

Murphy's Robots Featured on "Techknowledge"

By Rebecca Puig

Thursday, April 29, 2004 - Dr. Robin Murphy, professor at the University of South Florida and her team from the Center for Robot-Assisted Search and Rescue (CRASR) were featured on The Science Channel's March 3rd edition of "Techknowledge."

Host Tanya Hutchins presented a segment on how search and rescue robots will soon be working side-by-side with rescuers and their dogs to free survivors from the rubble caused by a disaster.

The Disaster Response Taskforce of Florida held a medial missions scenario to prepare rescue workers for what to expect at disaster sites. To make the training more realistic, volunteers wore theatrical make-up to give the appearance that they had sustained serious injuries from falling debris. Providing important information as to what the cameras can see and what medical personnel can detect from the images.

The program emphasized how training was critical to rescuers. "It took me several months to learn how to operate a robot and an opportunities like this prepares you for various types of rubble terrain," said USF graduate student Jennifer Carlson.

In this scenario, one robot was modified by CRASAR to carry a new medical payload. This payload houses CO₂, O₂ and SPO₂ sensors which can measure the victims breathing and monitor their pulse. A second robot was outfitted with

a water supply, which allows rescuers to offer victims water.

Michael Gonzalez, training chief for Tampa Fire & Rescue and Bill Bracken, owner/president of Bracken Engineering, Inc. were also on hand for the training. Working side-by-side with the CRASR team in the exercise and providing feedback on how medical and structural engineering personnel could use this technology to extricate victims from piles of rubble or hard to reach places.

Because of the robot's ability to shape-shift, it can easily move through the rubble and search for survivors

"We are here to give rescuers the right technology at the right time and we have to be ready because we know another natural disaster or terrorist event is just moments away," says Murphy.

"Techknowledge" is a world premiere series on *The Science Channel* that introduces groundbreaking ideas and explores exciting breakthroughs in technology.

Photographs courtesy of CRASAR



© 2005 University of South Florida 4202 E. Fowler Avenue, ADM 200, Tampa, FL 33620-5950

Direct comments about this site to sro@research.usf.edu

<http://www.research.usf.edu/absolutenm/templates/newro.asp?articleid=290&zoneid=26>