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 mission to ensure America's security and prosperity by addressing its energy, environmental and nuclear challenges through transformative science and technology solutions.

■ INL Scientists Again Gain International Acclaim

INL researchers were informed late this month that they had earned R&D 100 awards for two of three nominated technologies during the 2011 international competition hosted by R&D Magazine. The winning INL technologies offered two firsts in research – the capability of directly measuring the impedance in an operating battery and a highly effective chemical-foam-clay decontamination process tailored to specific radiological and metal contaminants. "INL's world-class research is showcased by these two winning technologies," said David Hill, INL deputy director for Science & Technology. "Our dedicated and talented researchers demonstrated their skill and innovation in earning R&D 100 awards this year. We are very proud of them and the research conducted at the laboratory." INL researchers have now won a total of 46 R&D 100 awards since 1986.

■ National Researchers Attend User Conference in Idaho

A record-breaking number of participants – more than 160 – gathered for the third annual INL Advanced Test Reactor National Scientific User Facility Users Week June 6-10 at University Place in Idaho Falls. The event brought together students, faculty and top industry and national laboratory researchers from 32 universities, various DOE laboratories and private industry. Participants had the opportunity to network, share their research and learn about the latest techniques and capabilities in nuclear science and engineering. Participants also had the opportunity to tour INL's nuclear facilities. "We're pleased that more and more people are taking advantage of this singular opportunity," said ATR National Scientific User Facility Scientific Director Todd Allen.

■ Idaho Schools Benefit from Battelle Grants

Chemistry programs at both Idaho Falls and Skyline high schools are $5,000 richer thanks to the generosity of recent Battelle Innovation awards for research achievements at INL. Two technologies developed at the lab received $5,000 to be donated to area schools as part of the inaugural Gordon Battelle prizes for scientific discovery and technology impact. The INL technologies were the Supercritical Solid Catalyst (SSC) and the Next Generation Fuel for High Temperature Gas Cooled Reactors, which was developed in collaboration with Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Each award included a $5,000 grant for the school of the researchers' choice.

■ Universities, INL to Combine Computing Capabilities

INL has signed an agreement with Idaho's three universities to pool computing resources in support of the state's research community. The agreement formally establishes the Idaho Computing Consortium, composed of INL, Boise State University, Idaho State University and University of Idaho – all of whom are partners in the Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES). "The Idaho universities and INL have shown through CAES what they can accomplish when they work together," said J.W. "Bill" Rogers Jr., CAES director. "We expect the same to occur with the Idaho Computing Consortium. This agreement will allow the Idaho universities to pool their computing resources so they can better compete for research funding."

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Idaho National Laboratory