



CAMPAIGN *for* CLARK COLLEGE

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iQ Credit Union Supports Scientific Research

Clark's pilot course joins Yale, UConn in student-led antibiotic research

VANCOUVER, Wash.—iQ Credit Union has provided Clark College with funding for curriculum development for first-of-its-kind antibiotic research led entirely by students.

Called the Small World Initiative, Clark College has teamed up with two dozen universities and colleges from across the nation—including Yale, UConn, Drexel University and Washington State University in Pullman—to launch a pilot course that tests soil organisms for antibiotics.

“The goal is to get students excited about science,” said Ryan Kustus, Ph.D., adjunct professor who is developing the curriculum and will teach the course at Clark College beginning in the spring. “This will be their project.”

iQ Credit Union of Vancouver has provided funding for Clark to develop lesson plans and the purchase of bacteria samples not grown in the Northwest. iQ Credit Union stands apart for its commitment to improving the quality of life in Clark County and leadership in support of education and children.

Roger Michaelis, president and CEO of iQ Credit Union, said, “We are excited to provide funding for this valuable program. The opportunity this provides for our local college students to participate in a research study of this caliber is fantastic.”

The course goes beyond a standard microbiology course that requires testing a few well-known substances in test tubes in a laboratory setting, to exploring and researching the more than 30,000 species of bacteria that live in one cubic foot of soil, according to Kustusch.

Clark students will conduct authentic research experiments, test soil bacteria for antibiotic activity, and identify bacteria and the chemical structure of antibiotics.

There are opportunities to discover new antibiotics that live within microorganisms or bacteria that are resistant to current pharmaceuticals, said Kustusch. The focus is on student learning and findings will be combined with other universities and colleges.

The course—called Biology 280—is a five-credit course open to 22 students who are interested in science. There are no prerequisites, except for an eagerness for discovery, according to Kustusch. More options in this subject are expected to be available in the fall quarter.

Clark is a leader in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in the region. The college provides a rigorous learning environment built upon foundational courses and creative problem-solving that prepares students to immediately enter the workforce or transfer to a four-year university for advanced education.

The number of STEM-related jobs is projected to increase from 16,849 to 18,074 by 2020 in Southwest Washington, and Clark students will be ready for those jobs.

Established in 1973, the [Clark College Foundation](#) is a nonprofit 501(c)3 charity that serves as the fundraising partner of [Clark College](#) in support of student learning and program excellence. The foundation is nationally recognized for excellence in superior fundraising.