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UMass to get \$2.4 million

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AMHERST - U.S. Congress approved \$2.4 million in federal funding for projects at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in the areas of energy and microwave technology.

Congressman John W. Olver, D-Amherst, announced the appropriations yesterday. Researchers studying environmental micro-biological energy harvesting and the Center for Advanced Sensor and Communications Antennas will each receive \$1.2 million.

Microbiologist Derek R. Lovley is leading the study of microorganisms that can harvest electricity from waste matter and clean up polluted sites. Lovley discovered the microorganism *Geobacter* in 1987 at the bottom of the Potomac River in Washington, D.C.

The bacteria live naturally in soils and waterways without oxygen and use metals or minerals to gain energy. They've been used to remove contaminants from underground petroleum spills and remove uranium from contaminated groundwater.

Last year, Lovley was awarded a \$21.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to continue his study.

The Center for Advanced Sensor and Communications Antennas is a partnership between the UMass-Amherst Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and the Air Force Research Laboratory Sensors Directorate at Hanscom Air Force Base. The center develops antenna technology for national defense, homeland security, wireless communications and air traffic control.

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