



News Advisory

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Work at ECBC Earns Genovese, Funk 2010 FLC Awards

Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. — The U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC), the premier national resource for chemical and biological defense, announced that the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer (FLC) recently honored ECBC employees Jim Genovese and Shawn Funk for their contributions in transferring technology to the private sector over the past year.

Genovese, a chemist within the Center's Engineering Directorate, was recognized for the development of a relatively harmless training composition that simulates the effects of chemical agent. The Chemical Agent Simulant Training Kit (CASTK) offers military and civilian first responders the ability to receive proper training on the correct handling of chemical contaminants without injuring trainees.

"FLC is an honor to receive because it is competed nationally and reflects the hard work that goes into growing and developing intellectual property," Genovese said.

Using his expertise as a mechanical engineer, Funk worked to create a product that would eliminate the need for military and civilian first responders and HAZMAT teams to enter areas of suspected chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) hazards in order to use handheld detectors, potentially placing them at risk. The CBRN Unmanned Ground Vehicle (CUGV), which allows personnel to conduct CBRN reconnaissance operations from a safe location, was the result of those efforts.

Recognizing that these technologies may assist not only the warfighter but also other government entities, industry and academia, ECBC has successfully transitioned both innovations for broader use and production. A nonexclusive patent licensing agreement developed with Modec, Inc., prompted the commercialization of CASTK, making the kit available to the company's private and government customers.

"Getting a technology to the market level is a daunting process that requires patience, persistence, professionalism and pride," Genovese said. "These innovation processes will help propel our scientists and engineers from ideas and inventions to prototypes and products."

The Center also worked with iRobot Corporation to establish a cooperative research and development agreement (CRADA) for the further maturation of the CUGV, which enabled the transition of technical data to iRobot Corporation, to develop a commercial source of the technology for quick procurement by military and homeland security personnel in times of urgent need.

"The commercial sector can often respond faster, and is often able to provide much larger quantities at lower cost than a government laboratory can manage," Funk said. "This is relevant with the CUGV because there was a lot of interest generated as a result of the Advanced Technology Demonstration and other customers emerged."

The FLC Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer recognizes science and technology employees in FLC laboratories who have accomplished outstanding work in the process of transferring federally developed technology. A panel of experts from industry, state and local government, academia, and the federal laboratory system judge the nominations.

Organized in 1974 and chartered by the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986 to promote and strengthen technology transfer, the FLC is a nationwide network of more than 700 major federal laboratories, centers, parent departments and agencies that provides the forum to develop strategies and opportunities for linking laboratory mission technologies and expertise with the marketplace. Among many things, the FLC develops and tests transfer methods, provides training and calls attention to national initiatives concerning technology transfer.

For more information on the FLC or the Laboratory Director of the Year award go to:
<http://www.federallabs.org>.

For more information about ECBC, visit <http://www.ecbc.army.mil/>.

ECBC is the Army's principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering and field operations. ECBC has achieved major technological advances for the warfighter and for our national defense, with a long and distinguished history of providing the Armed Forces with quality systems and outstanding customer service. ECBC is a U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command laboratory located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. For more information about the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, please visit our Web site at <http://www.ecbc.army.mil> or call (410) 436-7718.