

Lockheed Martin Backs Year Of Nano At Rice

Birthplace of nanotechnology to host gala, symposium, sculpture garden

PRNewswire
BETHESDA, Md.

Lockheed Martin and Rice University are celebrating the 25th anniversary of a breakthrough that has advanced technology in fields from medicine to baseball. Lockheed Martin is sponsoring the Year of the Nano, Rice's celebration of the Nobel Prize-winning discovery of the buckminsterfullerene molecule -- the "buckyball" -- that enables nanotechnology.

The buckyball, a perfect, soccer ball-shaped molecule of 60 carbon atoms, is one of the toughest materials in nature. Its discovery in 1985 by Nobel Prize winners Richard Smalley and Robert Curl of Rice and Harold Kroto of Florida State University, along with Rice researchers James Heath and Sean O'Brien, kicked off an era of nanotech research.

"Nano is revolutionizing modern technology just as plastics did generations ago," says Dr. Ray O Johnson, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer at Lockheed Martin. "As a global security company, Lockheed Martin looks to our scientists and engineers to come up with innovative solutions for the future. In so many ways, nanotechnology is that future. That's why we are proud to partner with Rice on this event."

Lockheed Martin and Rice already share a unique and productive partnership on the cutting edge of nanotechnology: the Lockheed Martin Advanced Nanotechnology Center of Excellence at Rice (LANCER) in Houston. LANCER is where some of the top researchers in academia tackle the high-tech industry's toughest problems. The goal of the facility is to get nanotechnology out of the lab and into our lives.

The Year of Nano, presented by Lockheed Martin, will include a series of events throughout 2010 capped by a symposium in October that will bring to campus some of the biggest names in carbon nanotechnology research. Curl, Kroto, Heath, and O'Brien will talk about their discovery and the subsequent development of nanotechnology into the focal point of researchers around the world. Smalley died in 2005.

The symposium week begins on October 10 with the 10-10-10 Gala, hosted by Rice's Richard E. Smalley Institute for Nanoscale Science and Technology. The event will celebrate the history of nanotechnology at Rice and support the future of a field that has the potential to remake the energy industry, medical care, materials science, and more.

"The Smalley Institute is grateful to Lockheed Martin for helping us put on the Year of Nano in a way that the 25th anniversary of the buckyball deserves," says Wade Adams, the institute's director. "Thanks to Lockheed's support, we can do a high-caliber symposium as well as many other events that will display Rice's pioneering role and leadership in the field of nanotechnology."

The symposium will feature talks by a number of nanotechnology pioneers, including Andreas Hirsch, Organic Chemistry Chair at the Friedrich-Alexander-Universitat Erlangen-Nurnberg; Phaedon Avouris, an IBM Fellow and manager of Nanometer Scale Science and Technology at the IBM Thomas J. Watson Research Center in New York; Hongjie Dai, the J.G. Jackson-C.J. Wood Professor of Chemistry at Stanford University; Millie Dresselhaus, Institute Professor and professor of physics and electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Marvin Cohen, University Professor at the University of California-Berkeley and a senior faculty scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; Andre Geim, professor of condensed matter physics at the University of Manchester; Morinobu Endo, professor of electrical and electronic engineering, Faculty of Engineering at Shinshu University and Donald Huffman, professor emeritus of physics at the University of Arizona.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 140,000 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 2009 sales of \$45.2 billion.

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First Call Analyst: Randa Middleton
FCMN Contact:

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