Building a Strong Partnership - Tips and Success Stories from Mentor-Protege Teams

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MPA at Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC)

Scope: Provide Operations in support of the International Space Station (ISS) at MSFC in Huntsville, AL and Johnson Space Center (JSC) in Houston, TX.

- Includes mission preparation (plan), crew and flight controller training (train), and real-time (fly) requirements for spaceflight operations support and research utilization.
Mentor-Protege Agreement (MPA)

- Two Concurrent MPAs with HBCU/MSI Universities
  - Alabama State University (ASU)
  - University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)
- Period of Performances: August 2015 – July 2016
- Agreements: 100% engineering and technical based
- Focus: Exposing the University teams to the International Space Station (ISS) Operations on the MO&I contract and providing real life work experience for the students
Tips for Mentor-Protege Teaming

Communication:
- Communicate, Communicate, Communicate, Communicate – this really is the key to success

Logistics
- Is geographical distance a challenge? Evaluate working remotely or establishing an alternative work schedule.
- Start the agreement at a time that works well with the school calendar for reporting requirements and participation
- Preselect students before agreement is in place
Tips for Mentor-Protege Teaming

**Participation:**

- Faculty and Staff involvement is necessary and critical to the success of the MPA
  - Lessons learned in corporate-academia partnership requiring flexibility, open communication and collaboration.
  - Host multiple brainstorming think tank sessions
UNLV Mentor-Protege Teaming

Successes

- Allowed UNLV to gain valuable past performance and opened opportunities for support on other NASA contracts
- Provided UNLV underlying knowledge to assist with writing proposals needed to sponsor experiments on board the International Space Station (ISS)
- UNLV team produced four multi-media products for the TBE Payload Developer (PD) training team and four additional courses to be used in training Ground Support Personnel (GSP)
- Based on outstanding level of support:
  - 1 student hired full time on MO&I contract
  - Subcontract provided directly to UNLV to continue the work
  - Identified additional doctorate student to assist with task order assignment on the MO&I contract
- Forming a new MPA at Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL)
- Contract in work with Lockheed Martin
ASU Mentor-Protege Teaming

Successes

- Total of six ASU students supporting Space Systems
- Produced five check on learning computer based training modules for ISS flight controllers.
- Two ASU students supported a task allowing them to gain an understanding of the Space Launch Systems (SLS) vehicle launch support requirements:
  - First ASU student graduated and was hired to join TBE team
  - Second student participating in the MO&I Flight Controller Certification program
- Subcontract provided directly to ASU to continue the work
- Beginning discussions with ASU to engage in ISS R&D projects