

## IDEA winner saves Air Force millions

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5th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

11/29/2010 - **MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. (AFNS)** - A member of Air Force Global Strike Command from here received the maximum payout of \$10,000 for his submission of the Launch Control Center NetLink System to the Innovated Development through Employees Awareness program.

Douglas Angell, a technical engineer from the 526th Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Systems Group, submitted his idea to the program in 2006, while he was a master sergeant working as a facility manager.

Mr. Angell said this new system was needed because crewmembers could not access the Internet from their workstations while on duty in the LCC.

He said these crewmembers were left to complete their training and other tasks during their off time.

"Crewmembers had to go home or go back to base, and during their time off, they would have to complete their Career Development Courses and other training that others can normally complete during slack time in the office," he said.

Mr. Angell's invention is called the Launch Control Center NetLink, the system responsible for crewmembers having computer access while on duty.

"As I was researching some components, I ran across this technology that would take keyboard, video and mouse signals you would normally have at your desk and would convert those signals to fiber optic light," he said. "The system would then send those signals over fiber optic for miles. This technology allows for crewmembers to control their computers from downstairs while the actual networked computer is upstairs."

Now, with these systems installed in the LCC's, Airmen have the ability to access the Internet and complete work that they previously were unable to do.

Retired Maj. Gen. Thomas F. Deppe, a former Air Force Space Command vice commander, recognized the importance of this system in a memorandum addressed to the major command missile wings.

"LCC NetLink is a system mission tool that is quickly becoming an integral part of the ICBM alert force," he said. "While LCC NetLink is not part of the Minuteman weapon system, it is an operations tool which can expedite information to the LCC. This capability will be used to its fullest for crew productivity and mission-related tasks such as the (Air Force) Portal, performance reports, electronic dispatches, vehicle tracking and weather forecasts."

Mr. Angell said his contribution saved the Air Force more than \$1 million because this system was accomplished within the Air Force and not through a contractor.

"This was technology the Air Force wanted," he said. "They wanted this system and I was able to design it for them. I also manufactured enabling components for this system. This was all done in-house, versus finding a company like Boeing and having their engineers design the system. It would have cost millions of dollars. The



Douglas Angell poses with his invention, the Launch Control Center NetLink, Nov. 23, 2010, at Minot Air Force Base, N.D. The LCC NetLink concept allows personal computing capability to crewmembers while they are on duty at the missile alert facilities. Mr. Angell is a 526th Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Systems Group technical engineer. (U.S. Air Force Photo/Airman 1st Class Aaron-Forrest Wainwright)

total cost of this system, including installation, was \$250,000."

Mark H. Kauer, a 5th Force Support Squadron manpower management analyst, said the IDEA Program is an incentive based program which promotes process improvement and resource savings.

"It encourages Airmen and Air Force employees to look for ways of doing the Air Force business faster, better and cheaper, through program awareness," Mr. Kauer said.

"This program enables our force providers to provide combatant commanders the necessary resources in a more timely and efficient manner," he said.

For more information on how to submit an idea to this program, visit the IDEA website at <https://ipds.randolph.af.mil>.