Brain Health Research Institute Grand Opening

The Brain Health Research Institute celebrated the grand opening of its new lab spaces in November 2021 with an afternoon of activities that included a keynote presentation by cognitive neuroscientist Earl Miller, BA ’85, PhD, a dedication of the space, tours and student research demonstrations.

Located on the lower level of the Integrated Sciences Building on the Kent Campus, the new space features interdisciplinary research facilities called "collaboratories." With state-of-the-art equipment and flexible lab space, the institute’s collaboratories enable researchers from diverse disciplines to bring their collective talents to bear on important unresolved questions about the brain and brain diseases.

The institute is a nationally recognized effort that taps passionate faculty and staff from across the university—not just in science-based departments—to work together as they solve brain-related challenges. Research topics include how hearing and listening change across childhood, reprogramming the brain with exercise, recovery from chronic spinal cord injury, new treatments for common forms of infertility, the effects of poetry on brain health and many more.

Crawford Hall Groundbreaking

Kent State University officials and donors to the Crawford Hall project officially break ground for the new building. Pictured (L-R): Valoree Vargo, vice president, Kent State University; Ambassador Edward F. Crawford, Deborah Spake, dean, Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship; Robert Archer, MBA ’61, John Brinzo, BBA ’54, and Staffany Matzcola-Larkins, BBA ’95.

Crawford Hall officially broke ground on Crawford Hall, the future home of the Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship, on March 8, 2022, in a ceremony attended by more than 400 people, including university officials, donors, alumni, students, elected officials and special guests. Construction on this state-of-the-art building is expected to be completed in 2024. Crawford Hall will support innovative instruction, leading research and student support services for thousands of business majors, minors and others taking business courses across the Kent State system.

The Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship and Crawford Hall have been named in honor of Ambassador Edward F. Crawford and his family, who provided the largest single philanthropic gift in Kent State history to enable the construction of this building.

Doctoral Student in Computer Science Receives AAUW International Fellowship Award

The American Association of University Women has awarded a 2021-22 International Fellowship to Rachael Mukisa, a Ugandan native who is currently pursuing a PhD in computer science at Kent State’s College of Arts and Sciences.

With an aim to tackle barriers women face in education, the International Fellowship is for women who are pursuing full-time graduate or postdoctoral study in the United States, but who are not U.S. citizens. For the 2021-22 academic year, the AAUW awarded a total of $5 million through fellowships and grant programs to 260 scholars, as well as to community projects and programs that promote education and equity for women and girls.

"The 21st century brought enormous advancements in computing and technology, yet women are still underrepresented in this field," Mukisa says. "One of the reasons for undertaking an advanced career in computing is to build a sustainable pipeline for empowering more women into technology."

Through this fellowship, Mukisa plans to leverage cutting-edge computational techniques to address prevailing challenges in developing countries. Prior to pursuing a PhD in computer science, she worked for a decade in information technology-related functions, including building spatiotemporal models for biosurveillance (using smartphones) of crop transmittable diseases in Uganda while earning her Master of Science in data communications and software engineering at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda.

Her current research is geared towards managing cardiovascular diseases by building machine intelligence in echocardiography (ECC), a field where sound waves are used to capture heart images for diagnosing cardiac conditions.

Recent advancements in ECC have led to the generation of complex multidimensional echo data, which exceeds the capabilities of current statistical tools," Mukisa says. "Applying machine learning is useful to analyze heart ultrasound data using signal processing, and such algorithms provide opportunities for developing automated echo analysis and interpretation systems. The automated approach can significantly assist in decreasing the variability and burden associated with manual image measurements."

"We’re proud to support the work of these outstanding scholars," says Gloria Blackwell, executive vice president and chief programs officer at AAUW. "This year’s recipients are making valuable contributions in a wide range of fields, but with a common goal of improving life for all of us. We’re impressed by what these scholars are doing and excited about the great things they’ll accomplish throughout their research and careers."

—By Jim Maxwell, BS ‘00, MS ‘11

Learn more about the Department of Computer Science at www.kent.edu/cs.