



2009 FLC Midwest Region Awards

Partnership Award

The Partnership Award is presented to an American-owned company, a nonfederal government entity, or a college or university in the Midwest Region that has made outstanding efforts to promote either the actual transfer of federal technology or the federal technology transfer program during the 12 months preceding the nomination.

The FLC Midwest Region presented the 2009 Partnership Award to Dr. Susan Ellspermann, founding director of the Center for Applied Research at the University of Southern Indiana, at its 2009 regional meeting in Bloomington, Indiana. Dr. Ellspermann developed an Innovation Discovery Process that is so effective it has exponentially increased disclosures and partnership development at Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Crane Division. Dr. Ellspermann worked with staff at NSWC Crane to conceptualize a panel of experts that would identify potential intellectual property from projects completed by Crane scientists and engineers. Using her expertise, Dr. Ellspermann put together first a pilot program, then a more extensive panel, to train inventors at NSWC Crane on how to “tell the story” of their projects and how to identify commercial opportunities.

The process revealed opportunities that NSWC Crane had previously missed and produced more disclosures in a single session than had been made the previous year. This process has the potential to benefit the wider field of federal technology transfer, and preparations are already underway to expand the process to other federal laboratories. Four other laboratories will observe the next session.