

New Mexico Small Business Assistance (NMSBA) Program Collaborations Recognized

Ten NMSBA projects that achieved outstanding innovations last year were honored at the program's annual Innovation Celebration Awards event. "NMSBA has been bringing small businesses together with scientists and engineers from Sandia and Los Alamos for more than 12 years. We are grateful to the principal investigators who work with New Mexico's small businesses," said Jackie Kerby Moore, manager of Technology and Economic Development at Sandia. "Together they are implementing innovative ideas and stimulating our state's economy."

Phil Kithil (Atmocean Inc.) partnered with Phillip Fullam (chief engineer of Reytek Corp.) to produce a pump system that converts wave power into electricity. Kithil and Fullam worked with Sandia's Rick Givler (a specialist in modeling physical systems in the Microscale Science and Technology Dept.) to assess the feasibility of their waves-to-electricity concept. Givler proved that, using typical waves and a set number of seawater pumps, considerable pressurized water would reach the onshore array of Pelton water impulse turbines. Givler's findings helped Atmocean attract a six-figure investment to continue product testing, add staff, and boost component manufacturing at Reytek. "Rick's work was absolutely essential to our moving forward with the business model," Kithil said. "We think our system is very viable and we'll do more testing this summer." This collaboration received the first Honorable Speaker Ben Lujan Award for Small Business Excellence as the honoree that demonstrated the most economic impact.

Since its inception, the NMSBA program has provided 2,036 small businesses with more than \$34M worth of research hours and materials. The program has helped create and retain 2,874 New Mexico jobs, increase small companies' revenues by \$145M and decrease their operating costs by \$72.6M. These companies have invested \$43M in other New Mexico goods and services and received \$52M in new funding and financing.



Phil Kithil, left, CEO of Atmocean Inc. of Santa Fe, and Phillip Fullam, chief engineer of Reytek Corp. of Albuquerque, worked with Sandia National Laboratories modeling specialist Rick Givler to assess the feasibility of their pump system that turns wave power into electricity. Givler's findings helped Atmocean attract a six-figure investment for continued product testing and component manufacturing. (Photo by Norman Johnson)

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