

U.S. Navy Adds Two Tech Bridges to Network



The Navy's assistant secretary for research, development and acquisition announced two new Tech Bridges, in Panama City, Florida, and Honolulu.

WASHINGTON – James “Hondo” Geurts, assistant secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, announced the stand up of two additional Tech Bridges, one in Panama City, Florida, and one in Honolulu, Hawaii, on Dec. 9, his public affairs office said in a release.

“Today’s Tech Bridge additions are a symbol of the Department of Navy’s momentum to rapidly deliver capabilities into the hands of our Sailors and Marines,” said Geurts. “There is nothing more exciting than seeing the speed and transition of technology that dramatically accelerates capability, and improved development processes – this allows our Navy and Marine Corps to provide the U.S. with the ability to adopt and scale its asymmetric advantage. I look forward to seeing these Tech Bridges serving as a ‘front door’ for emerging tech to work more seamlessly with the Navy.”

The newest Tech Bridges offer direct access for companies and the fleet to test and evaluate emerging technologies purposed for undersea and space-going missions. The focus areas for the Gulf Coast Tech Bridge, located in Panama City, Florida, includes coastal sciences and technology, assured maritime access and operational meteorology and oceanography. The focus areas for the Hawaii Tech Bridge, in Honolulu, entail efforts to adopt technology advances for command and control, communications, cybersecurity, intelligence, space systems and resilient infrastructure.

“The Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division, the U.S. Naval Research Lab in Stennis, Mississippi, and the Naval

Meteorology and Oceanography Command partnered together to establish the Gulf Coast Tech Bridge, which spans a unique, vibrant region across four states,” said Holly Gardner, Director of the Gulf Coast Tech Bridge. “Our region is focused on the future, growing coastal science and unmanned vehicle development, hosting industry events and expanding strategic partnerships.”

The Hawaii Tech Bridge represents a collaboration with the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Keyport Detachment Pacific, the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation, and the University of Hawaii’s Office of Innovation and Commercialization. Future teaming is anticipated with the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command; Commander, United States Pacific Fleet; and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

“In our logo, you will see the Hawaiian canoe (wa’a),” said Neal Miyake, dual-hatted as the Business Deputy at Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific and the Director of the Hawaii Tech Bridge. “This symbolizes that everyone has to work together in unity (lokahe) to achieve success. Like our Tech Bridge collaborators, each paddler may have a different role but they are all united by a common goal.”

Tech Bridges are part of an initiative birthed from the Navy Agility cell, called NavalX, with support from the Office of Naval Research and the Navy’s System Commands and Warfare Centers. Since September 2019, Tech Bridges stood up across the country to shorten innovation timelines, improve the U.S. Navy’s relationships with emerging tech companies, and advance the U.S. Navy’s ability to bring technology solutions to the fleet. As of today, the Tech Bridges network exists in 15 locations – stretching from London (U.K.) to Honolulu – and works with the U.S. Navy’s Warfare Centers to align requirements and bring value to Sailors and Marines.

More specifically, Tech Bridges collaborate and partner with startups, academia, corporations, small businesses,

nonprofits, and private capital to match capability problems with technology solutions. Additionally, Tech Bridges serve within the growing ecosystem of the U.S. Department of Defense's innovation groups – Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), National Security Innovation Network (NSIN), U.S. Army Futures Command, AFWERX, SOFWERX – that bolsters NavalX's overarching ability to connect people, companies, and technology solutions.

"The new Tech Bridge locations bring in a deeper connection to the fleet, rapid prototyping mechanisms, test ranges, and access to talented students and entrepreneurs in Hawaii and the Gulf Coast Region," said Whitney Tallarico, NavalX Tech Bridge Director. "We have seen this network mobilize during times of national crisis and are excited to watch them strengthen and serve our country during times of peace and otherwise, in the future."