Cal U Seeks Federal Grant for Urban Maglev National Demonstration Test Facility

Project will create jobs, show feasibility of cost-effective ‘green’ transit option

Cal U is seeking $299 million in federal stimulus funds for the Urban Maglev National Demonstration Test Facility at California University of Pennsylvania.

The university applied for funding this month through the U.S. Transportation Department’s Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants Program. “This project will have an enormous local, regional and national impact by fundamentally changing the way people and cargo move through urban areas,” said California University President Angelo Armenti, Jr. “The local businesses involved in this project are setting the stage for a new, American-based industry that will create thousands of jobs. At the same time, the project will demonstrate how Urban Maglev, a safe and sustainable transportation option, will lead to a cleaner environment and more livable communities.”

The Urban Maglev National Demonstration Test Facility at Cal U would consist of five passenger stations along a 5-mile (round trip) elevated guideway connecting the University’s upper campus and the nearby Center in the Woods senior citizen complex with Cal U’s lower campus and the borough of California. An intermodal transfer terminal with a 2,500-car parking garage and a maintenance/operations facility, both on the upper campus, also are included in the plan.

Four 70-passenger cars will travel an inch above the guideway, propelled by a magnetic levitation system that is safer and less costly to operate than previous designs. The climate-controlled cars will transport passengers at speeds of up to 50 miles per hour along a route that demonstrates Urban Maglev’s ability to handle 160-degree turns and a 7 percent grade — much steeper than the 3 percent maximum grade for traditional light-rail vehicles.

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At Convocation, Students Pose Questions About Parking, Funding, Baseball

Building on the momentum of new-student orientation, Cal U President Angelo Armenti, Jr. discussed the Cal U For Life program Sept. 15 at Student Convocation. “We must instill a culture of philanthropy in every University stakeholder,” he said. “Through awareness, appreciation and, ultimately, giving, we must have our students forge and maintain a lifelong relationship with Cal U.”

New Cal U students were the first to hear about the initiative, which also will be the topic for next month’s Mission Day.

“You’ve come here at a very interesting time,” President Armenti told the students. “You are at the juncture of the past and future of this University.”

During the question and answer session, many queries centered on parking. Manderino and Hamer parking areas now are closed for construction. Until the 650-space Manderino Parking Garage opens next summer, parking space at the lower campus will be limited. “This year is going to be a challenge, and we ask for your patience,” President Armenti said. He urged students to use the free bus service to and from the new Roadman Park Lot.

Cal U will charge for on-campus parking beginning next fall, he added. “We’ve had free parking at this University for 157 years, and we’re going to have it this year. But starting next fall, we are going to join the rest of civilization and pay for parking.”

— Continued on page 2

Grant Addresses Alcohol Abuse

The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education has received a grant of nearly $500,000 from the U.S. Department of Education to expand and refine programs designed to reduce alcohol consumption and binge drinking among PASSHE students.

The funds will be used to develop a system-wide strategic plan to attack the problem of alcohol abuse, which is considered one of the key public health issues facing colleges and universities today. The plan will provide direction and identify critical activities relative to each university’s needs.

— Continued on page 4
Hand-in-Hand Helps Students Pay for Child Care

The Women’s Center at Cal U will receive $219,300 from the U.S. Department of Education for its Hand-in-Hand program to provide safe, nurturing child care for low-income single parents who wish to pursue a college degree.

Funding for the four-year project was awarded under the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program.

Hand-in-Hand will provide quality, faith-based child care and preschool for the children of low-income Cal U students.

Children will be cared for at The Village, a nonprofit child-care facility about 1.5 miles from campus along the Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority’s Silver Line bus route, which also serves Cal U.

“As a nonprofit, we can only afford to give so many scholarships to parents going to school full time. This will enable us to help more people,” said Cherise Sears, president of The Village.

“If people can get the educational help now, they will soon be self-sufficient.”

Low-income single mothers will be given first priority for Hand-in-Hand. If space remains, low-income single fathers and two-parent families may be included. The program can accommodate no more than 26 children.

The state-licensed Village opened in September 2008 at The Center in the Woods to provide child care for ages 6 weeks through 12 years. The Village participates in the Keystone Stars Early Care + Education Quality Initiative as a Star 1 center, with a goal of becoming a Star 4 facility. Keystone STARS (Standards, Training/Professional Development, Assistance, Resources, Support) is an initiative of the state Office of Child Development and Early Learning to improve and support early learning programs in Pennsylvania.

Project director Nancy Skobel, Cal U’s associate dean for Student Development and Leadership, said Hand-in-Hand offers much-needed assistance, especially in these challenging economic times.

“Education is the ultimate equalizer, and Cal U’s participation in the CCAMPIS program will help both students and their young children,” she said. “Not only will immediate child care needs be met, but long-term family finances and child readiness will also be positively affected.”

Cal U students who need more information about Hand-in-Hand should contact Skobel at skobel@calu.edu or 724-938-7007.

Students requesting information about The Village child-care facility should contact Sears at sears.thevillage@centerinthewoods.org or 724-938-3554.

Cal U Seeks Federal Grant for Maglev Test Facility

“The national demonstration facility at Cal U will lay the foundation for a new high-technology, 21st-century manufacturing industry that creates jobs that cannot be outsourced to another country.”

Based on projections by the Council of Economic Advisors, building the test facility at Cal U will result in more than 2,000 job-years of immediate employment in western Pennsylvania, primarily in design, manufacturing and construction. This is critically important in Washington County, where unemployment is nearly 8 percent, and in neighboring Fayette County, with 9 percent unemployment. Vehicle manufacturing jobs also will be created in Beaver County, where unemployment stands at 8.4 percent.

Overall, the Council estimates that a $299 million investment will stimulate the creation of 3,261 total job-years of employment. A study promulgated by the American Public Transit Association places the figure even higher, at 7,136 jobs.

This project is a game-changer.

— David O’Loughlin, president, U.S. Maglev Development Corp.

The University’s parking committee will accept suggestions and make adjustments “until we get it as good as possible,” he said.

In response to other questions, President Armenti explained funding for some high-profile projects. The state’s $19 million contribution toward the Convocation Center, now under construction, comes from capital funds that cannot be used elsewhere, he said.

Private donations were used to finance the bronze statue of the University mascot, Vulcan, that will be dedicated during Homecoming festivities on Oct. 17.

The President also addressed concerns raised by members of Cal U’s baseball team, whose home field was displaced by the new 750-space Liberty Hall parking area. Cal U will continue to play its home baseball games at CONSOL Energy Field in Washington, Pa, until the facility is complete.

Students Ask About Parking, Funding and Baseball

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The President also addressed concerns raised by members of Cal U’s baseball team, whose home field was displaced by the new 750-space parking lot at Roadman Park. Since 2003, the Vulcans have played the majority of their home games at Consol Energy Park, about 30 minutes away.

Plans call for construction of a $3 million ballfield at another location within Roadman Park, the President said. He credited the team’s 6-2 victory over Shippensburg in May with putting Cal U on top of the Dixon Trophy standings for 2008-2009.

“I am very proud of our baseball team and always have been,” he said. “We just have to rely on neighboring fields for practice until the new field is constructed.”

Despite the inconvenience of ongoing construction, enrollment again has reached record levels, President Armenti reported. The student head count now stands at more than 9,000.

“Students and families are finding our institution very attractive for many different reasons,” he said, touching on Cal U’s relationships with the Smithsonian Institution, National Building Museum, National Gallery of Art and Library of Congress.

“I believe in the arts very much, and we celebrate them here,” he added.

As Convocation drew to a close, one student asked why the University is run “like a business instead of like an academic institution.”

“We have been here 157 years, and I am determined we’ll do whatever we have to do to be here another thousand years,” the President said. “We’re just preserving our future.”
**Digital signs have been placed near the California Volunteer Fire Department and at the intersection of Third and Green streets in California to inform motorists when the parking lots on Cal U’s lower campus are filled.**

It is recommended that drivers park in the Roadman Park lot near Adamoson Stadium and ride the free bus to and from the main campus.

Buses operated by the Mid-Mon Valley Transit Authority leave Roadman Park and stop at Mandersoni Library, Natali Student Center and near Gallagher Hall. Beginning at 7:20 a.m., the route from Roadman Park to the lower campus also will include stops at Vulcan Village and the MMVTA Park-n-Ride Lot.

University Police patrol the campus lots and direct drivers when all spaces are filled. They also make regular visits to the Roadman Park lot during their daily patrols.

For more information about parking and the bus service, or directions to the Roadman Park lot during their daily patrols.

Drivers When

*The Library Instruction Cookbook* is a practical collection of “learning recipes.” Each includes a plan for conducting a specific type of learning session and indicates how the recipe reflects specific ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. All told, Sittler and Cook have gathered 97 of the best lesson plans from academic librarians from around the world.

“It’s a different kind of academic publication with a lot of fun graphics,” Sittler said. “Both books have been well received.” Earlier this year Sittler and Cook, through ACRL, created Practical Pedagogy for Library Instructors: 17 Innovative Strategies to Improve Student Learning. This book gathered 17 case studies using unique instructional methodologies framed by sound pedagogical theory. It has helped many librarians who come from disciplines other than education upgrade their skills in the area of instruction and use in research methodologies, according to Sittler.

**Assistant professor Ryan Sittler co-edited and published two academic books this year.**

**Inkwell Accepting Nominations**

*The Inkwell* is the online literary magazine, invites students, staff and faculty to contribute original fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry and photos for the 2009 edition.

*The Inkwell can be viewed at:*

http://sai.calu.edu/inkwell.

Writers and photographers may contribute work in these categories:

— **Fiction.** Only original pieces will be accepted; no facsimile or previously published work. Submissions may not exceed 10 pages in length and should be double-spaced and numbered. Please include the title of your piece, your name, e-mail and phone number, a brief biography and a JPEG photo of yourself, if available. E-mail in rich text format to caluinkwellfiction@gmail.com.

— **Creative nonfiction.** Only original pieces will be accepted; contributors may submit no more than three pieces. Editors are seeking well-written, focused and structured narratives based on fact, with a distinct voice. Maximum length is 10 pages, double-spaced and numbered. Please include the title of your piece, your name, e-mail and phone number, a brief biography and a JPEG photo of yourself, if available. E-mail in rich text format to caluinkwellnonfiction@gmail.com.

— **Poetry.** Only original pieces will be accepted. Writers should use common sense about the length of poems. The Inkwell cannot guarantee that “shape” poems will remain in the same form when published. Please include the title of your piece, your name, e-mail and phone number, a brief biography and a JPEG photo of yourself, if available. E-mail in rich text format to caluinkwellpoetry@gmail.com.

— **Photographs.** Submissions will be accepted from new and established photographers. The Inkwell will use photos that best suit our articles and publication. Emphasis is on the photo itself; no photos of original paintings, drawings, sculptures, photos or other art will be accepted unless that art is part of the overall photo composition. All photos must be sent as a JPEG image. Please include the title of your photo, your name, e-mail and phone number, a brief biography, and JPEG photo of yourself, if available. E-mail JPEGs and information to caluinkwellphoto@gmail.com.

**Student editors for The Inkwell are:**

Hilary Scott, fiction; Rodney Taylor, creative nonfiction; Erica Zechender, poetry; Jaclyn Schwiani, photography; Dan John, public relations; and A.J. Carpinelli, Web

**Margo Wilson, associate professor of English, supervises the class. She can be reached at 724-938-1585 or wilson_m@calu.edu.**

**Librarian Cooks Up ‘Recipes’**

Assistant professor Ryan Sittler, Cal U’s instructional technology and information literacy librarian, co-edited and published his second academic book this calendar year.

**The Library Instruction Cookbook** is a practical collection of “learning recipes.” Each includes a plan for conducting a specific type of learning session and indicates how the recipe reflects specific ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. All told, Sittler and Cook have gathered 97 of the best lesson plans from academic librarians from around the world.

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**R I C**

**Internship Fair Coming Oct. 6**

Cal U has partnered with the Regional Internship Center (RIC) of Southwestern Pennsylvania to hold a free internship fair open to all students. The fair will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 6 in the Performance Center of the Natali Student Center.

Part of RIC’s internships-to-jobs initiative, the fair supports regional employers who recognize the value of internship programs and are looking to hire a full-time intern within the next two years.

The RIC is an online clearinghouse that connects bright, talented college students with regional businesses. It strives to increase the number of organizations in southwestern Pennsylvania offering internships by working with employers to develop programs and connect them with potential interns.

Cal U has worked with the RIC for five years, said Karen Pimm, director of the Cal U Internship Center. The University’s primary RIC contact is alumnus Trish Ross ’08.
Soccer Team Gets Their Kicks

Playing an effective and early defense, senior goalkeeper Rhiannon Marcus was a key to the Vulcans' success on the field. Marcus had 12 saves and allowed only one goal in the team's victory over Gannon University. The Vulcans advanced to the NCAA II Championship with a 35-1 record, including a 33-2 overall record in the PSAC-West. They also won the PSAC-West title and the PSAC Tournament championship.

Alcohol Abuse Focus of Grant

At Cal U, Siembak scored 1,139 points with 651 rebounds; her field goal percentage was nearly 61 percent (475 of 781). "All the pieces of the puzzle just came together, and we just had the right teammates and coaches," Siembak said. "We all had the right attitude and worked for the one common goal." Siembak praised previous women's basketball coaches Darcie Vincent and Heather Kearney, who also coached her at Slippery Rock. "Both are great coaches, and I could not have imagined playing for anyone else," she said. "They pushed us and got things out of us that I know I never thought I would be able to do." At Slippery Rock, Siembak scored 880 points in two years and was the team's leading scorer and rebounder both seasons. With Siembak, Slippery Rock was its only NCAA women's basketball regional title, in 2000. One of only 15 players in NCAA Division II history with 2,000 career points (2,019) and 1,000 career rebounds (1,203), Siembak was a four-time all-conference selection.

Center Was Key to '04 Women's Basketball Title

In two years at center, Becky Siembak helped the Vulcans win 68 of 71 games, including the 2004 NCAA Division II Championship. Siembak earned her bachelor's degree in special education from Cal U in 2004 and now is an eighth-grade learning support teacher at Trinity Middle School. She has been the head girls basketball coach at both Burgettstown and Trinity high schools, as well.

"I was very fortunate to have a scholarship that has really prepared for me for the rest of my life," said Siembak, now of Houston, Pa. "I could not imagine having all those student loans just starting my career, and I am very thankful and grateful to Cal for that. The school has played a big part in my career."

After sitting out the 2001-2002 season as a transfer, Siembak averaged 18 points and 10 rebounds a game in 2002-2003 while shooting 62 percent from the floor.

As an encore in 2003-2004, Siembak helped Cal U become the first and only PSAC team ever to win the NCAA Division II National championship in women's basketball. The Vulcans rolled to a 35-1 overall record with a third straight PSAC-West and PSAC championships.

The Vulcans are off to a program-best PSAC-West mark. Cal is also ranked tenth in the latest National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) Top 25 poll. This is the Vulcans' highest national ranking in program history.

Cal U is also ranked among the leaders in the NSCAA Atlantic Region with hopes of making the NCAA Division II tournament appearance. Last year the team went 12-7-5 overall and missed qualifying for the PSAC Tournament by point after winning just four games and one conference game in 2007. The team's national spokesmen, assistant coach Matt Buse and former assistant coach Pat Schrock, will be back on the field this fall as Cal U looks to improve on its 2007 record.

The Vulcans are coming off a season in which they set a program record for wins with 15. They finished third in the PSAC-West, winning 15 of 18 conference games and 17 of 20 overall. The Vulcans also had a 15-1 record in their home games.

Lucy Susick, a history major from Butler, was named to the PSAC All-Academic team.

The Vulcans are looking to improve their record in 2004, and they are off to a strong start. They have won seven straight games and are 17-2 overall. They are ranked tenth in the latest NSCAA Top 25 poll.

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