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Nuclear Engineering Education Gains Momentum from Navy Partnership

Manhattan, KS – Nuclear engineering is giving Kansas State University a boost in its growing relationship with the armed forces.

The US Navy is working with K-State and its higher education partners to expand nuclear engineering education for Big 12 students and Nave personnel alike. Officials from The Big 12 Engineering Consortium – led by K-State – and the US Navy Naval Nuclear Propulsion and Naval Recruiting Command signed a Memorandum of understanding February 11 on board a submarine off the coast of San Diego.

“K-State’s longstanding expertise in nuclear engineering is one of the assets that position us to become a top 50 public research university,” said K-State President Kirk Schultz. “It’s rewarding to see our leadership in nuclear engineering not only benefitting neighboring Big 12 Universities but also allowing K-State to expand our military partnerships.”

The Big 12 Engineering Consortium allows student across the partnership to take online nuclear engineering courses from K-State, Iowa State, Texas A&M, University of Missouri, University of Kansas, University of Texas at Austin while earning the credit at their home institution.

By working with the Navy, the consortium can give students the opportunity to interface with the Navy’s nuclear professionals. Faculty will become familiar with Naval nuclear engineering job opportunity that might interest their students. Moreover, the students will have the opportunity to go onboard Naval vessels and vie for summer internship positions.

In turn, the consortium offers online undergraduate and graduate engineering education to Navy personnel. The consortium is an ideal vehicle for the Navy because it connects students and educators at a distance, said Lt. Yancy Woodward.

“Lifelong education is a top priority in the Navy,” Woodward said. Being part of the Big 12 Consortium gives us the opportunity to have nuclear engineers teach courses and also provide personnel with an avenue for graduate education.”

The collaboration allows the Navy an opportunity to make its nuclear engineering efforts more visible to students and faculty.

“Partnering with the Navy will ensure that our at-a-distance engineering programs engage students and enhance their knowledge so they are prepared to positively impact society when they graduate,” said Sue Maes, dean of K-State’s college of continuing education.

Mo Hosni, who directs the Big 12 Engineering Consortium, said he was grateful to the U.S. Navy Naval Nuclear Propulsion and Naval Recruiting Command for supporting the consortium.

“Undoubtedly the Big 12 Engineering Consortium, the Navy Nuclear Trained Personnel, faculty and student will benefit tremendously from this agreement,” Hosni said. “K-State prides itself on being recognized as one of the top military-friendly colleges and universities in the nation. We are honored to have an opportunity to work with the U.S. Navy by offering nuclear engineering course, offering distance education program, and hosting Navy officers.”

K-State has been a leader in nuclear engineering since the field’s infancy. In 1958, K-State was the third U.S. university to create a nuclear engineering program behind the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Michigan. In 1964, K-State’s program earned the distinction of being the first to gain accreditation.

“The strengths of our nuclear engineering program continue to be recognized through partnerships such as this,” said John English, dean of the College of Engineering. “I see only positive outcomes from this new alliance between the U.S. Navy and the Big 12 Engineering Consortium.”