

Professor sues FSU, wants gift back

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The inventor of synthetic Taxol reportedly is suing Florida State University for renegeing on a deal to create a research center on molecular recognition.

Robert Holton, a FSU chemistry professor for 20 years, said molecular recognition is the process that makes mass production of the cancer-fighting drug possible.

"It's like the Mona Lisa is almost finished, and someone comes and sprays orange paint on it," Holton told the Talahassee (Fla.) Democrat. "We are deeply disappointed that it's come to this, and I might add embarrassed and disgusted."

The newspaper said Taxol royalties made Holton wealthy, while earning more than \$200 million for FSU.

Holton's lawsuit asks a court to order an FSU chemistry-biochemistry building to be constructed as promised, and four endowed professorships created, or order his money returned to him.

If the court doesn't enforce his agreements with FSU, Holton wants the return of an \$11 million gift, with interest, from the MDS Foundation he created. He also wants the return of \$18.5 million from his research lab account, the Democrat reported.

FSU would not comment on the lawsuit.

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