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UA's *Care* Research & Development Lab Receives Homeland Security Grant

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – The University of Alabama [CARE Research & Development Lab](#) has received a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to increase information technology projects in the area of fighting terrorism.

Alabama's proposal for developing the Secure Homeland Access and Reporting Environment received a nearly \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Information Technology and Evaluation Program. UA's *CARE* Research & Development Lab, the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center and the Alabama Emergency Management Agency jointly submitted the proposal to DHS.

Alabama was one of 12 states to receive a portion of the overall \$9 million grant. The Alabama program was selected because of its innovative uses of information technology for enhancing homeland security and for its projected results showing the greatest promise for nationwide application.

The grant will help develop a secure Web-based search engine that will allow law enforcement and criminal justice agencies to search numerous databases simultaneously, returning information in real time while it facilitates in-depth searches.

"We feel honored to be one of only 12 chosen out of the 113 proposals submitted and to have received the second highest award amount," said Dr. Allen Parrish, associate professor of computer science and director of *CARE* Research & Development Lab.

"It's an exciting and challenging project that is very rewarding because it will improve homeland security, and we feel it will be a national model for other states to adopt," continued Parrish.

The Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center was the submitting agency. Maury Mitchell, the center's director, said, "We were delighted to receive this very competitive award. This project falls right in line with our agency's goal to provide technical support for our state's homeland security efforts. We are thrilled to be partnering with such a talented team of researchers at The University of Alabama."

DHS's Information Technology and Evaluation Program was developed to foster and evaluate uses of existing, "state-of-the-market" information technology that will demonstrate how to remove barriers and improve information sharing and integration.

C. Suzanne Mencer, executive director of the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness, said one of the important lessons learned after 9/11 was the importance of sharing information at all levels of government, as well as with the private sector. This technology will improve the nation's ability to analyze and share information critical to the nation's ability to prevent, respond to and recover from terrorism and other major events.

In 1837, UA became the first university in the state to offer engineering classes and was one of the first five in the nation to do so. Today, the [College of Engineering](#), with about 1,900 students and more than 95 faculty, is one of the three oldest continuously operating engineering programs in the country and has been fully accredited since accreditation standards were implemented in the 1930s.

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