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Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise (LITE) Contingent Travels to Cannes Film Festival to Market Facility's Capabilities

LAFAYETTE, LA (May 27, 2008) – Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise's (LITE) Executive Director and Public Affairs Manager were part of a small Lafayette contingent, including City-Parish President Joey Durel and Lafayette Entertainment Initiative's Entertainment Industry Liaison Marcus Brown, who spent last week in the south of France attending part of the 12-day Cannes Film Festival. The purpose of the trip was to connect with filmmakers from around the world and entice them to consider doing film work utilizing the technologies available at LITE's 3-D and 3-D immersive visualization and high-performance computing facility.



The trip was part marketing and part fact-finding mission for the team. "LITE technologies are a perfect fit for the film industry," says LITE Executive Director and Chief Scientist Dr. Carolina Cruz-Neira. "Attending Cannes allowed us to show filmmakers how LITE capabilities can help them reduce risks and costs and allow them to finish their films on time and on budget. Tens of thousands of film professionals from all over the world converged on this festival to network and we wanted to introduce LITE to as many of them as possible. To become the major force in the film industry, we need to be a part of the industry network and there is no bigger opportunity to do that

than at Cannes. This was an educational and encouraging start."

One thing the team learned that was surprising is that there were no other entities at Cannes promoting 3-D and 3-D immersive technologies, something LITE Public Affairs Manager Erin Fitzgerald says was a timely topic at the festival. "James Cameron, who directed *Titanic* and is widely considered one of the most innovative film directors in world, gave a speech at the festival where he talked about his new film *Avatar*. *Avatar* is being shot entirely in 3-D and that type of filming requires special technology and lots of computing power. He is convinced 3-D films are the future of cinema and vowed he will never make another movie in any other format," she says. "That's a pretty strong statement from one of the most successful filmmakers in Hollywood. It also says a lot about the potential for LITE 3-D technologies and computing capabilities to become a valuable resource for the film industry."

For 12 days in May, the city of Cannes is transformed from a quiet seaside resort into the entire focus of the international film industry. Over 200,000 people - filmmakers, film fans, and stargazers alike - descend to take part in the Cannes Film Festival (or more correctly, the *Festival de Cannes*).



"Although it lasts 12 days, it's a very hectic 12 days and the time to make an impression is short," says Dr. Cruz-Neira. Many of the filmmakers and financiers they spoke with were impressed with LITE and the incentives the state of Louisiana offers film companies to work in the state. Fitzgerald says

those factors, combined with the weak performance of the U. S. dollar verses some foreign currencies, also attracted positive feedback.

About LITE: LITE, the only facility of its kind in North America open to government, research and private industry, is a cooperative effort between the State of Louisiana, Lafayette Economic Development Authority (LEDA) and University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL Lafayette). A state-of-the-art advanced supercomputing and data visualization facility, LITE uses 3-D and total immersive data visualization technologies powered by high-performance supercomputing capabilities and transmit via high-speed fiber optics. LITE technologies are available for government and academic research and private sector innovation, offering essential decision-making tools for collaborative research applications; product development, testing and validation; and training.

About Dr. Carolina Cruz-Neira: Dr. Cruz-Neira, Executive Director and Chief Scientist of LITE, is known as a worldwide pioneer in the field of virtual reality. Her work includes collaboration on the design of the CAVE[®], the first virtual reality projection cube ever built.

LITE, Lafayette Parish Consolidated Government and Lafayette Regional Airport are partners in a concerted technology-centered economic development effort in the Acadiana region of south Louisiana. The Lafayette area has a growing economy with a workforce, incentives and infrastructure designed to attract new businesses and business expansions specializing in technological advancements. For further information, please visit www.lite3d.com, www.lftairport.com and www.lafayettela.gov.

Photo Outline: A Lafayette contingent of (clockwise from bottom right) City-Parish President Joey Durel, University of Louisiana at Lafayette Marketing Professor Lucy Henke, LITE Public Affairs Manager Erin Fitzgerald, LITE Executive Director and Chief Scientist Dr. Carolina Cruz-Neira and Lafayette Entertainment Initiative's Entertainment Industry Liaison Marcus Brown traveled to Cannes, France for the annual film festival as part of an effort to raise interest in Lafayette as a viable area for film production work.