



Osceola County News Release

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Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center Opens

Center for Neovation Heralds Beginning of New High-Tech Opportunities for Community

Osceola County, Florida – With a focus on the future, officials dedicated a 109,000-square-foot building Thursday that is one of the most advanced research and manufacturing labs in the world.

The Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center was completed on schedule – 24 months after design began – and is ready to host new manufacturing technologies as the anchor of a 500-acre, master-planned site owned by Osceola County called NeoCity.

“This building puts us at the forefront of the next disruptive market explosion that will be semi-conductor based,” said Osceola Commission Chairman Brandon Arrington. “We are strategically positioned to capitalize on the collaboration between universities, the community and industry. The Osceola County Commission’s willingness to make a bold financial commitment, along with the vision and foresight to find great partners – starting with UCF and the Corridor -- has made it all possible.”

Leaders say the building’s dedication signals a new horizon for the region’s high-tech economy, and the site will be more than a traditional research park with its surrounding natural landscape, community connections and wide-ranging partnerships.

“This is a great day for Central Florida. Bringing together local and global partners isn’t always easy, but the power of partnership helps us achieve change that makes a difference. That’s what we celebrate today” said Dr. John C. Hitt, UCF president. “We’ve brought together some of the best minds from research labs and manufacturing centers with future-focused government and industry leaders. The result – BRIDG -- holds the promise of revolutionizing the smart sensor industry while driving economic development and innovation in our region.”

BRIDG, a consortium led by Osceola County, the University of Central Florida and the Florida High Tech Corridor Council, offers partners and others the opportunity to share equipment and conduct

research needed to profitably access the next-generation sensor economy – an area where UCF is positioned to lead the charge.

BRIDG (Bridging the Innovation to Development Gap) is an acronym that captures the central mission of the innovative technology collective.

“Just one year ago, NeoCity was an open field and today it is BRIDG's new home,” said BRIDG CEO, Chester Kennedy. “We have a state-of-the-art facility to help us bring to light new and exciting ideas for our partners. We are thankful to Osceola County, the University of Central Florida, and the Florida High Tech Corridor Council for their visionary leadership and invaluable support. Osceola County is becoming a hub for high-tech jobs and innovation, and it is amazing to witness this growth every day.”

The 109,000-square-foot facility will be one of the most advanced fabrication labs in the world. Since it launched in 2014, the consortium, formerly known as the International Consortium for Advanced Manufacturing Research (ICAMR), has provided a platform for advanced manufacturing development to “bridge the gap” between advanced research and cost-competitive manufacturing of new products tied to connected devices and the Internet of Things.

BRIDG’s partners now range from a Belgium-based leading international hub in nano-electronics and digital technology to a home-grown photonics and smart sensor developer. Other major partners include Harris Corporation, Tupperware Brands, Argonne National Laboratories, Kissimmee-based Photon-X, Florida International University, University of South Florida and University of Florida among others.

“The Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center is a testament to what can be accomplished when partners align for the greater good of a region and visionaries lead the way. Osceola County’s vision will change the future of this region as high wage, high skill job opportunities continue to grow benefitting the entire Corridor,” said, Ed Schons, president of The Corridor.

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