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Systems Engineering Body of Knowledge Honored with Prestigious INCOSE Award

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Systems Engineering Body of Knowledge Honored with Prestigious INCOSE Award

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Article By: MC1 Grant P. Ammon

Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Professor of Systems Engineering (SE), Dr. Dave Olwell, and his colleague, Stevens Institute of Technology Distinguished Research Professor Dr. Art Pyster, earned "Product of the Year" honors from the International Council on Systems Engineering (INCOSE) during a ceremony held in Jacksonville, Fla., Jan. 26-29.

The Product of the Year Award is given annually to the INCOSE product that provides the most significant value to INCOSE's stakeholders.

Formally recognized during INCOSE's International Workshop, Pyster and Olwell served as lead principal investigator and co-principal investigator, respectively, on the Body of Knowledge and Curriculum to Advance Systems Engineering (BKCASE) project.

"The (BKCASE team) has done an outstanding job in the development of this SE repository of information and training guidance," said INCOSE President John Thomas. "The world's systems thinkers and engineers are already benefiting from these efforts. INCOSE is proud to have provided many experts to assist in the success of this endeavor."

Launching in 2009, the BKCASE project involved the creation of a Systems Engineering Body of Knowledge (SEBoK) and the creation of an Advanced Graduate Reference Curriculum for Systems Engineering (GRCSE).

"This project will have a wide-ranging and deep effect on the practice of systems engineering," said Olwell. "It was completed on-time, on-budget, and exceeded expectations."

The SEBoK, published Sept. 2012, is the recognized and authoritative source of information on the systems engineering discipline, consisting of hundreds of articles, glossary terms and links to resources.

"With the SEBoK, we organized the knowledge for systems engineering so it is understandable and has a clear taxonomy and structure," said Pyster. "There are articles about each major topic in the discipline, more articles on how they relate to each other, and information on the primary references for systems engineering."

GRCSE, which was published in Dec. 2012, provides a standardized set of curriculum and content recommendations to align academia with current systems engineering research and to guide the development and improvement of graduate degree programs in systems engineering.

Both projects are published online, with the SEBoK publishing in Wiki format, that enables content to be easily updated, constantly kept fresh, and reflective of the latest knowledge and best practices from the systems engineering community.

"GRCSE provides a common set of content for graduate systems engineering programs across the world. It was built by consensus and peer review, and is a very important advancement for systems engineering educators," said Olwell.

Other NPS faculty on the team of 70 authors included Dr. Ray Madachy, Prof. Chuck Calvano, and Ms. Stephanie Enck.

"The success is due first to the leadership and vision of my colleague Art Pyster," said Olwell. "And also to the tremendous support we received from our partners, sponsors, and most especially, our 70 volunteer authors."

The BKCASE project was conducted through the Systems Engineering Research Center (SERC), a U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) led by Stevens where Pyster serves as deputy executive director.

NPS is a founding member of the SERC. The SERC works to improve the application of systems engineering within government and industry, with 17 universities participating.

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Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Professor of Systems Engineering, Dr. Dave Olwell, left, Mr. John Thomas, President of INCOSE, center, and Dr. Art Pyster, Distinguished Research Professor at the Stevens Institute of Technology, right, stand for a photo with 2012 "Product of the Year" plaques. Courtesy photo by Dr. Tim Ferris, University of South Australia.