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MIT teams with Ford on driverless car

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE STAFF JANUARY 23, 2014

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Longtime rivals Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University are joining with Ford Motor Co. to develop a driverless car that can operate as intuitively as the best drivers.

The automaker has previously disclosed work on an automated Fusion Hybrid research vehicle, in conjunction with other partners. The research vehicle has four LiDAR sensors that can measure distances between objects and are used to generate real-time 3-D map of the vehicle's surrounding environment.

Greg Stevens, global manager for driver assistance and active safety at Ford said the company's goal is to create a vehicle "with common sense."

"Drivers are good at using the cues around them to predict what will happen next, and they know that what you can't see is often as important as what you can see," Stevens said. "Our goal in working with MIT and Stanford is to bring a similar type of intuition to the vehicle."

MIT will help Ford to improve the ability of the experimental Fusion to predict where pedestrians and other moving vehicles may be.

“This scenario planning provides the vehicle with a better sense of the surrounding risks, enabling it to plan a path that will safely avoid pedestrians, vehicles, and other moving objects,” Ford said.

Stanford, meanwhile, is helping Ford to get the vehicle to see around other obstacles, such as a truck, and respond accordingly.

“This research would enable the sensors to ‘take a peek ahead’ and make evasive maneuvers if needed. For example, if the truck ahead slammed on its brakes, the vehicle would know if the area around it is clear to safely change lanes,” Ford said.

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“This research would enable the sensors to “take a peek ahead.””

Ford Motor Co.

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