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WEATHER

Today: Sunny, High 44
Tonight: Cloudy, Low 33
Tomorrow: 36/31
Data courtesy of weather.boston.com

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Tobacco grants funded BU cancer research

By Abbie Ruzicka
Daily Free Press Staff

Boston University has received more than \$3.5 million from tobacco giant Philip Morris since 1995, much of which has directly funded research on the BU Medical Campus, according to a university database and research and corporate documents.

Research done by the BU Cancer Research Center, the School of Medicine's genetics and genomics department and the Pulmonary Center cited Philip Morris and its subsidiaries, including the Philip Morris External Research Program, as funding sources, according to study and research pre-

sentation documents.

Some of the money granted to the BU Medical Campus funded research about cancer gene therapy, the relationship between heart disease and nicotine, the effects of cigarette smoke on the pulmonary system and genetic predisposition to hypertension, according to a PMERP management report from 2004.

Cancer Research Center Director Douglas Faller received \$268,759 from the Philip Morris Foundation for a 2004 study involving cancer treatment, according to a BUMC research report.

"I can't see how any research that I have

done plays into any marketing campaign," he said, "I'm relatively willing to take research funds from anyone that will help me help people."

A chain of emails between BU and Philip Morris employees from 2002 discussed plans for the PMERP to fund research at BU.

"The grants total a little over \$2M; \$1M of which goes directly to the University," states a June 12, 2002 email sent to Rick Solana, now the senior vice president of research and technology at Philip Morris USA.

Because of a 1998 U.S. Supreme Court ruling tobacco companies are required to dis-

close all their company documents.

BU School of Public Health social and behavioral sciences department Associate Chairman Michael Siegel said he did not know about Philip Morris funding at BU.

"I'm not questioning the validity or objectivity of the research," Siegel said. "The problem with this research is that by virtue of taking this money BU is basically allowing itself to be used as a pawn in the marketing scheme that the tobacco companies are playing."

Philip Morris launched the External

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THE MUSIC MAN



Bill to end gifts for docs, require e-record keeping

By Vivian Ho
Daily Free Press Staff

A bill sponsored by Massachusetts Senate President Therese Murray aims to cut health care costs and would require a statewide transition to electronic medical record keeping and would ban pharmaceutical companies from giving gifts to doctors.

The Joint Committee on Health Care Financing heard testimony for the bill March 12, but has not yet acted on the legislation. An

records for up to 15 years, he said.

Electronic records are intended to cut costs, but they could also help to keep pharmaceutical companies from giving gifts and bribing doctors to prescribe certain drugs more often, Collins said, because the system could show the medicines doctors prescribe over time.

Richard Powers, spokesman for the Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector Authority, said in an email that the Connector Authority supports the bill because it will help

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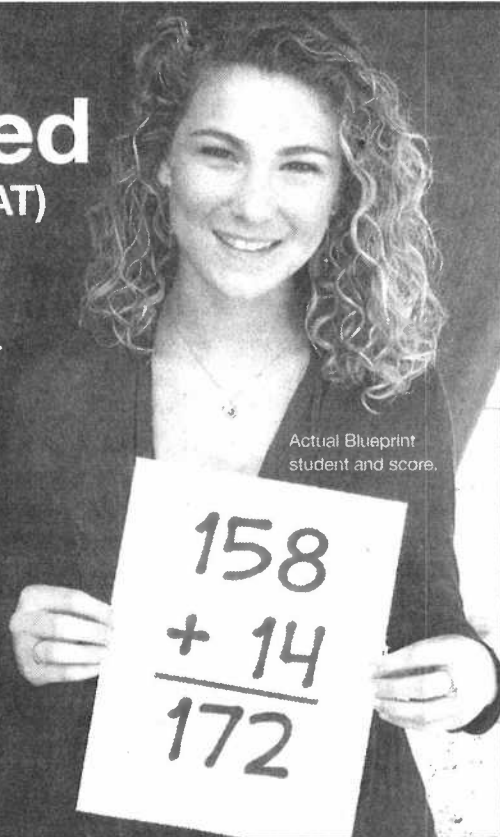
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Researcher defends his funding

TOBACCO: From Page 1

Research Program in 2000 after the U.S. Attorney General's Office disbanded the industry-wide Council for Tobacco Research and the Center for Indoor Air Research, claiming the groups manipulated research to promote public policies favorable to the tobacco industry.

Philip Morris decided last year to discontinue the ERP, which has drawn criticism from those who believe research funded by the tobacco company promotes its agenda, and notified grant recipients last September of the move, according to a Feb. 29 Science magazine article. The program has funded 470 research proposals at about 60 U.S. medical schools in the last eight years, according to the article.

"We have a commitment to continually research and develop new technology and methods that could help to reduce the harm associated

with our products," said Philip Morris spokesperson David Sutton.

Tobacco funding is never justifiable for academic research, said University of Alabama Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society Director Allen Blum.

"Whether it's \$3.5 million or \$3.50 it's despicable for anyone who calls himself or herself a health professional to accept money from a cigarette manufacturer, much less the company with the largest market share by far," Blum said in an email. "Justifying the acceptance of such funding by claiming it may lead to life-saving discoveries is self-interested and delusional rationalization at its most feral."

The New York Times reported yesterday that a Cornell University study on lung cancer received \$3.6 million in funding from Vector Group, the parent company of the tobacco company Liggett.

Fifteen public health and medical

schools have refused tobacco funding over the past few years, according to a Feb. 4 Times article. This year, the University of Texas at Austin business school banned tobacco funding, joining public health schools at Harvard University, Johns Hopkins, the University of North Carolina, Ohio State University and others.

Last September, the BU Medical Campus adopted a conflict-of-interest policy that prevents doctors from accepting gifts from pharmaceutical companies, according to Sept. 12 Daily Free Press article.

BU Medical Campus representatives declined comment when reached by phone multiple times during the past week.

BU spokesman Colin Riley said the entire university receives more than \$300 million in research grants from many sources each year.

Move out is a hassle for many

CAMPUS: From Page 1

said storing the items in a self-storage unit has made his life easier and helped keep his wallet fuller.

"It was a lot cheaper to do it yourself," he said. "I found a cheap storage place, and divided between four or five people. It ended up costing us between \$20 and \$40 for the whole summer. It was a pain taking cabs to the storage place, but in the end it was worth it because it was cheaper."

Adam Johnson, a College of Arts and Sciences freshman, said the perennial predicament is probably due to the fact that everyone on campus is moving out at around the same time, making the moving process — whether into dorms or back home — a bigger hassle than is

necessary.

"It's probably going to be really crowded and frustrating," Johnson said.

Others students, like College of Engineering freshman Geoff Brown, said the move and its accompanying troubles depend entirely on the location.

"At bigger dorms such as Warren Towers or West Campus, it can get crazy," Brown, a South Campus resident, said. "In South, you can just park outside the dorm, so it's much easier."

At move out, many students depend on the growing business of parcel storage. Daniel Abergel, operations manager for the Allston-based Michael's Movers, said most of the company's summertime business comes from BU students.

"We do a lot of storage deals where

we pick up the students' stuff they want to leave here from the dorms," Abergel said. "We do it so much it's become a painless procedure."

To be competitive with other local moving and storage companies, Michael's Movers has routinely offered a student discount to keep students coming back, he said.

Paolo Belfiore, a School of Engineering junior, said he tries to store his personal belongings over the summer, but usually ends up having his father drive to Boston to pick up him and his stuff.

"I will store things this summer because I found a cheap place," Belfiore, a Philadelphia native, said. "It costs less when you split up a storage place with friends."