Twenty Years of Leadership (1986-2006)

On June 16, leaders from industry, universities and government gathered to celebrate PSC’s 20th anniversary. Established in 1986, PSC has become one of the world’s leading institutions in high-performance computing and communications and a catalyst for high-technology development in Pennsylvania.

One of PSC’s strengths has been its affiliation with both of western Pennsylvania’s major research universities. President Jerry Cohen of Carnegie Mellon and Chancellor Mark Nordenberg of the University of Pittsburgh were on hand to help mark the occasion. Both commented on PSC’s support for business and economic growth.

“This region’s prosperity is the one we have gathered to salute today — the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center,” said Nordenberg. “It leverages the complementary strengths of three very special institutions — Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Pittsburgh, and Westinghouse.”

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On October 3, Beverly Clayton accepted congratulations from Pennsylvania Rep. Joe Markosek ($25). On this date, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives adopted a resolution recognizing PSC for 25 years of service to the nation and state. Rep. Markosek, who represents Moonville and surrounding areas, including the Westinghouse Energy Center where PSC houses its supercomputing systems, introduced the resolution. Thirty other western Pennsylvania representatives joined Markosek in sponsoring the resolution.

“It’s fitting that we recognize the achievement of the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center in advancing science and technology in Pennsylvania and in the country,” said Markosek. “I’m proud that the Commonwealth has over the course of the past 25 years been able to locate PSC with $9.9 million of support that has helped to leverage $4.9 billion in support from Federal agencies.”

Pittsburgh-based PPG Industries uses PSC systems for computational modeling in several aspects of its product lines as a global supplier of coatings, glass, fiber glass and chemicals. Medrad, Inc. in Indianola, Pennsylvania is collaborating with PSC and Carnegie Mellon to develop a novel method for safe removal of deep-vein blood clots. “Through SC,” (p. 8), Evergreen Technology Park in Greene County provides companies with access to PSC resources. This year PSC presented the fifth in a series of annual technology-briefing days to staff from the Beechdelt Bertis Atomic Power Laboratory in Pittsburgh. PSC consultants provided information on developing, managing and using a parallel distributed-computing environment.

In December 2005, PSC exhibited at the Annual Eastern Interregional Technology Conference in Harrisburg, Pa. Groups who toured PSC included Science Bowl participants from Young Area High School, students and teachers from the Elizabeth Forward School District and an Advanced Computing Machinery group from Bloomsburg College.

PSC’s networking group over the past year has worked with several “K20” organizations — building collaborations among K-12 education and higher education with government and the private sector. PSC has conducted these outreach activities in collaboration with MAGPI, the Philadelphia-based network hub, leveraging their well-developed K20 program. To date, these efforts have focused on seven Intermediate Units in western Pennsylvania.

Research, Outreach & Training

Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell, speaking at PSC’s 20-year anniversary celebration, remarked on PSC’s importance in helping to build Pittsburgh’s reputation as a high-tech center. “Today’s world runs on PSC’s importance in helping to build Pittsburgh’s reputation as a high-tech center. Today’s world runs on information,” said Rendell. “For two decades, this Center has served as an resource for local businesses and academic institutions.”

With nearly 1,700 technology firms in the Pittsburgh region, he added, the industry represents more than one third of the state’s workforce. "These companies represent literally thousands of opportunities for the state’s workforce, generating $10.4 billion in annual wages."

Support for High School Science

From June 19 to 23, PSC sponsored Computation and Science for Teachers (CAST), a workshop for science teachers from southwest Pennsylvania. Ten teachers from seven school districts completed the workshop, which is the first place of a one-year program to incorporate computational tools into the high school science curriculum. CAST was presented in conjunction with the Maryland Virtual High School project, with funding from the Gilder Foundation, the Ford Teachers Alliance Fund of the Buhl Foundation and NSF’s Engaging People in Cyberinfrastructure program.