



Seed money. (From l to r) Dr. Sarwan Dhir, FVSU associate professor of biotechnology and director of multiple National Science Foundation programs; Dr. Mark Latimore, FVSU interim head of the agricultural instruction department; Dr. Melinda Davis, FVSU interim chair of the Biology Department; and FVSU President Dr. Larry E. Rivers.

## *Ensuring future growth*

Fort Valley State University announced April 24 a \$2.55 million National Science Foundation grant. It is the largest amount of funding awarded to FVSU by the organization. The funds will provide 25 annual scholarships of \$3,500 to plant science biotechnology majors and students participating in science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs.

The five-year grant will support several initiatives in the interdisciplinary teaching and research area of biotechnology, genomics and bioinformatics. It will also prepare students for graduate school and research jobs. Scholarship awardees will travel across the country to attend scientific meetings where they will present research findings and participate in summer research programs at other top-notch institutions.

"The continuous financial support of NSF will allow us to recruit and provide incentives for highly motivated students who may otherwise choose a different major. It's important that we continue to strengthen our science programs because the number of African Americans entering this field continues to dwindle," said Sarwan Dhir, an associate professor of biotechnology and director of multiple NSF programs at the historically black university.