

Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI) ranks among world's top supercomputers

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BATON ROUGE — Louisiana's supercomputer Queen Bee, the centerpiece of the Louisiana Optical Network Initiative, is the 23rd most powerful supercomputer in the world.

The ranking follows the release of the annual Top 500 Supercomputer Sites list this week during the International Supercomputing Conference in Dresden, Germany, according to a news release from Kevin Hardy of the Louisiana Board of Regents.

Louisiana's Queen Bee is ranked fourth among the supercomputers owned by U.S. higher education institutions, the release states.

"We comfortably assumed it would rank in the top 25 worldwide based on early projections, but our standing in higher education is exciting," said LONI Executive Director Charlie McMahon.

The ranking gives Louisiana a competitive edge in advancing research through cyber-infrastructure, he said. "Our ranking will, hopefully, help attract and retain top researchers to our universities."

LONI's chief scientist, Ed Seidel, said the ranking represents a substantial achievement for Louisiana and the partner universities. "We have worked throughout the past three years to create a network and have developed a system that makes Louisiana one of the most well-connected places in the world," he said.

"With LONI in place and the newly formed LONI Institute, we can capitalize on the state's investments in information technology."

Queen Bee, a 50-teraflops machine in the state's Information Systems Building in downtown Baton Rouge, is the main computer for LONI, a high-speed, fiber-optics network that connects supercomputers at the state's eight major research universities — LSU, Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, Southern University, Tulane University, University of Louisiana at Lafayette and University of New Orleans.

Queen Bee is allowing greater collaboration on research that produces results faster and with greater accuracy.

The network led to the state Board of Regents granting six LONI universities funding under the Post-Katrina Support Fund Initiative to create the LONI Institute, a \$15 million state-of-the-art research collaborative to facilitate joint applications tackling complex scientific research problems.

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