

# *A Tribute to Engineering Innovation*<sup>SAND2007-3756P</sup>

*“Engineers build for the future, not merely for the needs of men, but for their dreams as well. Thus, inherently the engineer’s work is a fearless optimism that life will go forward, and that the future is worth working for.”*

*Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1951*

## *Willis Whitfield*

*Sandia National Laboratories Innovator from 1954 to 1984*

In 1959, Willis Whitfield developed a methodology that used unidirectional filtered air to dramatically reduce particle contamination in laboratory environments. His laminar air-flow design, patented in 1962, created the “clean room” environment found in laboratories, medical facilities, space industry, and micro/nanotechnology research and manufacturing throughout the world. The economic and scientific impact of Willis Whitfield’s innovation in contamination control is incalculable.