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## **Purdue alumnus to demonstrate his company's products at White House**

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WASHINGTON, D.C., and WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Educational products and services that enable students affected by blindness and low vision to experience more hands-on science learning will be demonstrated at the White House on Monday (Sept. 27).

Cary Supalo, a Purdue University alumnus and founder and president of the Purdue Research Park-based startup Independence Science LLC, will meet with Kareem Dale, associate director of the White House Office of Public Engagement and special assistant to the president for disability policy. Supalo, a blind chemist who recently earned his doctorate in chemistry from Pennsylvania State University, also will meet with Jessie DeAro, senior policy analyst in the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Independence Science produces and sells educational products to schools that assist in teaching science, math and other subjects to blind and low-vision students.

"We are honored to share Independence Science's products and services that empower students affected by blindness or low-vision with the current administration," Supalo said. "Our mission always has been to inspire this population -- which is underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics -- to consider career paths in these areas."

Other Independence Science personnel who will attend the meetings include Mick Isaacson, director of research and development; Michael Lombardi, curriculum development specialist; and Lillian Rankel, director of educational innovations.

One product to be demonstrated in the White House is the Talking LabQuest, which collects and stores scientific data like acceleration and pH level. The device incorporates a text-to-speech software component developed by Independence Science that makes information displayed on its LCD screen audible.

The software was tested at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and was used by students who attended Camp Tuhsmeheeta this summer in Greenville, Mich. Independence Science received funding from the National Science Foundation to develop the technology and collaborated with Vermeer Software & Technology and the Department of Educational Studies at Purdue University to create it.

Supalo's goals for Independence Science's visit to the White House are to learn about government opportunities in getting its technologies into schools to help blind students and to promote the company's mission.

"We hope to tie this to educational and innovative opportunities for student learning in the United States," he said.

### **About Independence Science LLC**

Officials at Independence Science (<http://www.independencescience.com>) are making their expertise available to help school districts, colleges and universities, and state rehabilitation agencies across the country meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in the science curriculum. These technologies are being made available to further serve as a dissemination tool to benefit any blind and low-vision student in the United States.

### **About Purdue Research Park**

The Purdue Research Park (<http://www.purdueresearchpark.com>) has the largest university-affiliated business incubation complex in the country in four locations across Indiana. The parks are home to about 200 companies that employ 4,000 people and are located in West Lafayette, Merrillville, Indianapolis and New Albany.

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