

New scholarship promotes women in science

by Sara Zaske

A University Honors College student and a College of Science ambassador, Christine Schneider is an exemplary student, so she was a little taken aback when she was called to the dean's office.

But Honors Dean Dan Arp had some great news — she had been selected to be the first recipient of a newly created scholarship: the Janet Richens Wiesner University Honors College Scholarship for Women in Science.

"It's pretty exciting and unexpected," said the 19-year-old OSU sophomore. "I'm just extremely grateful to receive the scholarship. And to be chosen out of a pool of very qualified candidates — I don't know how to describe the feeling, but I am very honored."

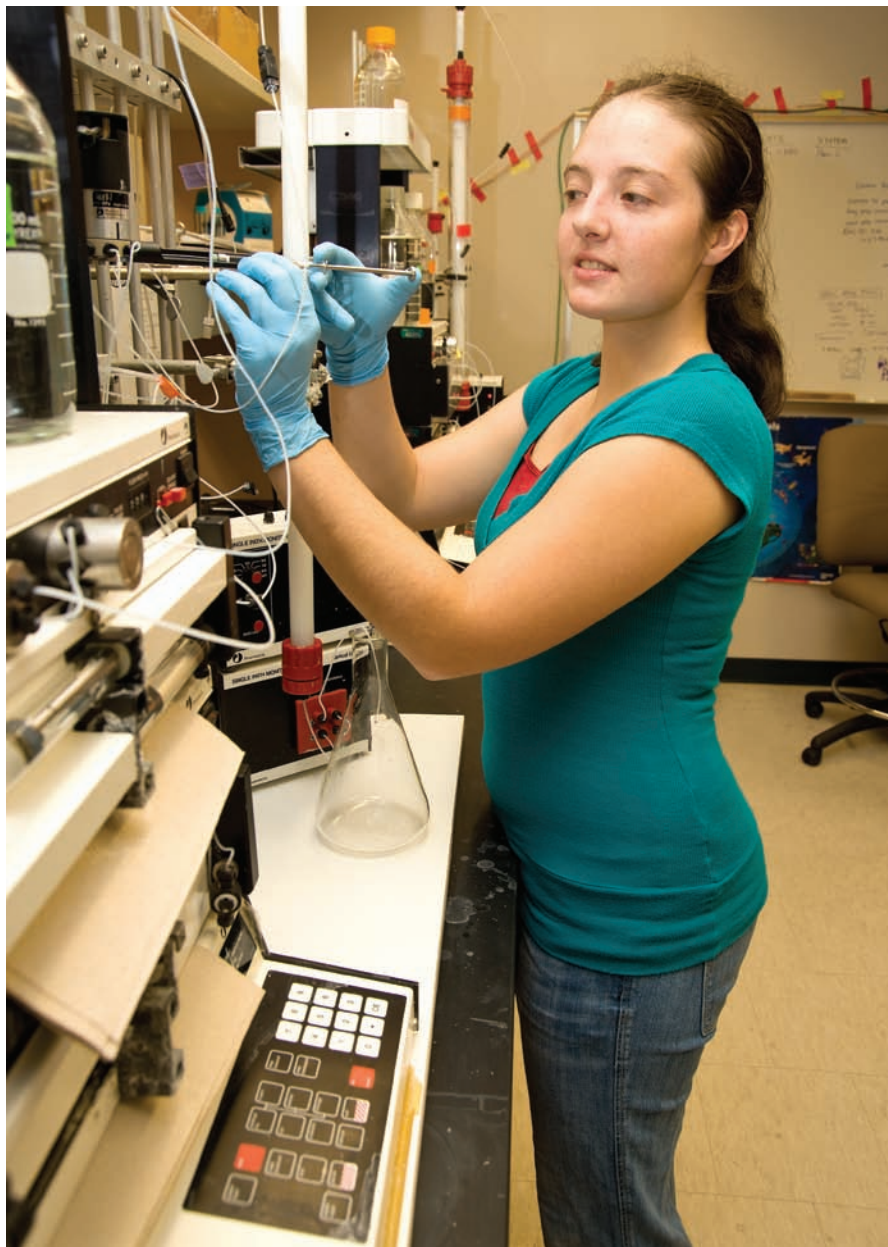
The award will help Schneider pursue her career goal to become a scientific researcher specializing in infectious diseases or virology.

"I've been into science ever since I was a little kid," said Schneider. "I did a lot of research over the past six summers. It's something I really enjoy."

Her first project was the summer after eighth grade: working with pigs as part of animal behavior study on memory at a veterans' hospital near her hometown of Peralta, New Mexico.

Her love of science led her to choose OSU because it offered so many research opportunities for undergraduates. A biochemistry and biophysics major, Schneider works in Professor Elisar Barbar's laboratory studying dynein, a motor protein found inside cells.

Schneider's accomplishments and ambitions would have pleased her scholarship's namesake, who was a 1941 OSU science graduate who died earlier this year. She studied pre-med at OSU, an unusual major for female students at the time. The outbreak of World War II shortly after her graduation changed her plans to go to medical school, but she never lost her interest in science.



Christine Schneider, the first recipient of a scholarship named for Janet Richens Wiesner, studies dynein, a protein that transports material inside cells. Photo by Dennis Wolverton

Janet Richens Wiesner's daughter Sue Koffel and her husband, Martin, established the scholarship in her memory.

"This scholarship is perfect to continue her legacy," said Sue Koffel, a 1966 mathematics graduate. "It combines all her interests — the OSU community which she loved, her passion for science, and her belief in women's excellence in science."

To encourage more gifts like the Janet Richens Wiesner Scholarship, President Ed Ray is focusing on a special Scholarship Initiative this year to help meet The Campaign for OSU's \$100 million goal for student support.

To date more than \$72 million has been contributed to the effort. For more information about this effort, visit CampaignforOSU.org.