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LLNS gift magnifies study habits of biology students

Through a \$10,000 gift from Lawrence Livermore National Security (LLNS), the entity that manages the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), the Las Positas College Foundation has enabled biology students to magnify and save images of molecular organisms to heighten the study of species' structure.

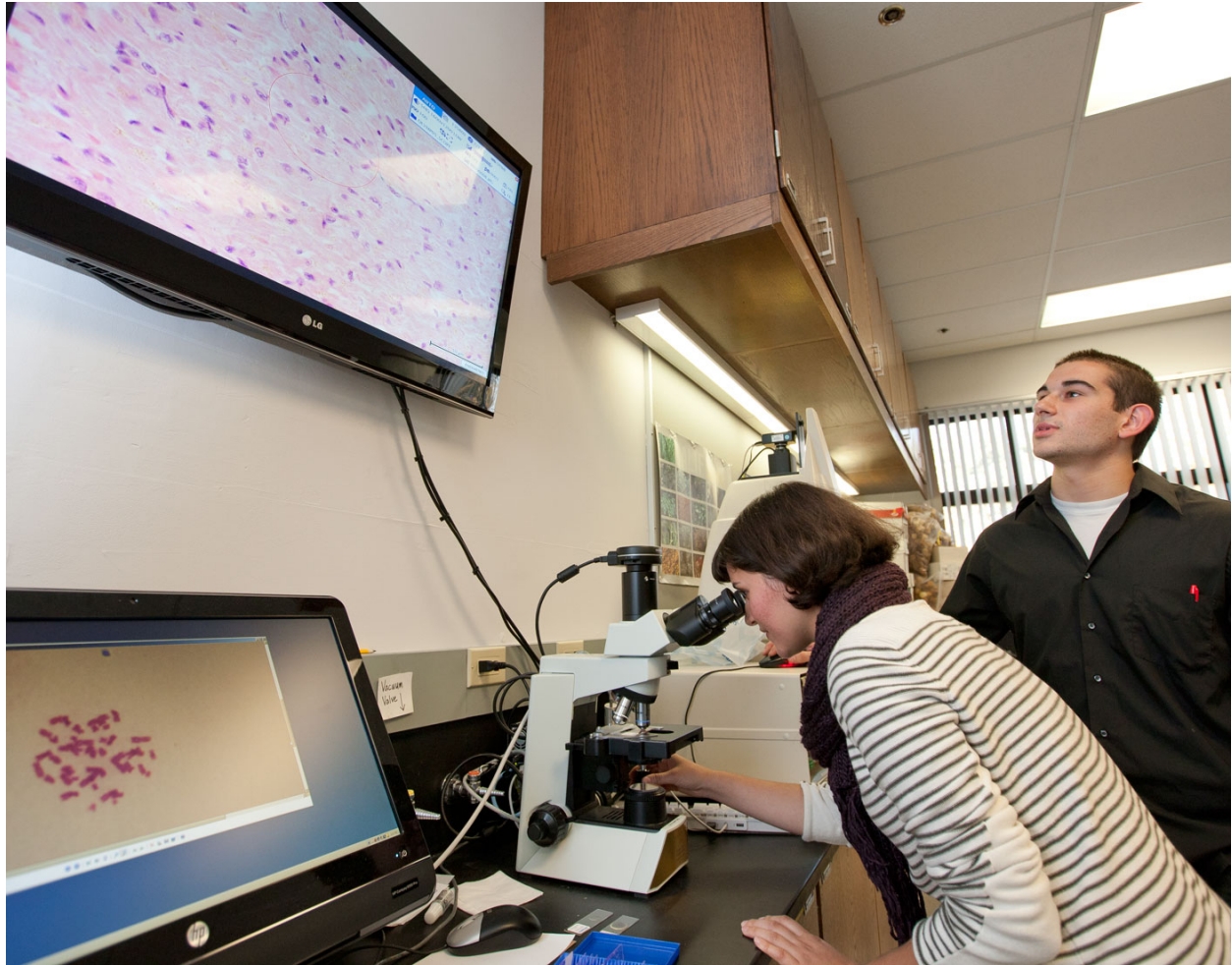
"There's a way to do it better—find it," inventor Thomas Edison once said. This is the sort of spirit that prompted the purchase of a digital camera and monitor, through a LLNS gift, for the Las Positas College biology department.

Katera Johnson, now at UC Berkeley, was one of the students in instructor Nan Ho's biology class who often used an iPhone positioned over a microscope's eyepiece lens to snap photos of microscopic images in order to share the images with classmates and save them for later review.

The concept was innovative, but when college administrators and LLNL managers saw the rather awkward process the students had to endure, they agreed there was a way to do it better.

With Johnson's inspiration, Las Positas College personnel applied for funding through LLNS to purchase a digital microscope for study purposes. A \$10,000 gift was given to the Las Positas College Foundation for the purchase of the equipment for the biology department.

Ho described the digital microscope as "a powerful learning tool." She said students now have the capability to analyze slides, and even count blood cells. "It is state of the art," she added. "This is very exciting and we are grateful to LLNS for the gift."



With the purchase of a digital microscope made possible through a gift from LLNS, Los Positas College students Sarah Hollister and Sean Giovacchini (shown here) have enhanced their understanding of biology.



(From left) Kevin Walthers, president, Las Positas College; Cindy McAneney, manager, LLNS; Neal Ely, dean of Math, Science, Engineering and Public Safety, Las Positas College; Nan Ho, Biology faculty, Las Positas College; Katera Johnson, inspiration for the original grant application, Las Positas College alumna and transfer student currently at University of California, Berkeley; and Jim Bono, Public Affairs director, LLNL.

LLNS manages Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory for the Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration. LLNS is comprised of: Bechtel, the largest project management contractor in the United States; The University of California, the world's largest public research institution; BWX Technologies and Washington Group International, the top two DOE nuclear facilities contractors; and Battelle, a global leader in science and technology and technology commercialization. The team also includes Texas A&M University, which provides programs in homeland security and national security

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