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Top News

ESF to get 13 patents donated to SUNY

School to try to develop new paper product technology from Kimberly-Clark work.

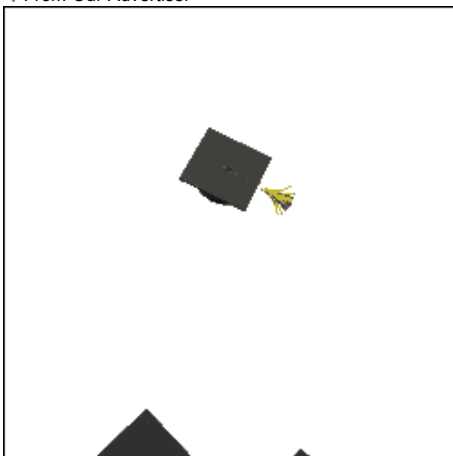
February 27, 2004

By **Nancy Buczek**
Staff writer

SUNY's chancellor is expected to announce today that Kimberly-Clark Worldwide - known for brands such as Kleenex, Scott and Huggies - has donated 13 patents to the SUNY Research Foundation.

The material generated in securing the patents will be turned over to researchers at the State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse so that they may attempt to produce new paper product technology.

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"There's an immeasurable amount of value coming back in the future," said D. Steven Keller, an associate professor in ESF's paper science and engineering faculty. Keller will be the lead researcher using the Kimberly-Clark material.

If ESF is able to further Kimberly-Clark's research, ultimately creating a marketable product, the State University of New York could license the technology to businesses that could commercialize it, said Guven Yalcintas, the research foundation's vice president for technology transfer.

The inventor would receive 40 percent of the royalties from a new product and the SUNY campus where the research was conducted would receive 60 percent. SUNY patents generate about \$17 million annually in royalties, Yalcintas said.

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Yalcintas said patent donations happen when companies identify technology they don't need, possibly because the direction of the business has changed.

By donating the patents to a university, the company could realize tax breaks, Keller said.

Kimberly-Clark representatives could not be reached Thursday evening.

SUNY Chancellor Robert King plans to make the donation

announcement at 1 p.m. today in Bray Hall on the ESF campus. SUNY Research Foundation officials said they believe this is the first time a company has donated patents and the supporting research to SUNY for researchers at ESF to build upon.

Other SUNY schools have received donated patents in the past, Yalcintas said.

The 13 patents given to ESF are split into two research categories, Keller said. The first involves using environmentally friendly compounds to enhance the wet strength of tissue products. The second deals with enhancing the usefulness of recycled paper, such as newsprint.

"We're in the process of examining the market and seeing where we could go ahead and contact companies who would be interested in advancing this technology through the marketplace," Keller said.

Kimberly-Clark has also committed to financially supporting the ESF research for two years. Yalcintas said the foundation agreed with Kimberly-Clark's wishes to not publicly disclose the dollar amount of that commitment.

"It's not just taking this technology and marketing it, but really the ability to make it grow from a very solid starting point," Keller said. "And in the realm of education you have students that are able to take advantage of this, and they themselves can grow to understand research by following that same track."

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