

Sandia Workers Received Entrepreneurial Spirit Awards

Jim Pacheco (now in the Active Response and Denial Dept.) received an Entrepreneurial Spirit Award for his participation in Sandia's Entrepreneurial Separation to Transfer Technology (ESTT) program, which encourages researchers to take jobs at startup or expanding businesses.

ESTT was started in 1994, and since then 144 Sandia employees have left the labs, 57 of them to start a business and 85 to help expand an existing one. ESTT has had an impact on 96 companies, most of them in New Mexico.

Pacheco worked in concentrating solar power (CSP) development programs for 15 years after coming to the Labs in 1987. One program was Solar Two, a large solar power plant built in the Mojave Desert near Barstow, California, by 11 organizations led by Southern California Edison Co. in partnership with DOE. Sandia was the technical adviser.

"It demonstrated thermal storage. You could collect energy during the day and dispatch it in the evening or night, producing power when the sun was not shining," Pacheco said. "It was a very successful project in that it led to a number of such power plants being built by other companies around the world."

Pacheco was involved with Solar Two through concept, design, construction, test, and evaluation. He was recruited by several companies when CSP technology took off in the marketplace.

Pacheco left Sandia through ESTT in 2008 and joined eSolar, a Burbank, California, startup that was developing a 5-megawatt commercial demonstration project near Lancaster. He stayed three years. "I helped steer the company toward more advanced technology," Pacheco said.



Jim Pacheco built a reputation in concentrating solar power and was recruited by several companies when the technology took off in the marketplace.
(Photo by Randy Montoya).

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