Expanding Assistance to the Food Processing Industry

Georgia Tech’s long-standing program of technology assistance to food processing companies got a major boost May 19 with the opening of a new 36,000-square-foot, $7.3 million research and education building.

Constructed using a mix of private and public funds, the new facility houses laboratories for developing new automation, information and environmental technologies designed to enhance the competitiveness of the industry.

The Food Processing Technology Building houses collaborative research involving both Georgia Tech and industry scientists and engineers on both immediate and long-term industrial needs in such areas as robotics, wastewater treatment, machine-vision inspection and rapid microbial detection. Also included in the new building are a high-bay prototyping area, auditorium, offices and exhibit area.

The new facility serves as headquarters for the Georgia Tech Research Institute’s Food Processing Technology Division, which conducts research under two major initiatives: the Agricultural Technology Research Program and the Traditional Industries Program for Food Processing.

gtresearchnews.gatech.edu/newsrelease/food-processing.htm

ATDC Celebrates 25th Anniversary and 100th Graduate Company

The Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC), Georgia Tech’s science and technology incubator, recently celebrated its 25th anniversary with the graduation of its 100th early-stage technology company.

ATDC was founded in 1980, when Atlanta had a much smaller community of technology companies. Since then, ATDC-affiliated companies have generated more than $9 billion in revenue, and each year provide thousands of high-wage jobs for Georgians.

Since 1999, ATDC companies have attracted more than $1 billion in capital activity, contributing to Georgia’s move into the top 10 states for venture capital investment. Some 27 ATDC companies have been represented on the public markets via acquisitions or initial public offerings.

The three most recent graduates were honored May 25 at an Anniversary Celebration and Open House held in the Technology Square Research Building. The three graduates are:

- CardioMEMS, Inc. – Founded in 2000 by Dr. Jay Yadav and Georgia Tech Professor Mark Allen, CardioMEMS combines wireless communications technology with microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) technology to develop wireless pressure sensors for advanced patient monitoring.

- Neurostar Solutions, Inc. – Neurostar Solutions’ innovative technology is designed to power virtual radiology networks, with its unique Web-based image management system providing secure, reliable and efficient image communication over the Internet to authorized users independent of their location.

- Vocalocity – Vocalocity provides platform and solution providers with the fastest and most cost-effective path to realizing the revenue potential of telephony solutions built on open standards technology.

atdc.org/news_details.asp?NewsID=695
Georgia Tech Launches New Commercialization Initiative

Georgia Tech has launched an aggressive new commercialization initiative designed to streamline the handling of intellectual property, accelerate the licensing of technology and make the Institute’s resources more readily accessible to business and industry.

Known as Georgia Tech Commercialization Services, the new initiative will expand the transfer of technology to Georgia companies while providing stronger marketing and management for Georgia Tech’s intellectual property portfolio.

Stephen Fleming, a successful Atlanta investor and entrepreneur, will head up the new unit as Chief Commercialization Officer. A Georgia Tech graduate with broad experience in technology companies, Fleming has been a partner in two Atlanta-based venture capital firms, and has managed investments in more than 20 start-ups.

By better commercializing the technology it develops, Georgia Tech expects to expand its impact on the local, state and national economies. The new initiative will:

- Create a clear process for commercializing technology developed by faculty members and students, and facilitate collaboration with experienced entrepreneurs in launching new companies;
- Provide a consistent set of expectations for business and industry partners who wish to commercialize Georgia Tech research, setting realistic goals for license terms and the licensing process, and
- Help Georgia companies develop the new products and processes they need to compete in world markets by transferring innovations developed at Georgia Tech and partner organizations.

Over the past decade, Georgia Tech’s research program has more than doubled in size and the institution has set records for the number of patents filed, technologies licensed and start-up companies formed. The Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC), Georgia Tech’s science and technology incubator, has won recognition for helping build the state’s technology community through support of start-up companies.

Winning Seed Capital from Uncle Sam

For more than two decades, the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program has helped stimulate innovation and economic development by using small companies to conduct research and development for the federal government. But though it ranks 11th in the nation for the number of high-tech workers, Georgia manages only a 25th place showing for winning SBIR grants.

To help more companies win SBIR funds—and thereby boost development of new products and processes—Georgia has launched the SBIR Assistance Program for the State of Georgia. Housed within Georgia Tech’s Office of Economic Development and Technology Ventures, the program will help educate companies about SBIR and its sister entity, the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program.

SBIR and STTR funding can help subsidize the cost of product development for small businesses. As companies conduct research to fulfill a government need, they retain rights to any technology developed from their research—and are encouraged to commercialize it. The government money, which comes in the form of grants or contracts, doesn’t have to be paid back, nor do companies have to give up equity to get it.

Beyond education, the new initiative will help companies determine if they should pursue SBIR funding, then guide those with potential through the process. To be eligible for the SBIR program, companies must be U.S.-owned and have fewer than 500 employees.

www.sbir-georgia.org
PROFILE

Charles France

As manager of business-to-business marketing and new product development services in Georgia Tech’s Business and Industry Services, Charles France helps Georgia companies develop strategies to improve their overall performance. A general business consultant with more than 25 years of experience, he helps clients boost performance through cost reduction, financial analysis and budgetary development, marketing and strategic planning, organizational and management development—and by setting objectives, goals and priorities.

“I specialize in assisting small and medium-size manufacturers answer questions regarding what strategies they should adopt for growth, given their products, customers and markets,” he said. “If my advice is good, I get to help them develop and implement those strategies.” France’s private-sector experience includes work as a consultant serving small manufacturing businesses, as well as acquisition and marketing experience with British-owned Blue Circle. His experience spans several industries, including apparel and textile, automotive, aviation, basic materials and construction, consumer products, fabricated metal products, fiberglass products, furniture and transportation.

He holds a bachelor's degree in marketing management from Florida State University and a master's degree in business administration from Kennesaw State University.

Top Honors for Economic Development, Incubator Programs

Two recent independent studies have given high grades to Georgia Tech’s economic development and business incubator activities.

In a study done to benchmark entrepreneur support programs in Denmark, the country’s National Agency for Enterprise and Construction ranked Georgia Tech’s Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC) third among 21 world incubators in the exit rate of companies and the attraction of outside capital for companies.

In the scope of business activities provided—termed incubator activity levels—ATDC was the top U.S. program evaluated and was ranked second among 19 programs evaluated worldwide.

Another study, this one done for the state of Connecticut, ranked Georgia Tech’s program of economic development through technology transfer as among the nation’s elite. The study examined nine university-based programs and praised Georgia Tech for its relationship with and assistance to industries of all sizes, as well as its strong role in statewide economic development.

The study, which also looked at such institutions as MIT, Stanford and Carnegie Mellon, found that Georgia Tech’s economic development activities were well-integrated with those of state and local initiatives and that private-sector involvement in shaping and directing activities was strong.

Samsung Announces Design Center for Georgia

The Samsung Electro-Mechanics Company (SEM) has announced the establishment of a Georgia-based design center to develop next-generation radio frequency integrated circuit (RFIC) technology. SEM is a corporation within the Samsung Group, a global leader in semiconductor, telecommunications, digital media and digital convergence technologies.

The center is expected to become the company’s principal North American research location. Its initial focus will emphasize high-speed RFIC technologies and expertise, including providing leadership to industry-critical activities that are setting worldwide standards for next-generation products.

Officials of the South Korean company cited the opportunity to collaborate with Georgia Tech researchers and support from the Georgia Electronic Design Center (GEDC) as their primary reasons for choosing an Atlanta location for the new design center. The new center will initially be housed at the GEDC, located in Georgia Tech’s Technology Square campus in Midtown Atlanta.

Profile: Harold Daniels

www.edi.gatech.edu/b2b/
Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC) member company **Jacket Micro Devices** raised a $6 million round of funding to support the production and marketing of its radio–frequency integrated passive components for the wireless industry. The company was launched through the VentureLab program.

To encourage the development of new start–up companies around the state, Georgia Tech has teamed up with the Georgia Department of Economic Development to develop and implement a program that helps counties and communities provide a supportive environment for entrepreneurs. The “entrepreneur friendly” designation was recently awarded to **Valdosta/Lowndes County, Douglas/Coffee County, Ashburn/Turner County, Adel/Cook County, and Fannin County**. The effort is supported by the OneGeorgia Authority through the Centers of Innovation initiative.

The Southeast Trade Adjustment Assistance Center (SETAAC), operated by Georgia Tech and funded by the U.S. government, helped **six Georgia firms** counter the effects of foreign competition. The assistance created or saved 113 jobs and produced $1.6 million in sales increases.

**Emcien, Inc.,** an ATDC member company, has won a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program grant from the National Science Foundation. The grant will support the research and development of techniques to reduce manufacturing lead time and inventory through the optimization of product configurations.