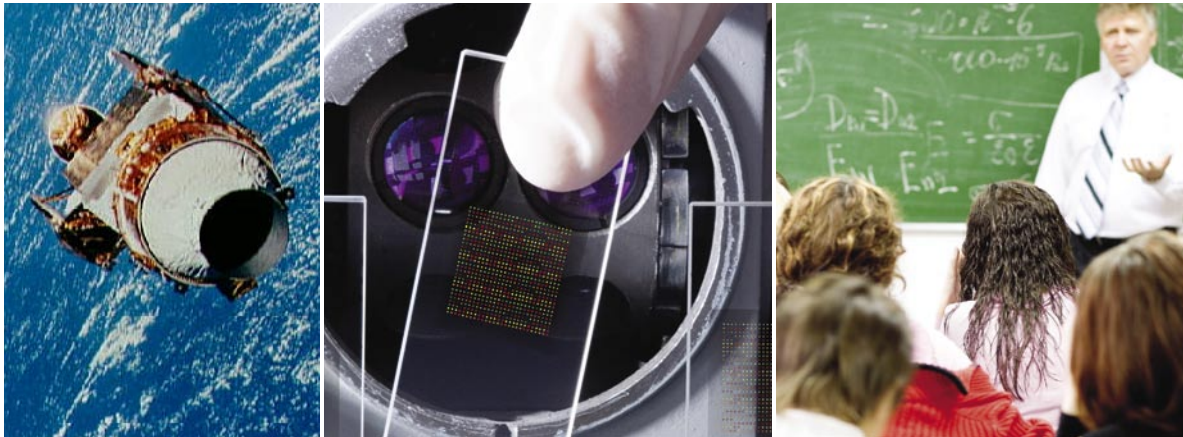




NASA Goddard Gives Howard Community College Students Hands-On Assessment Experience



Beginning with the Fall 2006 semester, students at Howard Community College (HCC) have the opportunity to attend a new Technology Assessment Program (TAP) course supported in part by technologies and innovators from NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. During the course, students will be assessing technologies from Goddard as well as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL). Future semesters will also include technologies from the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) and the Army Research Laboratory (ARL).

Students will work with inventors and local business mentors to assess the commercial viability of the inventions and develop written assessment reports. They will present findings and recommendations at an open event attended by students, researchers, prospective entrepreneurs, local business representatives, and technology transfer experts. The experience will introduce them to career options in science, technology, research, and business as well as teach them skills necessary in an innovative enterprise.

Benefits of Technology Transfer

- The agreement will enhance NASA's strategic technology objectives, providing Goddard with information about potential applications and licensing opportunities for possible technology transfer efforts.
- NASA researchers will collaborate with future academic, law, and business leaders who may be well positioned to work on future technology licensing efforts.
- HCC students will gain hands-on experience interacting with innovators, assessing technologies, and developing marketing recommendations.
- HCC will benefit from the recognition and prestige NASA's participation in its program may yield.
- Future consumers of products that may result from technologies the students assess will benefit from this collaboration between the HCC and Goddard.

tech transfer success

On the Record

“The NSF Partnerships TAP Program at Howard Community College provides real-life educational opportunities for students, while supporting NASA Goddard’s efforts to benefit the public through technology transfer.” – *Wayne Swann, HCC, Class Instructor and Director of Technology Transfer at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.*

“We’re excited about this opportunity to help inspire and motivate students to pursue careers in science, engineering, and mathematics as well as receiving insights into the development of a business process for the commercialization of Goddard technologies.” – *Ted Mecum, Innovative Partnerships Program Office, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center*

About HCC’s Technology Assessment Program

Howard Community College established the TAP under a National Science Foundation “Partnerships for Innovation” grant in collaboration with Goddard Space Flight Center, The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL), Howard County Economic Development Authority, Howard County Public School System, and the business community. As part of the “Technology Transfer from Invention to Marketplace” course, teams of high school, community college, and continuing education students will evaluate a technology, perform market research, and analyze the potential for commercialization. Their findings will be disclosed to U.S. government technology transfer offices.

The program offers a comprehensive strategy to expand the region’s innovation infrastructure and speed transfer of knowledge from the national research enterprise to the private sector. Participating partners like Goddard will enhance entrepreneurial education through a continuum of coursework and teamwork, teach the fundamentals of innovation and technology assessment, and facilitate access to technologies by a growing pool of entrepreneurs.

The Transfer Process

A non-reimbursable Space Act Agreement (SAA) between NASA Goddard and HCC was signed on August 26, 2006. Efforts to establish HCC’s technology assessment program were led by Wayne Swann, director of the technology transfer program at JHU/APL and part-time professor at HCC. Mr. Swann recognized that technology transfer personnel are in short supply and that technology transfer programs are unable to keep pace with assessing and marketing promising innovations. He was familiar with the strengths of Goddard’s technology transfer program through JHU/APL’s past technology collaborations with Goddard as well as Goddard personnel who had spoken at past JHU/APL tech transfer events. In April of 2006, he approached Goddard about participating in the TAP program. The Innovative Partnerships Program Office was excited about a program that would not only assess some of Goddard’s technologies but also accomplish the goal of engaging students and professionals in the innovation enterprise and teach them the fundamentals of technology transfer.

Looking Ahead

The SAA is a three-year agreement. Each semester through June of 2009, Goddard will provide several patented or patent-pending technologies for selection by the class instructor. The student teams will assess the chosen technology, providing valuable insights and ideas for potential markets and applications.

For More Information

If you would like additional information about Goddard’s technology transfer opportunities, please contact:

Innovative Partnerships Program Office
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
e-mail: techtransfer@gsfc.nasa.gov
internet: <http://techtransfer.gsfc.nasa.gov>