

UT Southwestern BioCenter Supports Research, Boosts Dallas Business

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Dallas, Texas - UT Southwestern Medical Center is spurring innovations in patient care and aiding economic growth in the area by establishing a new biotech park, called BioCenter at Southwestern Medical District, to develop university technologies and attract existing biotech companies to North Texas.

The 13-acre site - purchased from the city of Dallas for \$4.1 million and located near the medical center's campus on Inwood Road - is being developed in stages, with the first of four buildings expected to be ready for occupancy in summer 2009. With ultimate plans for up to 500,000 square feet of laboratory, office and research space, BioCenter will serve the full spectrum of the biotechnology and biodevice industry, providing a nurturing environment for early-stage and mature companies alike, said Dr. Dennis Stone, vice president for technology development at UT Southwestern.

"As an academic medical center, one of our primary missions is to translate research discoveries from the laboratory into better care for patients. BioCenter provides us the opportunity to do that in our own backyard," Dr. Stone said.

The purpose of the site is not only to develop UT Southwestern technologies to the point of commercialization, but also to provide commercial space for existing or start-up life-science companies that want to locate close to the university and its many resources, Dr. Stone said.

Proximity to UT Southwestern provides ready access to internationally renowned scientists as well as research facilities second to none.

"We're an untapped resource," Dr. Stone said. "Ninety-five percent of biotechnology companies are founded on university-based inventions, so it makes eminent sense to have the development center in immediate proximity to the scientists who are creating new technologies."

T. Michael Wilson, managing partner at the Dallas law office of Jackson Walker, LLP, is founding chairman of the board of directors of BioDFW, a regional biotech effort aimed at fostering the growth of the area's broad life-sciences market and research activities. He's one of the major supporters of UT Southwestern's efforts to boost biotechnology's presence in the city.

"UT Southwestern is the centerpiece of our regional biotech effort and is an extremely important partner in our success," Mr. Wilson said. "It's clear that BioCenter is a project that has been needed, and it will be a catalyst for further research and development. It's a huge, positive step forward toward realizing our broader vision, and it exemplifies the leadership of UT Southwestern in Dallas and the region."

Leading North Texas companies, such as Dallas-based Texas Instruments, are poised to take advantage of the singular opportunity that BioCenter presents to the business community.

"TI welcomes the establishment of this center. We expect semiconductor technology to play a key role in some projects, and we're excited about working side-by-side with the UT Southwestern researchers with the goal of commercializing breakthrough research in the medical device and health care fields," said Doug Rasor, TI vice president of emerging medical technology and current chair of BioDFW.

"Along with TI's creation of the Kilby Labs, the BioCenter uniquely positions the North Texas region to advance the technology of health care."

In addition, Dallas-based AT&T is providing \$750,000 over five years for BioCenter to help tenants support training in

entrepreneurship as well as job creation, attraction and retention. The contribution will help establish an entrepreneurial center, an area within BioCenter devoted to training researchers in the business skills they need to successfully commercialize biomedical discoveries.

“We are pleased to support such a prestigious institution in this ambitious endeavor, which promises to yield positive results for years to come,” said LaQuita Hall, AT&T vice president, Southwest Core Network.

The new facility will not just be a building to house faculty and rent out space to companies, Dr. Stone said.

“This is a public-private relationship, with industry and scientific progress driving each other,” he said. “Science is spurring important medical advances at a phenomenal rate, and there’s been an evolution in the commercialization process over the past five or six years as we’ve begun to capitalize on our scientists and their discoveries.”

PageSoutherlandPage of Dallas is providing architectural services, and Gilbane Building Co., which has a Dallas office, is constructing the facility. UT Southwestern is using long-term bonds to finance the buildings.

Site design will provide for 60 percent laboratory space and 40 percent office space, Dr. Stone said. The facility will include shared administrative services and conferencing facilities.

UT Southwestern will provide BioCenter tenants with privileged access to several of its core research facilities, such as DNA and protein sequencing, mass spectroscopy, imaging, and microarray analysis.

“Such services offer a great advantage because the capital expenses for these capabilities would kill a small company,” Dr. Stone said.

UT Southwestern’s core facilities are part of the university’s Institute for Innovations in Medical Technologies, which receives financial support from the Texas Legislature as a specific \$8 million appropriation.

The site for BioCenter was purchased with profits UT Southwestern received from its technology transfer program. Since 1984 more than 550 UT Southwestern researchers have been named as inventors on more than 1,200 invention disclosures, yielding more than 360 issued U.S. patents. Revenue from more than 300 licenses generated more than \$110 million for UT Southwestern since 1984, with more than \$40 million generated in the last four years. Among public universities, UT Southwestern has consistently ranked near the top in intellectual property revenue.