Penn State Electro-Optics Center Receives the 2015 Defense Manufacturing Technology Achievement Award

FREEPORT, Pa. — The Electro-Optics Center of the Pennsylvania State University was recently awarded the Department of Defense (DoD) 2015 Defense Manufacturing Technology Achievement Award for successful execution of the F-35 Electro-Optical Targeting System (EOTS) Producibility program. This award, presented at the 2015 Defense Manufacturing Conference, recognizes and honors those individuals from government and the private sector most responsible for outstanding technical accomplishments that further the achievement of the vision of the Department of Defense (DoD) Manufacturing Technology (ManTech) Program. That vision is to "realize a responsive world-class manufacturing capability to affordably meet the Warfighters' needs throughout the defense system life cycle." The F-35 EOTS Producibility ManTech program put significant improvements in place, which will potentially save the Government over $117 million in production costs, improving manufacturing readiness and enabling the F-35 Joint Program Office (JPO) to meet production cost and rate targets while also benefitting other platforms which use this sensor technology.

This program demonstrated exemplary collaboration between multi-service DoD ManTech institutions including the Penn State Electro-Optics Center (Penn State EOC), Santa Barbara Focalplane (a Lockheed Martin Missle and Fire Control Business, Lockheed Martin Corporation), the Air Force Research Lab (AFRL Materials & Manufacturing Directorate, Manufacturing Technology Division, Electronics Branch), OSD Defense-Wide Manufacturing Science and Technology (DMS&T), the Office of Naval Research (ONR ManTech), and the F-35 JPO.

Amanda Gentry, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Science and Technology Team Lead and Chair of the F-35 Production Affordability Board commended the program:

“The dedication and attention to detail displayed by the PS-EO [Penn State EOC] management team was critical to the programs overwhelming success. Being able to drive and maintain the close working relationship with not only the Joint Program Office but also its two prime contractors (Lockheed Martin Santa Barbara Focal Plane and Missile and Fire Control) became a key element to the program's success and ability to meet and exceed its cost savings threshold. The strong management skills employed by the PS-EO team are a model for other F-35 JPO ManTech programs - allowing full transition and technology implementation...”

This program was managed by Matthew DiGioia (PSU, B.S. Aerospace Engineering, 2011), a Penn State EOC engineer with experience in sensors, robotics, and automation. Since 1999, the Penn State Electro-Optics Center has served as the ONR Manufacturing Technology Center of Excellence for Electro-Optics. Dave Ditto, the Director of the EOC’s ManTech Center of Excellence, has been involved since its inception. Penn State EOC’s mission is to reduce acquisition, operational, and life-cycle costs while simultaneously improving the mission capability of electro-optic military hardware and enabling transition of technology to industry and ultimately to the Warfighter. Penn State EOC and the partner members of its Electro-Optics Alliance (EOA) have completed over 65 ManTech projects with savings in excess of $1 billion to taxpayers. The Electro-Optics Center, a proud part of The Pennsylvania State University, is a hybrid between the best components of a university and those of private industry. The EOC is located approximately 30 miles northeast of Pittsburgh, PA.

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