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For immediate release

Argonne researcher wins prestigious Presidential award

Presented at the White House today

ARGONNE, Ill. (July 26, 2006) — Todd Munson, a computational scientist at the U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory, is at the White House today receiving a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers.

These awards are the highest honor the U.S. government bestows on outstanding scientists and engineers beginning their independent careers. This year, 56 researchers supported by nine federal departments and agencies received awards. Munson is one of seven recipients affiliated with the U.S. Department of Energy. The winners each received a citation, a plaque and a commitment for continued funding of their work from their agency for five years.

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Argonne National Laboratory
is managed by the
University of Chicago for the
U.S. Department of Energy.

Munson – add one

“All of us here at the Energy Department are very pleased that these individuals are being recognized by the president for the intellectual rigor, relevance and high technical standards of their work,” Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman said. “We are proud to honor these seven awardees as a means of encouraging promising young scientists and engineers to pursue work in areas of importance to the Department of Energy’s energy research and national security missions.”

“The federal government’s continued support to these young scientists shows the high regard in which their work is held,” said Argonne Director Robert Rosner. “I’m proud that, once again, Argonne science is recognized in this way. I congratulate Todd on this success and look forward to his great work in the years to come.”

Munson is a member of Argonne’s Mathematics and Computer Science Division, where he has made significant contributions in the areas of large-scale continuous optimization and nonlinear complementarity problems. These problems represent situations where maximizing a desired goal must be done with regard to other constraints; an example would be designing reloading operations for nuclear reactors that give the highest power output possible while still observing appropriate safety measures.

Munson is a lead developer of PATH, the most widely used code for solving complementarity problems; the Network Enabled Optimization System (NEOS), a collaboration between Argonne and Northwestern University that provides access to optimization packages through a variety of Internet interfaces; and the Toolkit for Advanced Optimization (TAO), an open source collection of parallel algorithms for solving large-scale nonlinear optimization problems.

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Munson – add two

Munson has mentored graduate and undergraduate students through the DOE/NSF Faculty and Student Team Program and Argonne's Summer Student Program; has served on the organizing committee for the Argonne-University of Chicago Institute on Computational Economics and given tutorials on numerical optimization to the workshop participants; and has acted as a moderator and scientific judge for the Chicago Regional Middle School Science Bowl.

The nation's first national laboratory, Argonne National Laboratory conducts basic and applied scientific research across a wide spectrum of disciplines, ranging from high-energy physics to climatology and biotechnology. Since 1990, Argonne has worked with more than 600 companies and numerous federal agencies and other organizations to help advance America's scientific leadership and prepare the nation for the future. Argonne is managed by the University of Chicago for the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science.