



Nanosciences at the heart of an excellence collaboration between Université fédérale de Toulouse-Midi-Pyrénées and Rice University in Texas

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For over a decade, **Rice University in Houston** and the **Université fédérale de Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées** (UFTMP) have maintained a productive collaboration in nanophysics through a three party cooperation that also includes Germany's **Johannes Gutenberg University**.

This collaboration, focused on the study of nanomaterials essentially through optical spectroscopies, involve several research teams gathered in two laboratories, the **Excellence Laboratory NEXT** (Nano, mesures EXtrêmes, Théorie - Nano, EXtreme measurements, Theory) in Toulouse, recently awarded as a National research graduate school (*Ecole Universitaire de Recherche*), and Rice's **Smalley-Curl Institute**. Through researcher and student exchanges, numerous articles were published in high impact factor journals over the past dozen years. To further structure this successful cooperation, a high-level delegation from Rice University went to Toulouse, France, on June 11th and 12th, 2018, to sign a memorandum of understanding with the University of Toulouse. This meeting was partially supported by the Office for Science and Technology of the French Embassy in the United States.

The delegation from Rice, headed by the university president, David Leebron, included world-class nanotechnology researchers:

- **Pr Naomi Halas**, director of the Smalley-Curl Institute, member of the US' National Academy of Sciences and associate editor of the scientific review Nano Letters
- **Pr Peter Nordlander**, expert in the theoretical physics of nanostructures and associate editor of the American Chemical Society review, ACS Nano
- **Pr Junchiro Kono**, specialist in the photonics of nanostructures and pillar of the collaboration between Toulouse and Rice, notably involving Nobel Prize for Chemistry Richard E. Smalley (Rice)
- **Pr Jun Lou**, director of the Nanomaterials, Nanomechanics and Nanodevices laboratory, head co-editor of the scientific review Materials Today
- **Pr Matteo Pasquali**, expert in carbone nanotubes synthesis for industrial applications



The Texan delegation was welcomed in Toulouse by **Prof. Xavier Marie**, director of the NEXT laboratory. Over the two day visit, Rice and Toulouse scientists met and discussed prospects of collaborations. The memorandum of understanding was signed by **David Leebron** and **Philippe Raimbault**, president of the Université fédérale de Toulouse-Midi-Pyrénées.

For **David Leebron**, this agreement complies with his Vision for the Second Century, Second Decade (V2C2) program, one of its goals being to improve the international visibility of Rice through the quality of its research and education programs. During his speech, David Leebron, avowed francophile, expressed his wish to further this collaboration to the other expertise fields of the Toulouse campus, which are aerospace and artificial intelligence, a wish he privately expressed to the French General Consul in Houston a few days later.



Link: <http://www.next-toulouse.eu/news/next-welcomes-a-delegation-of-the-university-of-rice>.