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DoD Creates Corrosion Education Consortium

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The Department of Defense (DoD) Corrosion Policy and Oversight Office is serious about forging partnerships among the military, academia, and private industry. By funding joint military projects and broad-based networking among corrosion control experts in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and NASA, it fosters information sharing to preserve DoD weapons, assets, and infrastructure from corrosion.

But protecting these assets from degradation is daunting. To make progress, corrosion experts need a buy-in from the fabricators and users of the next generation. Fundamentally, that means attracting useful input and supporting their corrosion education efforts both inside and outside the United States.

To fulfill this goal, the DoD Corrosion Office launched a Corrosion Education Consortium (CEC) to involve university experts more closely in DoD-sponsored efforts to combat corrosion. The effort came about after a November 2005 meeting in which members of the University Consortium re-examined their goals and decided to refocus the new consortium's goals more specifically on corrosion awareness and education.

Ralph Adler of the Army Research Laboratory was appointed chairman of the reconstituted Corrosion Education Consortium. The group met for the first time on March 15, at the NACE International annual conference in San Diego.

The new consortium plans to work closely with the NACE Foundation to carry out several educational initiatives. They include encouraging the teaching of corrosion courses within the engineering curriculum of more colleges and universities; helping design corrosion engineering courses for the post-graduate education of the current DoD and industrial workforce; promoting the Office of Naval Research (ONR)/NACE International Research Grant within universities; providing new scholarships and promoting NACE and NACE Foundation scholarship opportunities among university students here and abroad; and developing corrosion-oriented, job-recruitment opportunities for attracting graduating students, and creating faculty sabbaticals to enhance corrosion teaching expertise among the traditional engineering school faculties.

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"With its mix of academic, industrial, and government members, the Corrosion Education Consortium is anxious to meet its challenge to increase the corrosion awareness and knowledge base of the current and future workforce," Adler said. "Thus, our first planned initiative will be to create DoD-sponsored faculty sabbatical opportunities at universities with strong corrosion curricula. These positions will allow staff from engineering schools lacking corrosion courses to enrich their expertise and to enable the teaching of corrosion courses to more engineering students in the future."