

INL Intelligence

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A high-level monthly briefing on operations and activities at the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory
Work at the lab advances the Department's strategic priorities of energy security,
nuclear security, scientific discovery and environmental responsibility.

■ INL Technologies Give Boost to Clean Biodiesel

For most of the past few years, talk of biodiesel invariably centered on its production from soybean or palm oil. Because those raw materials are also used to feed millions of people around the world, there's been a lot of controversy about diverting them to fuel cars, trucks and heavy machinery. There's been some discussion about using nonfood plants like jojoba and jatropha as the feedstock, but what if the technology could be developed that opens up a much broader range of raw materials for use in biodiesel production? That question has been asked ... and a new answer developed by researchers at INL. Through the application of an advanced catalysis technique, lab researchers have worked with industry to efficiently produce biodiesel from substances ranging from restaurant grease trap residue to the slime that clogs filters at wastewater treatment plants.

■ Science Advocacy Organization Honors INL Leaders

A community science advocacy group has recognized two longtime INL employees for their contributions to the energy field. The Partnership for Science and Technology honored Harold Blackman and Stephen Herring during its recent annual awards banquet. Herring, a prominent researcher and INL fellow, was named this year's nuclear energy advocate while Blackman, director of the Center for Advanced Energy Studies, received the organization's first energy education advocate award. The Partnership for Science and Technology is a nonprofit organization that advocates for advancement of science, energy and technology. Its mission is to provide accurate information on energy-related regional activities, including those at INL.

■ Education Expos Attract Thousands

Science and engineering expos at Northwest Nazarene University and Boise State University attracted thousands of students from across southwest Idaho to a series of interactive workshops and presentations the last week of January. The expos, long sponsored by INL in partnership with other leading technology companies and institutions, are designed to raise awareness of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers and encourage students to get the education necessary to pursue them. The regional STEM outreach activities culminated in Discover Engineering Day on the BSU campus.

■ INL Researcher Achieves Fellow Status

A renowned nuclear reactor physicist with a career spanning more than 35 years has been selected as an INL Laboratory Fellow. Dr. Giuseppe "Pino" Palmiotti has joined the elite ranks held by only nine others at the lab. The designation of Laboratory Fellow is INL's top scientific achievement and recognizes an individual's outstanding contributions to the scientific and engineering community. In the selection of Palmiotti, it was noted his work has been the basis for transforming reactor physics from an empirical discipline into a strong, science-based endeavor. "It is really a great honor being selected for the highest technical ranking of the lab, and being in such a prestigious company," said Palmiotti.

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