

\$200,000 nanotechnology grant awarded at Clarion University

► **The funds will be used to help the physics department test modules.**

CLARION — Clarion University, working in collaboration with its nanotechnology partners in the State System of Higher Education, has secured a \$200,000 grant from the state Department of Community and Economic Development to provide four nanotechnology upper division laboratory modules.

The physics department will test the modules this fall and integrate them into the new course on nanotechnology next spring.

Nanotechnology is any technology related to features of

nanometer scale — one billionth of a meter.

Experts say it is igniting "a scientific revolution as scientists begin to manipulate atoms and molecules as if they were tiny Lego blocks.

"Clarion University is like a magic portal to the nanoworld," said Sharon Montgomery, chair of the physics department. "Our students have been given access to state-of-the-art equipment to work alongside scientists who are themselves working on the forefront. This is just an incredible opportunity."

Joshua Pearce, the coordinator of nanotechnology for Clarion, will be teaching the course.

"This course is going to be great, but with the DCED's help

the lab component of this course is going to be absolutely spectacular," Pearce said. "The nano course will have something for everyone."

The course is tailored for students in Clarion's new nanotechnology minor to prepare them for the intensive 18-credit summer course at the Penn State Nanofabrication Facility, although Pearce stressed all strong science and mathematics students are welcome to take the nanotechnology course even if they are not doing the minor.

It is estimated that nanotechnology applications will represent a market of \$11 trillion by 2010.

Students with a nanotechnology minor are highly sought by graduate schools and industries in a number of fields.