

\$2 Million EPA Grant Will Fund Energy Research at Alfred University

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Alfred, NY -- Alfred University's Center for the Engineered Conservation of Energy (EnCo) will receive \$2 million in research support from the Environmental Protection Agency, AU President Edward G. Coll, Jr., announced today. "We have just received word that President Clinton this afternoon signed into law a Congressional proposal that awarded Alfred University \$2 million in initial funding for our Center for the Engineered Conservation of Energy," said Coll. "This is wonderful news for New York State, the Southern Tier and for Alfred," he added, noting that "The New York Congressional Delegation demonstrated that it is capable of working in a bi-partisan manner to advance promising initiatives such as EnCo. Due to the leadership of Congressman Amo Houghton and Congressman Jim Walsh and the strong support of Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Chuck Schumer, a research partnership between EnCo and the EPA will start this year." Houghton expressed his satisfaction that the funding had been approved by Congress and the President. "We've been working on this for a long time," said Houghton, a longtime supporter of research programs. "It cuts right to the core of what Alfred is all about." Dr. Robert K. Bitting, assistant vice president for research and EnCo director, called the grant "a major development in the life of the center," which was established by the University two years ago as a multi-disciplinary initiative for research in energy conservation, pollution control and waste reduction. It draws together faculty from the divisions of Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Environmental Studies, and builds upon Alfred University's strong reputation in materials research through the New York State College of Ceramics. "This research grant from the EPA is specifically for projects relating to environmental performance and resource conservation research," said Bitting, who envisions AU forging a number of partnerships with industries, utility companies and state and federal agencies to undertake the research projects. Already, he said, EnCo has partnered with the New York State Energy Research and Development Agency on a number of programs. "This funding will allow us to expand our relationship with NYSERDA, and to begin developing new relationships with agencies such as the newly formed New York State Science, Technology and Academic Research office." Using the federal allocation, "Our faculty will be working to develop and evaluate new technologies that contribute to waste reduction, pollution control and energy conservation," said Bitting. Another component of the program will be an "aggressive outreach and educational program," said Bitting, tying in with other EPA programs such as WaterWise, WasteWise, Energy Star, Green Lights and The Common Sense Initiative. Both Bitting and President Coll see the EPA grant as a major step in developing a nationally known center for energy research at Alfred University. "Given the cross cutting nature of EnCo's research focus, I am hopeful that our efforts on this initiative will expand to include the Departments of Energy, Defense and Transportation," said Coll. Among the planned EnCo initiatives is research into energy efficient and environmentally sustainable architecture and materials. "We are interested in the 'whole building' approach," explained Bitting. That involves all steps from building design, selection of "environmentally preferable" building materials and construction technology to the outfitting of the offices with energy efficient equipment and developing method to improve indoor air quality.