

# Vendors showcase their discoveries

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## MOORESTOWN

Recognizing that real innovation often begins in the mind of a lone undercapitalized geek, Lockheed Martin invited about 30 small-business owners Thursday to showcase their discoveries.

The daylong event gave smaller companies a chance to get on the radar screen of one of the world's largest defense contractors. In return, Lockheed got a peek at some cutting-edge technology that could help the Maritime Systems and Services unit at Moorestown improve its command and control mission for the Navy and Coast Guard.

Ultimately, Lockheed could add some of the companies to its regular vendor list, or fold a couple of them into its ever-expanding corporate portfolio.

Invitees were culled from a national database of small-business innovators compiled by the Department of Defense. Four are based in New Jersey.

The first-time event was set up like a trade show. It also allowed each potential vendor to pitch a product in a 30-minute staggered workshop to hundreds of interested Lockheed engineers.

The Moorestown unit, which specializes in Aegis radar systems, does business with about 2,000 vendors.

"Most people are surprised to learn about 45 percent of our vendors are small businesses. This event is an opportunity to collaborate with the designers of the future," said William Reid, director of procurement for the Moorestown operation.

Thomas L. Fagan, vice president of Camden-based Channel Logistics, worked hard preaching the gospel of his company, which has a total of 12 employees.

Using information from 21 databases, Channel Logistics is selling software that can quickly evaluate the threat potential of a vessel coming into a port, based on profiles of the onboard crew, the ship's history, its itinerary and other factors. The company's brochure calls what it does "maritime forensics, tiered analysis and threat evaluation."

So far, Channel Logistics, one of 18 in a small-business incubator at L-3 Communications in Camden, has grant-funded pilot programs under way in the ports of Houston and Charleston, S.C. Recently, it signed a contract with the Ports of New York and New Jersey. The cost per port per year is \$450,000, said Fagan.

Richard O. Claus, a professor of electrical and computer engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Blacksburg, Va., has business dealings with Lockheed Martin units elsewhere in the country, but Thursday was his chance to make an impression on Moorestown.

His company, NanoSonic Inc., has developed a multilayered material called metal rubber. Crush it, stretch it, twist it, cook it and it always bounces back to its original shape, wrinkle- and scar-free, he said. At the same time, the material conducts electricity like solid metal. Claus believes the applications are endless -- from artificial muscles to smart clothes to shape-shifting airplane wings.

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