Lockheed Martin, University Of Florida To Develop And Launch Five Miniature Satellites

Lockheed Martin has partnered with the University of Florida to develop and launch five miniature satellites to test innovative new space solutions. Building on the corporation's 50-year legacy of space exploration, Lockheed Martin will fund $450,000 of research and development projects at the university in 2009.

Lockheed Martin Information Systems & Global Services and the University of Florida will use these satellites to investigate technological advances such as miniaturized, space-hardened GPS electronics and state-of-the-art intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. Lockheed Martin will also perform payload data analysis for these satellite missions.

The satellites, called CubeSats, are built in the shape of a cube, measuring 10 centimeters (less than four inches) on each side. They operate on a power output similar to a cell phone and weigh less than 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds). CubeSats can be built and launched relatively inexpensively and in a matter of months, compared to more sophisticated satellites that weigh thousands of pounds and cost millions of dollars to develop and launch.

"We are pleased to partner with the University of Florida to continue exploring space technology with their students and academic staff," said Bill Graham, president of Lockheed Martin's Enterprise Integration Group.

"The University of Florida is looking forward to working with Lockheed Martin," said Dr. David P. Norton, Associate Dean for the College of Engineering's Research and Graduate Programs. "This relationship not only creates exciting new opportunities for our faculty and students, but it provides a robust conduit for applying Lockheed Martin's systems integration expertise for an emerging technology."

The university's principal investigator on this project is Dr. Gloria J. Wiens, director of the Space, Automation and Manufacturing Mechanisms Laboratory, and her co-investigators Drs. Janise McNair and Anil Rao. These activities will complement the work of the Advanced Space Technologies Research & Engineering Center (ASTREC), led by the University of Florida's Dr. Norman Fitz-Coy. ASTREC is an Industry/University Cooperative Research Center under the National Science Foundation that works with the space industry to incorporate and evaluate technological innovations in their true operational environment.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 146,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2008 sales of $42.7 billion.

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