

NEWS FROM...

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Science Foundation grant launches Mid-Pacific ICT (MPICT) Regional Center at City College of San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, November 14, 2008 — The National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded a \$3 million Advanced Technological Education (ATE) grant over four years to establish the Mid-Pacific Information and Communications Technologies (MPICT) Regional Center, which will be headquartered at City College of San Francisco (CCSF).

Congresswoman Jackie Speier (D-San Francisco-San Mateo), announces, “This grant from the National Science Foundation will not only benefit the thousands of students in CCSF’s Computer Networking and Information Technology Department, but the entire community by helping to train the next generation of innovators who are so vital to the economy of the greater San Francisco Bay Area.”

MPICT’s mission is to coordinate, promote and improve the quality of ICT education, with an emphasis on two-year colleges, in a region consisting of northern California, northern Nevada, southern Oregon, Hawaii and the Pacific Territories.

“I am very pleased to see the launch of the Mid-Pacific ICT Center at City College of San Francisco,” says CCSF Trustee John Rizzo, Chair of the Board’s Technology Committee. “Business is increasingly relying on information technology and network security and needs qualified employees to run the systems.”

“City College of San Francisco is very pleased to host the new Mid-Pacific Center in partnership with Ohlone College, Foothill College, Santa Rosa Junior College and Cabrillo College, as well as other community colleges,” says Dr. Don Q. Griffin, Interim Chancellor. “It is great to see community colleges collaborating to realize efficiencies and mutual benefits for our communities,” he adds.

ICT is an umbrella term, widely used outside the U.S. and in the U.N., to encompass all rapidly converging computer, software, networking, telecommunications, Internet, programming and information systems technologies. MPICT will leverage the abundant ICT industry and academic resources of the San Francisco Bay Area and Silicon Valley to enrich educational experiences and outcomes for faculty and students throughout its region.

MPICT Principal Investigator Dr. Pierre Thiry states, “ICT industry representatives care deeply about ICT education and want to contribute toward its improvement and success. However, they cannot or will not interact individually with 100+ community colleges in the State of California alone. MPICT will serve as an efficient vehicle to improve ICT educational programs throughout the region and across the U.S.”

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MPICT Executive Director James Jones says, “In the 21st Century, we all increasingly depend on information and communications technologies and the increased connectivity and productivity they enable. Improvements to deployed ICT solutions — and people’s abilities to use them productively — are issues of tremendous strategic importance, to individuals and their families, organizations of all kinds, and local, state, national and global economies.”

Judy C. Minor, President of Foothill College, notes, “Many of the world’s leading information and communications technology companies are based or have important operations within our college district. Silicon Valley is synonymous with technological innovation throughout the world. Many of our students come from families involved in technology, and we experience great demand for technical education services and competent ICT technicians to support employers throughout our area.”

Robert Agrella, President of Santa Rosa Junior College, states, “ICT plays a key role in every student’s life and, directly or indirectly, in every student’s career. We need strategies and solutions for improving technical education throughout the region being served by MPICT and we see very clear and compelling benefits to participating in the MPICT Center.”

Jim Wright, Vice President, Academic Affairs, Ohlone College, says, “Computers are still the cornerstones of new communication systems, connecting multi-media networks which link information through fiber optic, microwave telephone or satellite media. Ohlone College’s Computers, Networks and Emerging Technology department has long been involved in preparing students to build and support ICT infrastructure and systems that support these communication highways.”

Dr. Brian King, Superintendent/President, Cabrillo College, notes, “We are particularly proud of our efforts at developing innovative programs that capitalize on education, workforce development and industry partnerships.”

Jim Dolgonas, President and CEO of the Corporation for Educational Networking Initiatives in California (CENIC), points out, “We believe information and communications technologies (ICT) are an important foundation on which much of modern productivity and current knowledge and information economies depend. We need competent information and communications technologies technicians to make our economies and enterprises efficient.”

Jim LeValley, Global Education Programs Director, Microsoft Learning, says, “MPICT is a shining example of education focused public-private partnerships to drive economic development. Working together with MPICT we will as an industry assure the next generation of workers have the technology skills necessary to further advance science and remain competitive.

For more information on the MPICT Center, please email Principal Investigator Dr. Pierre Thiry pthiry@mpict.org or Executive Director James B. Jones jjones@mpict.org or telephone (415) 239-3600.

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*Note to the Editors: Photographs from the Press Conference are available upon request.
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