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## CCT Colloquium Series

**LITE: The intersection of Academic Research and Economic Development****Dr. Carolina Cruz-Neira, Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise**

Executive Director &amp; Chief Scientist

Johnston Hall 338

September 07, 2007 - 02:00 pm

**Abstract:**

This presentation introduces the Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise (LITE), a new initiative created by the partnership of the Louisiana Economic Development, the Lafayette Economic Development Authority, and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. LITE opened its doors in September of 2006 and since then, it has grown rapidly initiating a wide gamma of projects both with industry partners and research organizations. The presentation will provide an overview of the operational model of LITE, how economic development is being addressed, and the current projects under development. It will conclude with a summary of the year's activities and opportunities for those interested in collaborating with LITE.

**Speaker's Bio:**

Dr. Carolina Cruz-Neira is the Executive Director and Chief Scientist of the Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise (LITE™). She is also an Endowed Chair in the College of Engineering at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Until 2005, Dr. Cruz was the Stanley Chair in Interdisciplinary Engineering, and the Associate Director and co-founder of the Virtual Reality Applications Center at Iowa State University (ISU). In 2002, she co-founded and co-directed the Human-Computer Interaction graduate program at ISU. Dr. Cruz-Neira's work in VR started with her Ph.D. dissertation, the design of the CAVE™ Virtual Reality Environment, the CAVE™ Library software specifications and implementation, and preliminary research on CAVE™ Supercomputing integration. She shares the recognition of the invention of the CAVE with Tom DeFanti and Dan Sandin. Since then, her research has been driven by providing applicability and simplicity to virtual reality (VR) technology focusing on software engineering for VR, applications of VR technology and usability studies of virtual environments. She spearheaded the open-source VR API movement with the development of VR Juggler, and has been an advocate of best practices on how to build and run VR facilities to serve practical applications. Many of her former students are now doing leading work in VR at places such as Purdue University, Navtech, Nintendo, EA, Deere & Company, Boeing, Sony Pictures Imageworks, and Argonne National Laboratory. Beyond her academic career, Dr. Cruz is an entrepreneur. She co-founded Infiscape Corporation, a services company in immersive applications and high-end interactive graphics. She serves in many advisory boards, including Sensics Inc, Mersive Corp, and Micoy and has performed corporate consulting in many companies around the world. In 1997, Business Week magazine named Cruz a "rising research star" in the new generation of computer science pioneers. Among her many achievements, Cruz received the 200 Iowa State Foundation Award for Early Achievement in Research; in June 2001 she received the Boeing A.D. Welliver Award; in 2002 she was named Eminent Engineer by the Tau Beta Pi Honors Society; in 2003 she was inducted as a Computer Graphics Pioneer by the ACM SIGGRAPH organization; and, in 2007 she was the recipient of the Virtual Reality Technical Achievement Award from the IEEE Visualization and Graphics Technical Committee (VGTC). Dr. Cruz has a PhD in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) (1995) and a Master's degree in EECS at UIC (1991). She graduated Cum Laude in Systems Engineering at the Universidad Metropolitana at Caracas, Venezuela in 1987. Additionally, she studied (and performed) Classical Ballet at the Music Conservatory of Alicante, Spain, at the National Academy of Dance, in Caracas, Venezuela, at the University of Illinois Dance Company, in Chicago, Illinois, and with the Geoffrey Ballet and the Hubbard Street Dance Company in Chicago.