

WSU News

January 25, 2023

NSF director praises 'amazing' applied learning at Wichita State

By Tracee Friess



National Science Foundation Director Honorable Sethuraman Panchanathan (middle) visited Wichita State University's National Institute for Aviation Research, WSU Tech and the National Center for Aviation Training last week. U.S. Senator Jerry Moran (second from right) hosted the tours. Also pictured are (from left): Waruna Seneviratne, ATLAS director, Composites & Structures and senior research scientist, WSU President Rick Muma and John Tomblin, senior vice president for Industry and Defense Programs and NIAR executive director.

- **Honorable Sethuraman Panchanathan, director of the National Science Foundation, toured NIAR and WSU Tech.**
- **Senator Jerry Moran, university president Rick Muma and NIAR's John Tomblin demonstrated Wichita State's work with industry to educate students and prepare them for the workforce.**
- **It was Panchanathan's second trip to Wichita with Moran.**

The director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) visited Wichita State University last week.

The Honorable Sethuraman Panchanathan toured Wichita State's National Institute for Aviation Research, WSU Tech and the National Center for Aviation Training as a guest of U.S. Senator Jerry Moran.

"I always believe that the real work happens in places like Wichita, and Wichita State is truly an example," Panchanathan said.

The tours focused on demonstrating how Wichita State partners with industry to educate and train students for the workforce through applied learning.

"Wichita State University is doing amazing things," Panchanathan said. "When I look at the convergence of what industry needs and what we need to train the next generation of experts, that fusion is right here in action – live - which is phenomenal to watch."

“ I always believe that the real work happens in places like Wichita, and Wichita State is truly an example.”

*– Sethuraman Panchanathan, director,
National Science Foundation*

"For the national security and economic well-being of our nation, we need to make sure that we are investing in science and engineering," Moran said. "NSF is the primary funder of opportunities to grow that science across the country."

Earlier this month, Moran also accompanied representatives from Micron Technology and SpaceX on their visits to Wichita.

"While we saw certainly what potential there is for Wichita and Kansas businesses to do more work for companies across the country, none of that is possible without the necessary education and training that takes place in our universities and our technical and community colleges across Kansas," Moran said.

This was Panchanathan's second trip to Wichita with Moran. The trip also included a visit to Pittsburg State University's Tyler Research Center.

Last month, the NSF released its most recent survey for Higher Education Research and Development, in which Wichita State cracked the top 20 in engineering R&D expenditures for the first time. Wichita State's total R&D expenditures were listed at \$192 million.