Los Alamos National Laboratory names new head of weapons programs

December 1, 2011

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, December 1, 2011 — Laboratory Director Charlie McMillan today announced the selection of Bret Knapp as the new principal associate director for Weapons Programs. Knapp has been acting in that position since June 2011 when McMillan left the post to become Laboratory director.As the head of LANL's Weapons Programs, Knapp is responsible for the leadership, development, and execution of the Laboratory's primary mission: ensuring the safety, security, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. The programs have a $1.5 billion annual budget that is split between two directorates with a workforce of more than 1,400."Because of Bret's demonstrated leadership excellence, his broad knowledge of the technical elements of stockpile stewardship, and his distinguished track record as an engineer, he can continue to move the weapons programs forward without missing a beat," said McMillan. "I have even more confidence in Bret because of his 30 years of technical and leadership supporting stockpile stewardship at all sites across the nation's nuclear security enterprise.""In a world without nuclear testing, the issues of

our nation’s aging nuclear weapons demand the sharpest minds, the best experimental capabilities, and the world’s leading supercomputers to ensure the safety and reliability of the stockpile,” said Knapp. “I am honored and humbled to continue working with this distinguished team of scientists, engineers, and other professionals who tirelessly dedicate themselves to serving the national security needs of our country.”Prior to serving as acting leader of the Weapons principal associate directorate, Knapp was associate director for Weapons at LANL. In that capacity he had responsibility for a variety of functions and programs, including weapon systems engineering, weapons experiments, computational physics, theoretical design, and advanced scientific computing.Knapp joined LANL in 2006 as associate director for Weapons Engineering.

From 2001 to 2006 he led the Defense Technologies Engineering Division and Weaponization Program at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California.

He joined Livermore in 1980 and held a variety of leadership and management positions.Knapp holds a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from California Polytechnic State University and a master’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of California, Davis.

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