

**From:** [Jan Eckert](#)  
**To:** [Shelly L Armstrong](#); [Archive](#)  
**Subject:** Ferris Professors Receive Grant  
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– Included below is a press release regarding a National Science Foundation grant for scholarships at Ferris State University. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

For Immediate Release  
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### **Ferris math professors receive grant for scholarships**

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University Mathematics professors Hengli Jiao and Kent Sun have been awarded a grant of nearly \$500,000 by the National Science Foundation to provide Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (S-STEM) to students with financial need.

The National Science Foundation established the S-STEM program “to support scholarships for talented, financially needy students, enabling them to enter the workforce following completion of an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate level degree in science and engineering disciplines.”

According to the request for proposals, the scholarship program emphasizes “biological sciences (except medicine and other clinical fields); physical sciences, including physics, chemistry, astronomy and material sciences; computer and information sciences; geosciences; engineering; and technology areas associated with the preceding fields.”

According to Ferris Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Harris, applications for grants and sponsored research are an important aspect of a comprehensive university, and he has encouraged faculty to pursue funding from national organizations, including the National Science Foundation.

The grant received by Jiao and Sun will be used to support 35 talented, low-income students with an average scholarship of \$3,100 per year for four years of study. The current ratio of male to female students in such programs at Ferris is 13:1, and a number of the scholarships are targeted at under-represented groups in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

“We are very happy to have the opportunity to provide scholarships for financially-needy students who have academic potential,” Sun said. “With these scholarships, we hope to encourage students, especially those from the under-represented populations, to pursue careers in the science, engineering and technology fields.

“Placing students in these fields benefits both the students, by placing them in high-paying jobs, as well as society in general which needs more people to fill high-tech jobs.

We would like to encourage qualified students to apply for a scholarship or for those who know people who may qualify for a scholarship to contact them,” he added.

According to the offices of Institutional Research and Financial Aid at Ferris State University, approximately 75 percent of students enrolled are first-generation college students and 78 percent of students are eligible to receive financial aid. The configuration of the student body at Ferris, together with its strong focus on science, technology and engineering, made the University an ideal candidate to receive NSF funding in the S-STEM program, Harris said.

Added Ferris Chief Diversity Officer David Pilgrim, “We should all be proud of professor Hengli Jiao and professor Kent Sun. Their hard work produced a grant that will enable talented, low-income students to succeed at FSU.”

Students interested in Ferris or the S-STEM scholarship program should contact the Office of Admissions at 800-4-FERRIS, or at [www.ferris.edu/admissions](http://www.ferris.edu/admissions).

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