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The School of Communications and Theater was recently awarded a major grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Link-to-Learn program. The funds will be used primarily to upgrade hardware and software in the School. The grant includes \$370,410 from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and \$109,018 in matching funds from the University, for a total value of \$479,428.

The grant program was highly competitive; Temple was one of only 21 Pennsylvania public and private colleges and universities to receive funds. Approximately \$5 million was allotted to the funding program by the Commonwealth in an effort to expand and strengthen technology-influenced programs for students across the state.

The grant was designed around SCAT's recently introduced New Media interdisciplinary concentration, headed by Dr. Jan Fernback and Professor Heather Raikes. Dr. Priscilla Murphy, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, served as the grant's principal investigator.

The grant proposal represented a truly collaborative effort among four SCAT departments. As Dr. Sandy Kyrish, assistant dean for technology and planning, explained, "This grant represented many, many hours of collaboration among our faculty, staff, and board members across the School's disciplines. A grant of this size cannot be won without a substantial investment of time and effort, and our success demonstrated that such an investment can pay off magnificently.

"This grant strengthens our emerging New Media interdisciplinary concentration and also benefits students taking our traditional curriculum in four of our five departments. It's wonderful to see the scope of what the grant funds enable us to do," Kyrish continued.

The improvements will include new computers, microphones, monitors, mixers, audio mixing software and acoustic treatment for audio Studios A, B, C, D, E and F. One studio will also be equipped with specialized hardware and software to accommodate visually disabled students.

Another improvement is a faculty instructional support center that will provide faculty with a shared work area. This center will include Macintosh and Windows computers with digital editing and image design software, an Avid Xpress, a networked printer, Betacam and DVcam equipment, mixing equipment, a scanner and other peripherals.

The digital post production center will receive upgrades to two Avid MCXpresses, and the addition of multiple Avid 72GB striped disk arrays, DVD-R drives, Betacam equipment, mixing equipment and additional peripherals.

For the Tomlinson and Randall theaters, new amplifiers, mixers, microphones and speakers will be installed. In the theater's digital audio studio, a new computer, minidisk player and CD player will be installed, and in the theater design lab, new computers and a new plotter will be installed.

Computers in the graphics lab will be replaced with new Macintosh computers that have DVD-R/CD-RW capabilities, and additional networked printers and scanners will be installed.

The Link-to-Learn grant program is part of Governor Tom Ridge's nationally recognized Link-to-Learn education technology initiative and was designed to ensure that college students in all areas of study receive technology training and to make sure that Pennsylvania businesses have enough 'tech-savvy' workers.