

Kissing a frog

When Rebecca Finell, a 2005 graduate of ASU's School of Design, created Frog Pod – a wall-mounted invention used to scoop, rinse, drain and store children's bathroom toys – as her junior year studio project, she could not have anticipated where that would lead.

Finell's bright green creation won the 2004 Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA) Student Design Competition and she received a trip to JPMA's annual trade show, where the Frog Pod was, again, a huge hit. Finell decided to start her own company, Boon Inc., featuring the Frog Pod as her first product.

Results: the Frog Pod is the darling of the juvenile products market and is distributed through numerous retail stores and more than 250 upscale boutiques around the country. Boon has projected revenues of \$9 million for 2006 and \$50 million for 2011.

Not bad for a frog.

Grants fuel new and varied research

ASU's research agenda continues to attract donors from the public, private and government sectors as evidenced in these recent awards:

In the last six months of 2005, researchers at **ASU's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences** garnered more than 165 grants totaling \$68 million, including a \$14.8 million grant from Grand Challenges in Global Health that life sciences Professor Roy Curtiss received for his pneumonia-vaccine research.

ASU graduate student Andrea Downing recently received a Ruth Kirschstein Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Grant from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Institute for Neurological Disorders and Strokes. Downing will use the \$90,000 to develop practical and effective therapeutic interventions to improve the motor skills of children with cerebral palsy. She also seeks to improve methods to control muscle force in a child's lower body with a particular focus on muscle inflection, timing and coordination.

The Ford Foundation selected ASU as one of 27 higher education institutions to receive \$100,000 grants for projects that

promote academic freedom and constructive dialogue on campus. ASU's project has the potential to serve as a national model for teaching, scholarship and dialogue about religion across multiple disciplines. ASU's **Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict** is one of the few established academic sites in the country devoted to this study.

ASU's **Biodesign Institute** was awarded a \$3.2 million grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to develop a safe and effective vaccine against the disease tularemia, more commonly known as "rabbit fever." The bacterium that causes the disease is a potential biothreat agent against which no effective vaccine exists.

The **W. P. Carey School of Business** will offer a new MBA next fall, Real Estate Finance and Marketing, as a result of a \$2 million gift from Phoenixians Robert and Sharon McCord. The gift will provide the real estate program with a named chair that can recruit a renowned thought leader as the founding faculty director.

New center begins construction

The new ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center, also called SkySong, will be home for a diverse set of tenants: ASU units, large multinational corporations, small and medium-sized technology companies, and arts and culture organizations, among others.

"This center is not a traditional research park, nor a business park, not a university campus. It is a hybrid of all three," says ASU President Michael Crow.

Construction on the 1.2 million square foot project, located at the former Los Arcos Mall site, begins in March with a scheduled occupancy date of early 2007. Confirmed tenants include eFunds, Wildfire Broadband Communications, the ASU Edson Student Entrepreneurship Initiative, Arizona Technology Enterprises and ASU Technopolis.

Charity honors three educators

Three ASU educators were honored recently with "Excellence in Education" Awards from the Ronald McDonald House Charities for their exemplary commitment

to education, innovation and leadership in the community.

The ASU honorees are Janice Kelly, who has overseen ASU's community-based service learning program, ACES, for eight years; Delia Saenz, director of the ASU Intergroup Relations Center; and Peterson Zah, counselor to the president on American Indian affairs.

Edson Initiative funds 18 ventures

In the second year of the annual Edson Student Entrepreneur Initiative program, 18 student-led ventures will be launched with seed funding, office space, and training and networking opportunities with ASU faculty, researchers and entrepreneurs.

The 18 selected programs were selected from 86 team submissions from across the university. Among the venture awardees for 2006 are Integral Science Supply, which produces and markets specially designed, prefabricated "science learning/exploration kits" that offer an innovative new interdisciplinary approach for teaching science to elementary and high school students; and Visudi/Sufficiently Advanced Technologies which researches and develops an environmentally friendly robust water purification and fluid-processing solution.

Eight teams from the Edson 2005 portfolio were granted second-year funds.

The initiative, made possible by a \$5.4 million donation in October 2004 from Orin Edson to the ASU Foundation, supports student-led ventures at ASU.

New director for Social Work

Mary R. Gillmore is the new director of the School of Social Work in the ASU College of Public Programs.

She will be responsible for planning and executing the school's move to the new ASU Downtown Phoenix campus and improving the national rankings of the school's academic and research capabilities, in addition to the daily operational responsibilities of a director.

Her research findings are widely published in peer-reviewed journals and she has presented her work internationally.