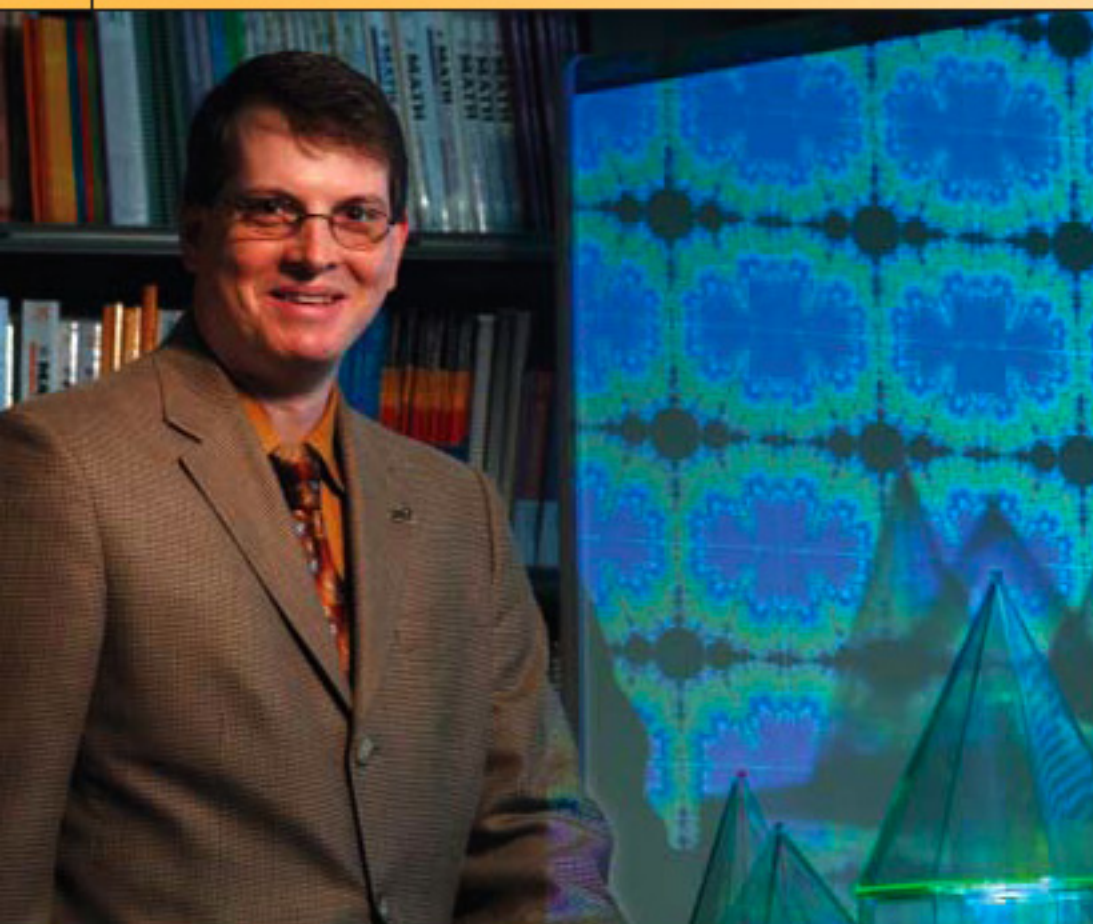


GRANT-FUNDED PROJECTS ADD UP TO BENEFITS FOR AREA SCHOOLS



Associate Professor Eric Milou is using a grant to improve math instruction in the state's middle schools.

THE \$6 MILLION in research grants Rowan University faculty members received last year is going toward more than laboratory experiments. Federal, state and private funds also are being used by Rowan faculty to conduct research and develop programs that affect communities – and people's lives – in significant ways.

"Not everyone is using the funding to conduct laboratory research under a microscope," said Peggy Schoen, director of Government Grants. In addition to many grants for projects in engineering and the sciences, funds also have been awarded for research and programs that assist college students, children and families, and communities. "A lot of our funding is turned back into helping people," she noted.

Associate Professor of Mathematics Eric Milou is using an \$866,464 grant from the New Jersey Department of Education to assist middle school math teachers – and, in turn, their students – through the South Jersey Math Partnership (SJMP).

The SJMP, which Milou directs, provides intensive professional development coursework to 100 middle school math and science teachers from 21 school districts in South Jersey.

"Middle schools are the biggest weakness academically in America," Milou said. "There's a lack of content knowledge

in mathematics for teachers."

The disconnect is particularly apparent in New Jersey, where "schools are being pushed to teach algebra in middle schools, but teachers in those grades are only certified to teach elementary math," Milou said.

To address that, teachers enrolled in SJMP engage in 200 professional development hours over 18 months. They will improve their math content knowledge, learn instructional planning and designs that promote critical thinking, improve their communication and technological skills, learn better assessment strategies, and gain a better understanding of adolescent development.

Teachers who complete SJMP can apply the graduate credit they earn toward a certificate in graduate studies in mathematics education at Rowan. More than half of the teachers who have completed SJMP have enrolled in graduate studies at the University, Milou said.

Most importantly, they're using

their knowledge, gained at Rowan, to teach – and reach – South Jersey middle school students.

"I used just about everything I learned in the program in my classroom," said Tobey Realley, a sixth-grade math teacher in Woodbury who completed the program and is now pursuing her master's degree at Rowan.

"Through my use of manipulatives in the classroom, my students began to understand, without my telling them, the relevance of the math skills they were learning. Since completing the program, I love teaching math so much more and I feel more comfortable and competent in the classroom."

Realley's experiences are in line with Milou's initial research findings on the effectiveness of SJMP, which show significant increases in teachers' understanding of mathematics concepts and in teacher instructional practices.

For Milou, work with SJMP helps keep him up-to-speed with challenges and changes facing mathematics teachers, which he then shares with his own students who plan teaching careers. ♦

Rowan University Grant Activities

Year	Awards	Funding
2006	45	\$6,063,869