UNLV student Richard Leclerc (left), works alongside laser physics professor John Farley.

UNLV student earns physics fellowship

Richard Leclerc, a UNLV student, received one of eight science fellowships given nationwide by a division of the American Physical Society. As a result, he spent last summer in a UNLV physics laboratory using lasers to study water molecular ions.

Leclerc, who was 20 at the time, received the $2,500 fellowship from the society's Laser Science Topical Group.

With that fellowship, he was able to spend the summer working alongside UNLV laser physicist John Farley on experiments designed to determine the wavelengths at which molecular ions in water absorb laser light.

Leclerc, a senior majoring in chemistry, said the fellowship provided him with valuable experience.

"It gave me a chance to go out in the field and apply what I had learned from textbooks," he said. "It also gave me practical insight into what scientists do in the field.

"Working one-on-one with Professor Farley was a wonderful opportunity. He really helped me learn a lot about lasers," Leclerc said.

Alumni Association holds luncheons

The UNLV Alumni Association is sponsoring a business luncheon series. The seminars take place the second Wednesday of every month and presentations begin at 12:30 p.m. Alumni and faculty can attend for $10.

"The seminars have been very well attended and the speakers have been excellent," said Fred Albrecht, executive director of Alumni Relations.

The presentations range in topic and are designed for alumni who are in business and wish to learn.

"Without the support of the terrific UNLV faculty members this would not be possible," said Carl Cook, coordinator of the business luncheon seminars and assistant director of Alumni Relations. "The professionalism and expertise in their chosen fields lends a quality to these events which cannot be matched anywhere in town."

Future events include:

Feb. 12 — Dimitri Shalin, "The future of the USSR."

March 11 — Ron Milne, "On becoming rich."

April 8 — Ira Peak, "The health care crisis in America."

For more information contact Carl Cook at 739-3621.

UNLV professor visiting at Harvard

UNLV physics professor Victor Kwong, currently serving as a visiting professor at Harvard University, was awarded a research fellowship by the Smithsonian Institute to work on a project at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.

Kwong, who specializes in laser physics at UNLV, is attempting to make complex measurements of silicon ions. These measurements require a working knowledge in particular areas of plasma physics, atomic physics and laser physics. Scientists at Harvard have made several unsuccessful attempts to get these measurements in the past six years.

"If we are successful, these measurements will be used by solar physicists to determine precisely the electron density and temperature in the atmosphere around the sun," Kwong said. "This will allow an accurate model of the solar atmosphere to be made."

Kwong, who developed a unique "ion trap," which allows him to capture and study rapidly moving charged particles, has lectured on ion storage at Harvard this fall, at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics and at Lyman Laboratory in Harvard's physics department.

In addition to delivering a paper concerning the use of his ion trap at the Atomic Processes in Fusion Plasmas conference in Portland, Maine, in late August, Kwong was invited to the Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara Dec. 3-7 to participate in a workshop on the surface interaction of highly charged ions.

Kwong has been a member of the UNLV physics department faculty since 1984.

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