

Homeland Security secretary visits CIC

Written by

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12:48 AM, Aug. 10, 2011|

The Department of Homeland Security would like to use the collaboration between the Cyber Innovation Center and area schools as a model for the rest of the nation, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said Tuesday.

"The uniqueness here is the integration of different elements," said Napolitano, who toured the Cyber Innovation Center with U. S. Sen. Mary Landrieu and spoke with several students and teachers who had attended this summer's CIC cyber discovery camp.

She said the community's investment in a zoning overlay district, the CIC's collaborations between the private sector and local grade schools and colleges and the presence of Barksdale Air Force Base has made Bossier City "a cyber innovative community.

"Now we can begin to see how does that integration grow and begin to see how that can be replicated across the country," she said.

The CIC was awarded a \$300,000 Department of Homeland Security grant in

July to support its cyber camps and other educational programs.

Students who attended this summer's cyber discovery camp shared part of what they learned with Landrieu and Napolitano by presenting a sumo challenge with Boe-Bots (Board of Education robots) after the building tour.

The sumo robots, which local middle school students built and programmed, attempt to locate and push each other out of a small sumo ring, Elm Grove Middle School student Bryan Day, 12, told Napolitano and Landrieu during the demonstration.

Day later said learning to build the robots was the most interesting part of the camp and he had really enjoyed attending this year.

The camp provides an opportunity for students to learn cyber security skills at a young age and then continuously reinforce those skills as they return year after year, Elm Grove Middle School Principal Terrie

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Johnson said.

She said students who attended the cyber discovery camp were immersed in all aspects of cyber robotics, which will help them understand the impact of this type of technology early in life.

Landrieu said one of the challenges of cyber security is how to train the workforce, which the Department of Homeland Security has found Bossier City is doing "beautifully."

She said the community should be proud that the camps and other educational programs developed at CIC are seen as a model for the nation.

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