

LabUPDATE

ISSUE 2 – FEBRUARY 26, 2003

News about the Berkeley, Livermore and Los Alamos national laboratories, which are managed by the University of California for the U.S. Department of Energy

RESEARCH AND PUBLIC SERVICE NEWS

ABC News features Los Alamos security work: A special report on ABC's *World News Tonight* focused on a visit to the Los Alamos lab and an interview with Interim Director George P. "Pete" Nanos by anchor Peter Jennings.

Deterring the threat of nuclear terrorism was the main topic of the report, which traced the lab's Manhattan Project legacy and generally described the work of the lab's Nonproliferation and International Security division. The report noted that United Nations weapons inspectors received training at Los Alamos before traveling to Iraq.

Jennings ended the report by referring to the lab's theme for the commemoration of its 60th anniversary this April: "Ideas that change the world."

Livermore expert traps a killer: The Livermore lab's Forensic Science Center was featured in a CBS *60 Minutes II* report on health care professionals who murder their patients. The report included an interview with Livermore forensic scientist and chemical sleuth Brian Andresen.

Detectives in Southern California approached Andresen for help in their case against "Angel of Death" Efrén Saldivar, a respiratory therapist suspected of administering lethal injections to as many as 200 elderly patients.

The report detailed the extensive efforts Andresen employed to find traces of two drugs Saldivar was suspected of using to paralyze his patients and stop their breathing. Saldivar was convicted and is now serving a life sentence.

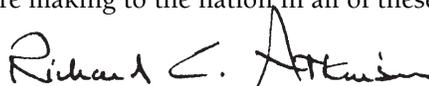
The *60 Minutes II* report described the Livermore center as a place to bring "what seems impossible" and "the lab of last resort" for police officers looking to solve a crime. *(continued on back)*

Message from the president

Welcome to the second issue of "Lab Update," a periodic newsletter from the University of California intended to keep you updated about news at the three national laboratories managed by UC for the Department of Energy.

The University's work to strengthen the business and administrative practices of the Los Alamos National Laboratory continues. As UC representatives told members of Congress at a hearing in Washington on February 26, the University is unwaveringly committed to identifying problems in the laboratory's operations, rectifying those problems, and implementing appropriate systems to prevent their reoccurrence. We are making headway, and the laboratory communities — particularly the committed employees of Los Alamos — have my appreciation for their assistance and support.

At the same time, all three of the UC-managed national laboratories are continuing their tradition of superior science in the national interest. Some of the most significant issues facing our nation and the world are being addressed at the national laboratories. Helping to safeguard the security of the United States, controlling the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction worldwide, and searching for solutions to problems of national and international scope in areas such as health and the environment are all central aspects of the laboratories' mission. I am proud of the contributions the laboratories are making to the nation in all of these areas.



Richard C. Atkinson
President



MANAGEMENT NEWS

UC VOWS TO FIX PROBLEMS, RESTORE CONFIDENCE

The University of California takes full responsibility for the business and administrative problems at the Los Alamos lab and is aggressively implementing the changes necessary to strengthen financial controls, improve the governance of the lab and restore confidence in Los Alamos and UC's management role.

That was the overriding message in Congressional testimony by Bruce B. Darling, UC senior vice president for university affairs and interim vice president for laboratory management. He represented UC today (February 26) in Washington, D.C. before the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Darling summarized the sweeping actions UC has taken at Los Alamos in recent months — including the implementation of leadership changes, internal and external audits, revamped governance structures, tighter business and financial practices, and improved audit and accountability processes.

Committee members asked a range of questions, largely focusing on the purchases of various items at Los Alamos, management responses to employees who questioned those purchases, and UC's actions to rectify the problems. In response, Darling stated his intention to pursue "vigorously and immediately" any new information from the hearing, to implement reforms at the lab in a sustained way with "rigor, discipline and relentlessness," and to restore full confidence in UC management. *(continued on back)*

Berkeley study eyes auto safety: Sport utility vehicles and pickups aren't as safe as many of their owners believe and they can be especially dangerous to other drivers, according to a study by scientists at the Berkeley lab and the University of Michigan.

Believed to be the first of its kind, the study assesses fatalities among drivers of various vehicles and the occupants of vehicles involved in accidents with them. The study comes at a time of growing concern about the social costs of SUVs, which have been attacked as harmful to the environment and U.S. energy goals.

Berkeley lab scientist Mark Wenzel, co-author of the three-year study that has generated national media coverage, said, "We're learning more and more about the dangers of these cars, and now the manufacturers are taking corrective steps."

New UC scholarship for New Mexico students: A scholarship developed by the UC Office of the President and the Los Alamos lab is available to high school and undergraduate transfer students from New Mexico who have applied for UC admission next fall.

The scholarship, administered by the Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation, is designed to defray the cost of non-resident tuition for qualified students from the seven counties and eight American Indian pueblos in northern New Mexico. Applicants from low-income families and first-generation college bound will be given preference for the UC scholarship.

Los Alamos is first to map Mars water: Mars has enough water to support future human exploration, Los Alamos scientists have concluded after nearly a year of mapping the hydrogen content of the planet's surface.

Los Alamos instruments, in orbit 250 miles above the surface aboard NASA's Mars Odyssey, have identified extensive deposits of water-ice near the poles, some close to the surface and others buried beneath several inches of dry soil. The instruments also have mapped smaller amounts of water-equivalent hydrogen elsewhere on the planet. During the Odyssey spacecraft's 1000-day science mission, Los Alamos' neutron spectrometer will continue to measure neutrons from the Martian soil and improve the hydrogen map.

Los Alamos scientist Bill Feldman reported the findings at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

This newsletter provided by the University of California Office of the President. For more news and information visit these sites:

University of California: www.universityofcalifornia.edu
 U.S. Department of Energy: www.energy.gov
 National Nuclear Security Administration: www.nnsa.doe.gov
 Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory: www.lbl.gov
 Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory: www.llnl.gov
 Los Alamos National Laboratory: www.lanl.gov

Please direct questions about this newsletter to Rick Malaspina, University of California Office of the President, (510) 987-9232, rick.malaspina@ucop.edu

Darling also emphasized UC's commitment to focus on maintaining the missions of Los Alamos and the other UC-managed labs in science, technology and national security, particularly at this critical time in world events. He expressed regret that the problems at Los Alamos have detracted from the high-quality work of the lab's thousands of scientists, engineers, technicians and support staff.

"Managing the national security laboratories for the last 60 years has been an honor and an awesome responsibility," he said, "and we will address any challenges that might detract from our ability to fulfill our obligations to the American people."

Throughout this process, Darling said in his testimony, UC will focus on ensuring that:

- Los Alamos' scientific and weapons programs continue to meet their objectives.
- Security operations of the lab meet the nation's expectations.
- The UC-managed Livermore and Berkeley labs meet the same high standards the University is setting for Los Alamos.
- UC continues to strengthen its governance and oversight of the three national laboratories.
- Open and timely communications continue with the Department of Energy, the National Nuclear Security Administration, the committee and Congress, as well as the media, to promptly apprise all interested parties of UC's findings and actions.

"Far from weakening us," Darling said, "this experience has strengthened us; it has further bolstered our resolve to restore the confidence of the nation in the service we are determined to perform in time of peace and in time of war."

The full text of Darling's testimony is available at: universityofcalifornia.edu/news/losalamos/

Audit resolves most of questionable Los Alamos transactions

A comprehensive analysis by the UC Auditor has favorably resolved 96 percent of procurement card transactions at the Los Alamos lab that were previously questioned during an external review.

The new UC audit identified \$195,246 in transactions that are being questioned for their allow ability under the Department of Energy contract, due to incomplete documentation, technical deficiencies (e.g. missing approvals) or other reasons, including documentation destroyed in the Cerro Grande fire.

In addition, continuing UC's aggressive efforts to reform the business practices at Los Alamos, the audit made a series of recommendations for improved management of the procurement card system at the laboratory and requested the laboratory to develop an implementation plan within two weeks.

The report is available at: universityofcalifornia.edu/news/losalamos/reports/audit.pdf