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University Teams To Focus On Visual Analytics To Thwart Terrorism

Richland WA (SPX) Jan 18, 2006

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory has awarded contracts to four university teams to support the Department of Homeland Security's mission with the National Visualization and Analytics Center. These contracts will establish regional visualization centers and will bring academic expertise to the nation's efforts to discover information that may warn officials of a terrorist attack before it can be carried out.



PNNL, which leads NVACTM, announced the Regional Visualization and Analytics Center teams this week. They are: University of North Carolina at Charlotte and Georgia Institute of Technology; Purdue University and Indiana University School of Medicine; Pennsylvania State University; and University of Washington.

Jim Thomas, PNNL's chief scientist for information technologies and NVACTM director, says, "Beyond developing innovative technologies, NVAC and the RVACs also have the responsibility to stimulate the next generation of talent that's required for both invention and operation of the field's new suite of tools. This means a steady flow of staff exchanges, building new curriculums, and hosting interdisciplinary workshops and conferences among academia, industry and other laboratories."

University of North Carolina at Charlotte and Georgia Institute of Technology

UNC Charlotte and Georgia Tech will develop techniques and tools to assist homeland security analysts and then combine the tools in an artificial analytic reasoning system. The system will analyze enormous multimedia databases, such as the data generated by the Web in the forms of text, imagery, video and

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Purdue University and Indiana University School of Medicine

Purdue and IUSM will perform research that will allow homeland security personnel at all levels to quickly and effectively extract, visually analyze and synthesize information so that they can make quick and accurate decisions. The team will focus on three homeland security areas – intelligence analysis; emergency planning and response; and healthcare monitoring and management.

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Pennsylvania State University

Penn State will develop visualization tools designed to extract and safely store pertinent information, such as place and time, from a variety of data formats which can help analysts anticipate, prevent and respond to major events. Armed with this information, researchers will develop new methods to integrate the data and visualization tools to uncover and interpret emergent patterns.

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University of Washington

UW will establish a Pacific Rim regional center, which includes experts from UW, British Columbia, Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii. Industrial partners include the Boeing Company and ChangeTools, of Huntsville, Ala. Rather than individuals analyzing data, the interdisciplinary team will work together to conduct their analysis, a process known as "collaborative visual analytics."

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With today's announcement, PNNL has established five Regional Visualization and Analytics Centers. The first, Stanford University, was announced in February 2005.

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DHS established NVACTM in 2004 to provide scientific guidance and coordination for the research and development of new tools and methods that DHS has identified as required for managing, visually representing, and analyzing enormous amounts of diverse data and information.

Development of these visualization tools will enable analysts to more effectively identify signs of terrorist attacks in their earliest stages and ultimately to prevent terrorist plots before they occur. The four core responsibilities of NVACTM are research and development; education; technology evaluation and implementation; and integration and coordination of research programs across government agencies.

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Raytheon IDS Opens Athena Fusion Center

Tewksbury MA (SPX) Dec 13, 2005

Demonstrating an affordable and proven capability to strengthen America's port security, Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems (IDS) officials and Rhode Island legislative leaders recently commemorated the opening of the Athena Maritime Domain Awareness Fusion Center with a ribbon cutting ceremony.



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