

Opening Statement
The Honorable Vernon J. Ehlers (R-MI), Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Research and Science Education
21st Century Biology
U.S. House of Representatives
June 29, 2010

Thank you, Chairman Lipinski. I am pleased that the Committee is holding this important hearing today.

Collaborations between the biological sciences, physical sciences and engineering are becoming much more common at our major research institutions. Young investigators have discovered that to remain on the cutting edge of their research they need to be partnering with various departments to solve challenges that are much larger than a single discipline. This type of research arrangement will inevitably benefit students by preparing them for today's workforce much more than an education bound by a single discipline. At the same time, we need to ensure that our graduate students do not become overly broad instead of gaining some level of expertise in a disciplinary area.

As this Committee determines how to foster new models for science and engineering research, today's witnesses will provide valuable insights on both conducting research in the "new biology" and integrating it with other disciplines.

I look forward to hearing about this topic from our witnesses.