

9/2007

Re: Weapons Research

Dear Editor,

Eric Eiden (Letters, 09/17/2007) seems to see a conspiracy behind every acronym, and based on the Bush administration's penchant for secrecy I can hardly blame him. However, I should like to point out that he is mistaken about the purpose of the new science buildings on the University of Oregon campus. I am part of the faculty team that worked on the design of the new building. I also manage several laboratories that will occupy the new facility and I am familiar with the research projects that are currently ongoing and will continue in the new laboratories.

The bottom line is that there is no classified or weapons related research on the UO campus. What is going on are numerous efforts to characterize material on the smallest scales, which include development of commercial electronic and optical components, evaluation of chemical toxicity and bio-activity of nano-materials and a host of other scientific research unrelated to any commercial applications, such as the study of volcanic eruptive processes and investigations into extraterrestrial impacts.

The analytical instruments will not be relocated to the new facility for several months, but I invite Mr. Eiden to give me a call and come see our existing facilities. I would be pleased to give him a tour of the materials characterization research we perform, and I think he will see for himself that we have every reason to be proud of our contribution to scientific knowledge, economic development and the public health of the state of Oregon.

John Donovan
Eugene, OR