

tor workers in the US and will offer state-of-the-art multidisciplinary research facilities, says Alain Kaloveros, Albany Nanotech's executive director. The center is scheduled to open in 2003 and will have space for 500 researchers.

To kick-start the center, New York Governor George Pataki last year announced a \$50 million donation from the state. This was quickly followed by a \$100 million investment by IBM Corp. Kaloveros says he hopes that nearly 85% of NanoFab 300's costs will be paid by private companies. "The idea is that the center becomes the Bell Labs, the R&D facility for industry. And interest is growing exponentially." —PKG

Barcelona light source. A state-of-the-art synchrotron light source will be built outside of Barcelona, according to an 8 March announcement from the Spanish and Catalan governments, which are splitting the tab. Construction of the Synchrotron Light Laboratory (LLS) is anticipated to cost 120 million euros (\$105 million), and the estimated running cost is €12 million a year. The facility is scheduled to come online in 2008.

The LLS will start off as a 2.5-GeV machine, with the option to upgrade to 3 GeV. Surface and materials science, structural biology, and chemistry are the main foreseen research thrusts. The LLS is the largest scientific project Spain has yet undertaken on its own, says Maria Asensio, a condensed matter physicist who splits her time between Madrid and Paris. "The whole scientific community is very enthusiastic," she says. "This installation is designed to be an interactive project focused on stimulating relationships between academic and industrial laboratories."

Spain is also involved in Soleil, a synchrotron under construction near Paris (see PHYSICS TODAY, November 2000, page 47), although the level and mode of the country's participation are yet to be decided. —TF

MIT-Army nanotechnology center. Imagine a soldier withstanding bullets, jumping over 20-foot high walls, or walking down a mountain with a broken leg. Sound more like science fiction than reality? Actually, the US Army hopes scientists will work toward these types of innovations at a planned \$50 million Institute for Soldier Nanotechnologies at MIT.

The ISN will gather scientists from the army, MIT, and industry to conduct unclassified basic and applied research. So far, Raytheon Co, DuPont,

Massachusetts General Hospital, and Brigham and Women's Hospital have signed on as ISN partners and will together give an additional \$40 million.

Research at the ISN will focus on using nanotechnology to develop uniforms and equipment that can self-adjust to the environment, examine and heal soldiers, store and transfer energy, and protect against chemical and biological agents. For example, MIT is developing polymeric actuators that outperform natural muscle in terms of energy storage and force.

"We hope to deliver some breakthroughs early," says ISN Director Edwin Thomas, a professor in MIT's materials science and engineering department. "Some [innovations] are indeed futuristic and many years from reality." —ACT

Georgia starts NSF-inspired agency. The Republic of Georgia has created its first independent grant-giving science foundation, with help from the US Civilian Research & Development Foundation (CRDF), a nonprofit organization created by the US State Department in 1995. The Georgia Research & Development Foundation (GRDF), modeled on NSF, will work to maintain the country's scientific and technological infrastructure. "The main goal is to support Georgian science and help young scientists have an alternative to emigration," says CRDF staff member Amy Prevatt-Bulat. The GRDF will also help fac-

ulty members who worked in defense-related areas make the transition into civilian research, she adds.

Nearly \$500 000 of GRDF's \$720 000 annual budget is set aside to promote collaborations between US and Georgian scientists. Grant proposals will undergo peer review in both countries. The deadline for this year's proposals is 1 July.

The GRDF is the third such agency in the former Soviet Union in which the CRDF has had a hand: During the 1990s it helped set up similar science foundations in Armenia and Moldova. "Both these programs have been very successful," says Prevatt-Bulat. More information about the new foundations can be found at <http://www.crdp.org/Centers/ecbp.html>. —PKG

Materials journal. *Nature Materials*, the eighth *Nature* sister journal and the first in the physical sciences, will debut in September. Modeled on the parent publication, the new monthly will feature peer-reviewed original research papers, news, editorials, correspondence, and commentaries. It will cover the spectrum of materials research, although founding editor Vincent Dusastre says he expects that "the interface of materials science, biology, and nanotechnology will be highly visible." For more information about submissions and subscriptions, see <http://www.nature.com/nmat>, which also has other information about materials science and nanotechnology. —JB ■

WEB WATCH

<http://www.astrosociety.org/education/publications/tnl/56>

To help counter demands that modern cosmology be banished from K-12 science curricula, the Astronomy Education Board of the American Astronomical Society has written an article for teachers entitled "An Ancient Universe: How Astronomers Know the Vast Scale of Cosmic Time." The article is available on the education board's Web site, *The Universe in the Classroom*.



<http://www.intuitior.com/moviephysics>

Tom Rogers, a high-school science teacher in Greenville, South Carolina, has reviewed the physics that appears in popular movies and found it wanting. On his Web site, *Insultingly Stupid Movie Physics*, he describes the commonest blunders and reviews and rates movies according to accuracy of their physics content.



<http://www.cap.ca/pic.htm>

Physics in Canada Online is the Web version of the bimonthly magazine of the Canadian Association of Physicists. At present, most of the content of each print issue is not available online. However, the magazine's books department is fully accessible. Visitors to the Web site can even volunteer to review any of the recently received books.

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