

USI, Crane continue partnership

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The University of Southern Indiana and the Crane Division, Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC Crane) announced a renewed Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) on Monday, June 22 during an event held on the USI campus. The event included representatives from both USI and Crane including USI President Linda L. M. Bennett and Captain Jeffrey "JT" Elder, commanding officer at NSWC Crane.

"Our relationship with NSWC Crane has elevated our University as a nationally-recognized best practice in technology transfer from the Department of Defense," said Bennett. "We continue to collaborate on strategic initiatives in order to develop a strong ecosystem for innovation in the southern Indiana region."

The USI-Crane partnership has provided USI students with entrepreneurship opportunities through USI-sponsored programs such as Technology Commercialization Academy (TCA), Eagle Innovation Accelerator and Tech on Tap. From these programs hundreds of ideas have been generated utilizing Crane technology and patents, and four start-up businesses have been incorporated and sustained. Furthermore, the formal agreement helps bolster USI's STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) program, intellectual property development and experiential learning opportunities.

"Both USI and Crane are committed to research and discovery of advanced technology initiatives," said Elder. "This collaboration is an added bonus to NSWC Crane because it introduces us to some very bright, technically advanced students while exposing them to the critical technical workload we perform for the Warfighter. This is one of many partnerships that can serve as a pipeline for future employees and the students can benefit by ultimately obtaining great technical jobs right here in southern Indiana."

During the event on Monday, students involved with USI's TCA and Innovation Accelerator programs demonstrated projects they have been working on in recent months. USI student, Logan Hayford of H&H Heating Sources, LLC, demonstrated his product, "Cuisine Caterer". Hayford used a thermal target patent from Crane that has been utilized in sniper training to heat food. H&H Heating Sources is currently working with manufacturers in California to commercialize the Crane technology.

USI and NSWC Crane have operated under a Memorandum of Understanding since 2007 and a PIA since 2009. The ongoing partnership, along with the resulting increase in learning opportunities for USI faculty and students, led to the creation of a full-time position at USI dedicated to management of the USI-Crane partnership. In addition, the partnership helps support several components of the University's strategic plan, including enhanced experiential learning opportunities and providing leadership to both Indiana and the region.

NSWC Crane is located in Martin County, on the third largest naval installation in the world. It is also one of Indiana's largest high-tech employers with over 2,000 scientists, engineers and technicians. As USI's partnership with Crane continues, local industries will see further benefits from the commercialization of military technology coming out of Crane.

For more information on the USI-Crane partnership visit: www.usi.edu/outreach/usi-crane-partnership