



SANDIA CELEBRATES NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK

NNSA administrator visits Sandia



CAMINO TOUR — NNSA Administrator Brandon Williams and his wife, Stephanie Williams, look at a nested printing of a reentry vehicle while touring the new CAMINO facility on Feb. 12. Photo by Craig Fritz

By Kenny Vigil

Labs Director Laura McGill welcomed NNSA Administrator Brandon Williams for a daylong visit Feb. 12, marking his first trip to Sandia since the Senate confirmed him as DOE Under Secretary for Nuclear Security.

“It’s really incredible, the capabilities that you practice here at Sandia,” Williams said. “My focus is deterrence. That’s what I think about when I wake up. That’s what I think about when I go to bed.”

The visit highlighted some of Sandia’s one-of-a-kind capabilities in the nuclear security enterprise and aligned with NNSA priorities. Stops included the Microsystems Engineering, Science and

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NNSA, Sandia, KCNSC cut ribbon on CAMINO

By Katherine Beherec

The ability to rapidly design and manufacture hardware for nuclear weapons and other missions is essential to develop new systems at pace to meet the nation’s security needs. On Feb. 12, leaders from Sandia and NNSA cut the ribbon on the Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation, or CAMINO, a capability that enables rapid prototyping and shortens development life cycles.

“CAMINO is a network of labs, partners, and physical and digital capabilities that connect foundational research to real-world applications,” Labs Director Laura McGill said. “The key is a design and production model that accelerates technology maturation and reduces process steps.

“What CAMINO ultimately delivers is speed, readiness and resilience. And that matters for deterrence.”

About 120 people attended the event at CAMINO, located at the Sandia Science and Technology Park outside Kirtland Air Force Base. Its location reflects Sandia’s intent to collaborate



CELEBRATORY CUT — From left, NNSA Administrator Brandon Williams, Sandia Labs Director Laura McGill and Kansas City National Security Campus President and CEO Eric Wollerman cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of CAMINO surrounded by their teams. Photo by Craig Fritz

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Beyond the building

By **Kenny Vigil**

CAMINO is open for business.

That was one of the messages Associate Laboratories Director Steve Girrens delivered just days before a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new facility in Sandia's Science and Technology Park. But Sandia's vision for CAMINO extends beyond a physical building for advanced manufacturing.

"It's a deliberate framework for collaboration," Steve said during an inaugural CAMINO meeting in the Steve Schiff Auditorium on Feb. 10. "It's about going faster in the national interest."

Sandia convened the meeting to coincide with the ribbon-cutting, bringing together partners from across NNSA's nuclear security enterprise, universities and private businesses.

In opening remarks, Steve, who oversees nuclear deterrence components and production, said CAMINO's goal is to deliver on the nuclear security mission faster through rapid prototyping.

"It's a testament to Sandia and its partners in implementing new and needed ways to improve our deterrent," said John Evans, NNSA's principal deputy administrator for Office of Stockpile Management. Evans said CAMINO will help deliver higher-quality components and products, with rigorous testing to ensure the stockpile is reliable and safe.

"Centralizing advanced manufacturing activities offers significant advantages," said Associate Laboratories Director Douglas Kothe, who oversees advanced science and technology. "We want to grow this partnership into something that's



MULTILAB VISION — Participants from across the nuclear security enterprise, universities and private businesses gather in the Steve Schiff Auditorium to discuss how they will collaborate under the Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation framework.

Photo by David Lienemann

worth your time and effort."

Several panel discussions included a town hall, tech talks and conversations on technology transfer, with participation from attendees at other sites.

Sandia plans to host the CAMINO meeting annually. 

NNSA Visit

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Applications, or MESA complex. MESA is the nation's sole supplier of trusted, strategic radiation-hardened microelectronics for the nuclear stockpile and other national security customers.

Through briefings and tours, Sandia showcased how as the nation's premier engineering lab, it is positioned to deliver faster and highlighted its role as the lead systems integrator for nuclear weapons, with a focus on ensuring the stockpile is safe, secure and effective.

Williams emphasized the importance

of artificial intelligence and quantum computing to national security. DOE Under Secretary for Science Darío Gil also joined Williams during the visit. In addition to Sandia, Williams and Gil visited Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore national laboratories the week of Feb. 9. [@](#)



LEADERSHIP CHAT — NNSA Administrator Brandon Williams, right, speaks with Labs Director Laura McGill, left, during a briefing while visiting the Labs.

Photo by Craig Fritz



SITE WALK — NNSA Administrator Brandon Williams and Labs Director Laura McGill, front row, lead a group, including NNSA Military Assistant Kyle McVay and NNSA Sandia Field Office Manager Daryl Hauck to their next briefing during a visit.

Photo by Craig Fritz

CAMINO

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with the nuclear security enterprise, industry and academia by offering space and technology for partners to translate concepts into tangible results that support a safer nation.

Laura spoke along with NNSA Administrator Brandon Williams, Kansas City National Security Campus President and CEO Eric Wollerman and Sandia Associate Labs Director Steven Girrens. Leaders and staff from NNSA, the Kansas City National Security Campus and Sandia joined the stage for the ribbon cutting.

Sandia is the design agency for many non-nuclear components in the nation's nuclear deterrent while the Kansas City National Security Campus is the production agency. CAMINO will allow the production agency to get involved earlier, when parts are being designed, to drive increased producibility.

“This facility reflects how we will operate going forward. We must be



MISSION READY — Labs Director Laura McGill delivers remarks at the CAMINO ribbon-cutting event Feb. 12. “CAMINO is a model for how we strengthen deterrence and readiness to ensure the United States remains prepared for what comes next,” she said.

Photo by Craig Fritz

integrated across disciplines, connected across organizations and focused on delivering at the pace national security demands of us,” Laura said. [📺](#)



WATCH VIDEO OF THUNDERBIRD PAPERWEIGHTS MANUFACTURED AT CAMINO Video by Bryn Whisenand

SANDIA CELEBRATES NATIONAL

ENGINEERS WEEK

Engineers at Sandia ensure that innovation is not just a theory but that the highest technical and operational standards are put into practice. In honor of National Engineers Week, hosted by the National Society of Professional Engineers from Feb. 23-28, Lab News selected a few photos of engineering happening around the Labs.

This year's theme, Transform Your Future, is a reminder that engineering shapes the world through new opportunities, local communities and the next generation. This goal is shared by Sandia's community involvement team and volunteers who aim to inspire the future of engineering through their efforts. [📺](#)



UNDER INSPECTION — Electronics engineer Rebecca Schmitt, right, and mechanical engineer Simon Yang perform a destructive physical analysis of a capacitor.

Photo by Craig Fritz



TEST PREP — Mechanical engineer David Krawczyk places multi-contact probes into a cryogenic probe station for environmental printed circuit board tests.
Photo by Craig Fritz



IN THE BALANCE — Mechanical engineers work with an inert B61-13 during mass properties testing.
Photo by Craig Fritz



WISHFUL WAITING — Telemetry engineers Aaron Czeszynski, left, and Emily Yang anticipate success while preparing a Joint Environmental Test Unit in Telemetry and Visualization Software Realtime at Sandia California. They prepare the unit to ship to Sandia New Mexico, where it will undergo a combined environments test involving simultaneous spin and acceleration.
Photo by Craig Fritz

SANDIA CELEBRATES NATIONAL
ENGINEERS WEEK

Sketchbooks offer view into Sandia's early engineering days

By **Kenny Vigil**

Tucked inside Sandia's National Security Technology Gallery, hand-drawn sketches, or engineering design packages, offer a look at some of Sandia's earliest engineering work.

In celebration of National Engineers Week, those rarely seen sketches from the Vela satellite program were briefly on display, offering Sandia a window into the past.

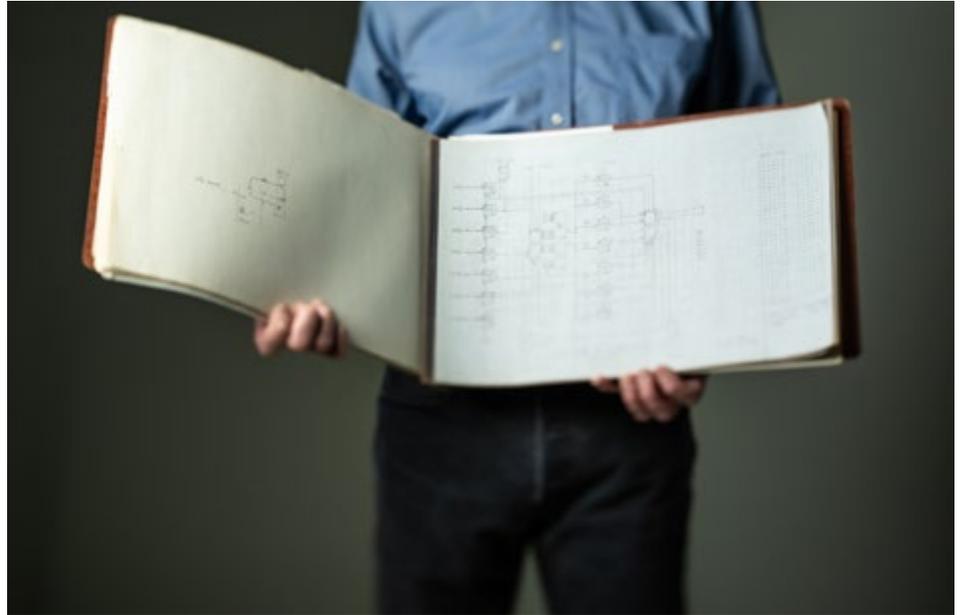
The Vela satellite program was initiated in 1959 — not even a decade after Sandia was established — to provide a nuclear detonation detection capability from outer space and verify compliance with nuclear treaties. Sandia initially helped develop the Vela satellites to detect gamma rays, neutrons and X-rays, the signatures of nuclear tests. Later versions added detectors for optical and electromagnetic signals as well as space-background sensors for anomaly resolution.

"We have a very decent historical evolution story about Vela," said John Kiegel, who oversees the gallery.

Surviving artifacts like these sketchbooks help preserve that story. Originally from electrical engineer Dick Spalding, the books contain handwritten diagrams and specifications for electronic connections, schematics of circuit boards and logic diagrams. They are dated from the mid- to late-1960s.

"Spalding was involved in the Vela program from its start. We can tell that satellite story in about 10 minutes with some really neat artifacts," John said. "For anybody who works on satellites in Global Security, this is their origin story. This is how Sandia got started in space-based monitoring."

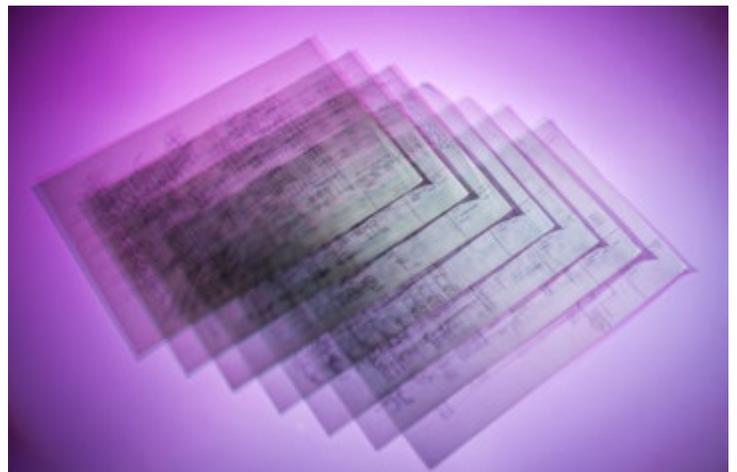
Sandia worked closely with Los Alamos National Laboratory on the Vela



THROWBACK — A hand-drawn engineering design package, or sketchbook, offers a look at the early engineering days at Sandia. The sketchbooks for the Vela satellite program, dated from the 1960s, are on display during Engineers Week. **Photo by Craig Fritz**

program. Initially, Los Alamos developed Vela sensors and Sandia handled component integration and data processing tasks. As the program matured and decisions were made to add to the satellite's capabilities, Sandia took on a larger role in sensor design, particularly the optical sensors.

The sketchbooks are a reminder of the important accomplishments engineers made with paper and pencil and how far engineering capabilities have come during Sandia's more than 75 years in operation.



ENGINEERING EVOLUTION — Hand-drawn engineering design packages for the Vela satellite program offer a rare look into some of earliest engineering work at Sandia. The sketchbooks, which are housed in Sandia's National Security Technology Gallery, are on display for Sandians to view as a part of Engineers Week. **Photo by Craig Fritz**

Growing collection

John takes any opportunity he can to build the collection at the gallery. Following Spalding's retirement from Sandia in 2016, his office administrative

assistant invited John to Spalding's office.

"I was harvesting these artifacts relating to Vela. I got everything I could and brought it to the gallery," John said.

The collection also includes work from Rik Holman, who John said spent his entire Sandia career working on satellites.

"Over a 30-year career, he'd collected a bunch of satellite gear. He was looking for a steward for his collection," John said.

Holman had so many items that Sandia's Legacy Hardware Lab took what he couldn't fit in the gallery.

Another contributor to the Vela collection in the gallery was Dan Thompson, who retired from Creative Services.

"He had a stash of old artwork related to Vela and when he left, he gave those items to the gallery," John said. Thompson's father, F.E., was an engineer on the Vela

program and is featured in one of the photos holding an engineering design package sketchbook.

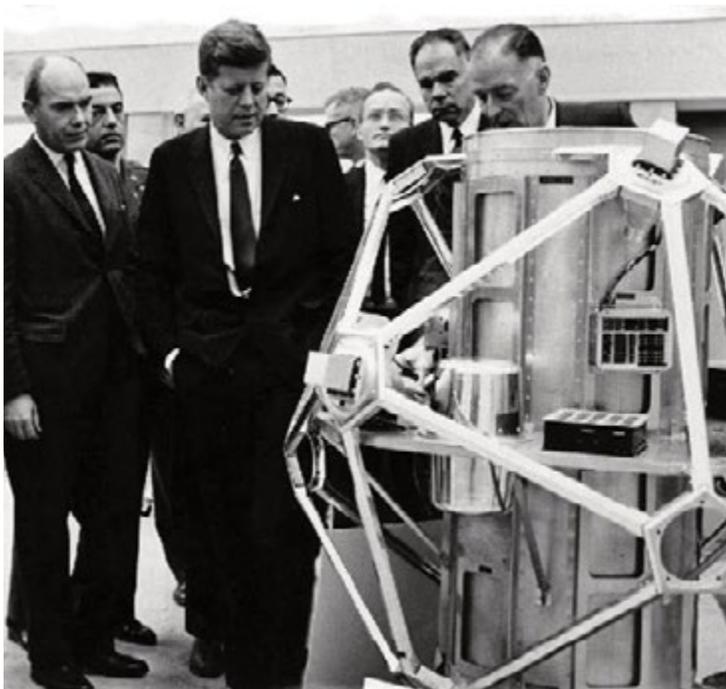
While the last of the Vela satellites were turned off in 1984, today Sandia's work in detection remains critical for national security. Individuals like John, with a passion for preserving Sandia's history, remind us how far the field of engineering has come — from pencil and paper to computer-aided design to a shared digital thread, artificial intelligence and beyond.

Read more about the [Vela program](#). 



EARLY ENGINEERING DAYS — W.B. Goldrick and F.E. Thompson assemble logics systems in a Vela Hotel satellite frame. The first Vela Hotel satellite pair was launched in 1963. Thompson is seen holding an engineering design package.

Photo from the Sandia archives



LOOKING BACK — During a 1962 visit to Sandia, President John F. Kennedy looks on as Sandia President Siegmund Schwartz, center, explains capabilities of the Vela satellite, designed for detection of nuclear detonations.

Photo from the Sandia archives

The National Security Technology Gallery

Sandia established the National Security Technology Gallery following the Sept. 11 attacks.

"We were hosting a lot of people who wanted to know what Sandia could do to help with national security. There were so many visitors we decided to put much of the work for people to see in one room," said John Kiegel, who oversees the gallery. "It's matured and evolved over the years."

The gallery, which is not open to the public, has hosted about 4,000 tours and more than 35,000 people, including policymakers.

"The gallery showcases current and forward-leaning technology at Sandia and how we solve problems the nation is facing right now and will be dealing with tomorrow and the next day," John said. "We often use the historic arc of technology development here at Sandia. It's somewhat challenging to get the latest technology off a technician's desktop and into the gallery. We rely on historical pieces to show that arc of development."

The gallery educates sponsors and visitors about Sandia capabilities. It also serves as an education space for members of the workforce and a recruiting tool for potential new hires.

SANDIA CELEBRATES NATIONAL

ENGINEERS WEEK

A platinum anniversary in the Golden State

California campus celebrates 70 years

By **Lea Blevins**

On March 8, 1956, Sandia grew in ways that would only be discovered over seven decades at the Labs' second principal site in Livermore, California.

Sandia California is marking its 70th anniversary, reflecting on its start with a small group of employees focused on coordinating nuclear weapons projects with the University of California Radiation Laboratory, Livermore Branch — now Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory — across the street.

The site is now home base for more than 2,000 workforce members.

“In honor of this anniversary, we celebrate the legacy and imagination of the thousands of people who have created technical breakthroughs supporting national security,” said Associate Labs Director Toby Townsend, who leads the Deterrence, Science & Energy Division that stewards the California lab. “While the site and its workforce have performed work that no one may ever know about, we know it has kept the nation safer for decades. I hope when you consider all the innovations we’ve developed over the last 70 years, you’ll have the same sense of pride as I do.”

In addition to Sandia California’s early collaboration with LLNL on nuclear deterrence, the campus became home to the renowned [Applied Biosciences Laboratory, Micro and Nano Technologies Laboratories](#) and [Combustion Research Facility](#).

The CRF was one of Sandia’s first facilities located outside fenced areas in what is now part of the Livermore Valley Open Campus, allowing collaboration for the first time with industry and universities as well as international collaborators.

Sandia California’s mission work has proved innovative, including inventing the first extreme ultraviolet lithography machine to advance microchip manufacturing, creating organic glass scintillators to detect nuclear material at ports and borders and defending against cyber threats to national security.

Livermore’s employees are also stewards of the site’s natural resources and habitats, including raptors and protected species like the red-legged frog and tiger salamander.

Throughout the Bay Area, Sandia California engages in community outreach for educational success, family stability and community leadership.

Site leadership and employees will honor the 70th anniversary throughout 2026, celebrating the Labs’ contribution to national security in the past and for years to come. [f](#)



HISTORY IN THE MAKING — Historical photo of Sandia California’s original entrance on East Avenue, taken before 1970 when the logo changed to the modern version. The entrance is no longer accessible to traffic, though the buildings are still in use. **Photo courtesy of Lab News archives**



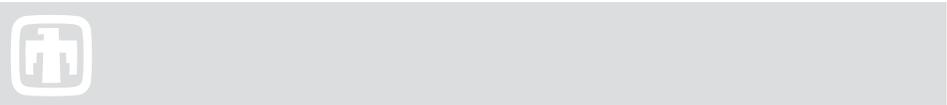
GLOWING BRIGHT — Sandia California’s current front entrance sign along Greenville Road. **Photo by Spencer Toy**

Sandia California's storied past

For further reading about Sandia California through the years, visit these links to learn more stories of the site:

- [Sandia California: Innovation and inspiration come together](#)
- [Celebrating the evolution of 75 years of Sandia](#)
- [California campus improvements enhance site for Sandians and visitors](#)
- [Legacies of innovation: Families with ties to Sandia California share their stories](#)
- [Then and now: California site](#)
- [After half a century, Martha Camiotti leaves a legacy of taking care of others](#)

Mileposts



Jeff Nelson 35



George Bachand 25



Heather Brown 25



Jeanne Oselio 25



Uzoma Onunkwo 20



Christopher Orendorff 20



Karla Weaver 20



Linda Bayliss 15



Dani Cover 15



Damon Grant 15



Terri Greene 15



Brian Jeantete 15



Kevin Ledwith 15



Teresa Ostrem 15



Jonell Samberson 15



McKenzie Siebert 15



Andrew Starbuck 15



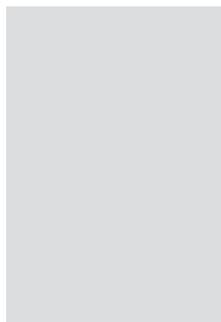
Lita Suina 15



Marlena Taylor 15



Timothy Wildey 15

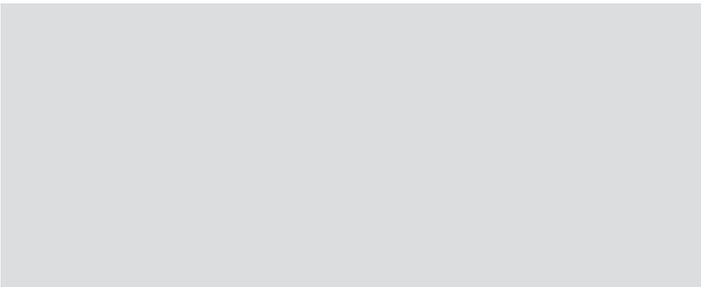


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Sandia Labs has official social media accounts on several online communities to engage in conversations about our work, update followers about the latest Labs news, share opportunities, and support the open government principles of transparency, participation and collaboration.

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