

## 2006-2007 MELLON FOUNDATION FUNDED RESEARCH CIRCLES

### 2006-2007 FACULTY GRANT RESEARCH RECIPIENT

“Elucidating the Evolution of Alternative Spliced Exons within the Arthropod Lineage of the DSCAM Family”

**The Center for Undergraduate Research (CUR):** What made you choose your student assistants?

**Dr. Stassi DiMaggio (Dr. DiMaggio):** I chose students who were very eager to be involved in research for the education and the experience, not just for the ability to add it to their resume. All of my students are enthusiastic about the project and enjoy the process of research. They also have great lab skills.

**CUR:** In your opinion, what makes your research unique in comparison to other projects?

**Dr. DiMaggio:** It is a highly interdisciplinary project. The project combines organic synthesis, bioconjugate chemistry, nanotechnology/materials science, and cell biology. This allows the students to have a very diverse training through participation in one project.

**CUR:** What is the purpose or goal of your research to your field?

**Dr. DiMaggio:** The short term goal is to study the kinetics of the bioconjugation reaction between organic polymers and biologically active molecules (such as cell penetrating peptides, targeting agents, and anti-tumor drugs). The long term goal is to develop and test new nanotherapeutics as drug delivery systems or gene transfection agents.

**CUR:** After your research is completed what will be your next project?

**Dr. DiMaggio:** Our next project will involve looking at the current syntheses of the polymers and nanotherapeutics and attempting to make them “greener” (environmentally friendly).



**DR. STASSI DIMAGGIO**

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