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Welcome to the January 2002 edition of the MSCI online newsletter. There are various items of interest in this edition including employment and training opportunities, the upcoming Geomatics 2002 Conference, news from the community college front, and news of a partnership contract between Digital Globe and SPOT Image Corporation.

As was highlighted in the December newsletter, MSCI ended Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2001, with 33 member companies that employ 255 people and have invested over \$43 million in the state of Mississippi since 1998. As an update on the successes of the industry cluster, MSCI is pleased to tell about developments with two of our member companies that have happened as a result of MSCI funded research and development of strategic partnerships between MSCI member companies.

First, AeroAstro has developed and commercialized SENS (Sensor Enabled Notification System) technology and its application to in-situ remote sensing. They have signed a major exclusive telecommunications agreement with a global satellite communications provider with a potential value in the tens of millions of dollars. This has pushed AeroAstro eight years ahead into their business plan. An order has been placed for 1,000,000 field units and the satellite service provider has contributed about \$400,000 to the system development.

The sensor technology is being applied for airport noise monitoring and has resulted in strategic partnerships with PixSell and AeroTec. Demonstrations have been conducted at the Gulfport/Biloxi International Airport and Columbus AFB.

Secondly, AeroTec has developed and commercialized remote sensing technologies and applications/analysis products for the Department of Defense. They are now consulting with the major commands of the Air Force to implement their product set at all bases in

the U.S. Initial discussions are beginning with the Office of the Secretary of Defense. These projects could result in AeroTec and AeroAstro installing thousands of sensors at the participating bases as part of a rapid response / security plug-in module to the overall system. AeroTec plans on starting a production facility in Mississippi that will create numerous jobs within the state.

The MSCI schedule is very busy this spring and I encourage you to peruse the upcoming events section to see conferences and meetings that might be of interest to you. If MSCI companies see conferences they are interested in attending, please contact us for additional details.

On a final note, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at The University of Mississippi is hosting a Remote Sensing Research Forum on the Ole Miss campus in Oxford on Thursday, February 28, 2002. The event is being held in the 4th floor ballroom of the Student Union from 1 - 4:30 p.m. and will feature presentations on MSCI, the National Remote Sensing and Space Law Center, the UM Geoinformatics Center, and the UM Geospatial Workforce Development Center. In addition, the current MSCI Graduate Fellows at Ole Miss will give brief presentations on the status of their research projects. We encourage you to attend.

--Allan Falconer

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