

Thursday, March 29, 2012

## **UC Berkeley, lab get \$35M to study Big Data**

by Patrick Hoge

Federal agencies are giving a combined \$35 million for Big Data research led by the University of California, Berkeley and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory as part of a wider federal effort to find meaning in the deluge of digital information spewing from the computerized gadgets and systems of modern life.

The grants are part of \$200 million in spending the White House unveiled Thursday as part of President Obama's "Big Data Research and Development Initiative."

The Department of Energy is providing \$25 million to establish the Scalable Data Management, Analysis and Visualization Institute, which will be led by Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory and involve six national laboratories and seven universities. It will focus on managing and visualizing data on the Energy Department's supercomputers.

In addition, the National Science Foundation has awarded a five-year, \$10 million grant for U.C. Berkeley's new Algorithms, Machines and People Expedition, which aims to extract information from databases of measurements from sensors, high resolutions images and video, audio, tweets, texts and more.

That effort is being led by Michael Franklin, the first holder of the new Thomas M. Siebel Chair in Computer Science in U.C. Berkeley's Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences.

U.C. Berkeley said researchers will develop an open-source software stack called the Berkeley Data Analysis System that seeks to harness the power of algorithms, machines and human groups.

Some projects are already underway at Cal, including one collecting data from thousands of GPS-enabled mobile devices to provide real-time reports of traffic conditions on roads and highways, and another tapping data from metropolitan planning organizations and other regional agencies to develop models for assessing impacts of land use regulations and transportation policies.