

ACC board approves UAS van purchase

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ALPENA - The Alpena Community College Board of Trustees approved the purchase of a mobile ground control van from LDV, Inc., of Burlington, Wis., for use with unmanned aerial systems at a cost of \$151,530, which will be paid from grant funds.

The college has committed to the support of unmanned aerial systems and is actively participating in outreach and curriculum development within the UAS industry. This new van will enable students to participate in field activities, and make testing possible in a mobile setting.

"This is a huge purchase for UAS testing and training, and fits in with the idea of Alpena attempting to become a hub for that sort of testing, training and eventually manufacturing," ACC President Dr. Don MacMaster said. "To have mobility is really credible, and it's something most places who are working on this field don't have. This van is custom made."

The van will serve as a mobile command unit, outfitted to accommodate industry specific communications systems, networked for full computer connectivity and will provide a safe and comfortable mobile classroom for students and staff involved in the instruction, research, development and testing of unmanned aerial systems.

"This is a really big van, and includes two work stations with computers, heating and cooling control, an antenna to tie into satellite access and bring in information from the drone itself," Dawn Stone, Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant director, said. "The mobile station can be taken into the field to collect and process data, and make sure the acquired data is correct before leaving the site. We can view it all before we leave to make sure we have what we need. It facilitates hands-on activity in the field."

The funds for this purchase will come from the Michigan Strategic Fund, Community College Skilled Trades Program. Through the utilization of unallocated grant funds, the college was able to achieve the required 25 percent match.

After the two rounds of proposals only one vendor, LDV, Inc., met all specs for the bid identified in the second request for proposals. This is the last piece of procurement related to the drone program, and according to Stone, it's an essential piece.

The van is expected to take six or eight weeks until it is complete and ready to be delivered to the college.

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- See more at: <http://www.thealpenanews.com/page/content.detail/id/552782/ACC-board-approves-UAS-van-purchase.html#sthash.CITS9V4L.dpuf>