

## Professor lands \$250,000 grant to help grow Tree of Life

Associate Professor Matthew Julius, biological sciences, and colleagues have been awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) Assembling the Tree of Life Grant that will bring SCSU more than \$250,000.

Assembling the Tree of Life is an NSF research effort designed to reconstruct the evolutionary origins of all living things.

Research at SCSU will focus on the branch of the evolutionary tree that includes more than 100,000 species of heterokont algae, a family of organisms comprising sea plants like kelp. Julius expects the research will contribute data that will facilitate global studies of gene expression, of value to anyone examining the impact of specific environmental cues on algal survival.

Julius is working with investigators at Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, the University of Washington, the University of Texas, the U.S. National Herbarium, Leiden University (Netherlands) and Kobe University (Japan).

The project also will give SCSU students hands-on research experience in evolution, genomics, molecular biology, computational biology and plant biology.



*Image courtesy of  
Tree of Life Web Project  
<http://tolweb.org>*