

Sustainable Fuels IGERT Awarded

The National Science Foundation awarded a grant of \$3.2 million to Principal Investigator Eric Lam (Plant Biology and Pathology, Biotech Center) and colleagues across Rutgers for graduate education in renewable and sustainable fuels through its IGERT program (Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship). The NSF IGERT program supports scientists and engineers pursuing doctorates in fields that cross academic disciplines and have broad social impact. The 5-year renewable fuel IGERT project led by Dr. Lam will provide education, research, and training in biotechnology, chemistry, ecology, engineering, and energy policy in collaboration with partner institutions in the U.S. as well as from Brazil, China, and South Africa. The goal is to produce a new generation of leaders who will design and implement ecologically sustainable solutions for renewable fuels worldwide. Co-PIs on the project are Paul Falkowski (Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences, director of the Rutgers Energy Institute), Frank Felder (Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy), Alan Goldman (Chemistry & Chemical Biology), and Lena Struwe (Plant Biology & Pathology, Ecology and Evolution). In total, 43 faculty members from 14 institutes across Rutgers will be involved in the project, partnering with colleagues at the University of Puerto Rico, Virginia Union University, and Delaware State University; as well as Peking University at Shenzhen and Academia Sinica Guangxi in China; the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil; and the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa. Dr. Lam and his colleagues will be coordinating with other Rutgers faculty members who have been awarded another IGERT project from NSF this year that will focus on graduate training in nanotechnology for clean energy generation and storage. The synergistic interaction between participants of these two energy-related IGERTs across the Rutgers campus is anticipated to create huge opportunities for interdisciplinary research and training for energy programs in the coming years.