



Clemson University breaks ground for Advanced Materials innovation center



Submitted by: [John Warner](#) on Jun 13, 2008 at 7:51 am Tagged with: [Entrepreneurship](#), [Innovation](#) Source: [Clemson](#)

DATE: June 12, 2008

CONTACT: Chris Przirembel, (864) 656-7701
cprzmb1@clemson.edu

WRITER: Sandra Woodward, (864) 656-1220
sandra@clemson.edu

CLEMSON — Clemson University Thursday broke ground for a center that will anchor a research and innovation complex at the Clemson University Advanced Materials Center technology park in Anderson County. The complex will enhance opportunities for Anderson County to take a leading role in the state's advanced-materials industry.

Rendering by The Boudreaux Group Located on S.C. 187, a stone's throw from Interstate 85, the innovation center will serve as a high-tech business incubator, providing space for advanced materials-related start-up companies and so-called "landing parties," companies exploring the viability of locating new businesses or relocating existing businesses in the area.

Clemson University President James F. Barker said the Clemson University Advanced Materials Center already offers tremendous value to advanced-materials businesses.

"The state-of-the-art Advanced Materials Research Laboratory features exceptional research laboratories and equipment and one of the finest electron microscope facilities in the nation," Barker said. "Even more important, however, is the intellectual power housed here. An interdisciplinary group of scholars in such fields as chemistry, physics, photonics and other materials science and engineering disciplines is increasing the body of knowledge and educating the graduate students who will become the next generation of leaders in their fields."

Completion of the new facility, he noted, will complete the "innovation chain" from basic research to the startup companies that take a discovery to the marketplace.

Groundbreaking "The location so near Interstate 85, in the heart of the eighth-largest regional economy in the world, offers the advanced-materials industry many advantages, and we look forward to significant growth and collaboration," he added.

Barker praised the commitment of Duke Energy and AdvanceSC to the project. Each contributed \$1

million toward the innovation center.

“Today we celebrate the dedication of these two organizations to the economic health of South Carolina and to the Anderson community,” he said. “Their support is essential to the success of the innovation center and to the growth of the advanced materials industry in this area.”

Barker said the Clemson University Advanced Materials Center follows the same economic development model that created the Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR) in Greenville.

“It takes the focus and commitment of everyone in the state — business, academic and government entities — to move South Carolina ahead economically,” Barker said. “The economic-development model we have followed matches academic strength with the needs and goals of private industry in the state with support from public and private sources.”

The state of South Carolina provided \$5 million toward construction of the building through the South Carolina Research University Infrastructure Act. Innovate Anderson, a public-private partnership focused on stimulating economic growth in Anderson County, purchased the remaining property in the Advanced Materials Center for \$1.3 million for recruitment and development of advanced materials-related business.

Ellen Ruff, president of Duke Energy Carolinas, noted that company’s interest in the economic health of the region and the importance of maintaining a manufacturing base.

“When I visit with customers, they make it very clear that for manufacturing to thrive in the region, they must have a strong academic knowledge base, a well-trained workforce and reliable, cost-effective energy. This initiative brings those three priorities together into a partnership where everyone benefits,” Ruff said.

Carol Burdette, president of the AdvanceSC board of directors, said the board voted unanimously to support the innovation center project.

“AdvanceSC remains very excited and honored to assist in the creation of this new innovation center,” Burdette said. “This facility well represents three of the main focus areas of our organization: education, economic development and manufacturing competitiveness, and we look forward to seeing the impact it will have across the entire region.”

Mike Panasko, president of Innovate Anderson, said Anderson County leaders are poised to make the most of the opportunity the innovation center provides.

“The Innovation Center is a great example of what it takes to build your community’s future in a progressive and positive manner. The impact this facility will have on raising not just Anderson County’s value, but the region and state as well, is tremendous,” he said

Chris Prziembel, Clemson’s vice president for research and economic development, added that the South Carolina Research Authority will build a \$4-million companion facility adjacent to the innovation center to house SCRA contract and classified research.

“The financial commitment by SCRA was a very important element in matching the research infrastructure funds and making this entire project possible,” Prziembel said.

“We are pleased to join with Clemson University and our private partners to fulfill the vision of our legislators in delivering this Innovation Center,” said SCRA CEO Bill Mahoney. “Our partnership will provide two side-by-side facilities that will accelerate discovery and commercialization of advanced materials for both military and corporate applications, and help generate higher-paying, knowledge-based jobs in South Carolina.”

Construction of the complex is expected to be complete by August 2009.

END

About Duke Energy

Duke Energy, one of the largest electric power companies in the United States, supplies and delivers energy to approximately four million U.S. customers. The company has approximately 36,000 megawatts of electric-generating capacity in the Midwest and the Carolinas and natural gas-distribution services in Ohio and Kentucky. Duke Energy also has more than 4,000 megawatts of electric-generating capacity in Latin America, and is a joint-venture partner in a U.S. real estate company. Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., Duke Energy is a Fortune 500 company traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol DUK. For more information go to www.duke-energy.com.

About AdvanceSC

AdvanceSC supports education, economic growth, existing manufacturing and public-assistance agencies in Duke Energy’s South Carolina service area. Established as a limited-liability company by Duke Energy in 2004, AdvanceSC is funded with profits from the company's Bulk Power Marketing program and is managed by a board of Upstate South Carolina leaders.

About Innovate Anderson

Innovate Anderson is a public-private non-profit organization formed by Anderson County, the City of Anderson, the Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce and private businesses to encourage economic development in Anderson County. Innovate Anderson is an important catalyst for future-oriented economic development strategies that will help Anderson County compete in a challenging global economy.

About SCRA

SCRA is a global leader in applied research and commercialization services with offices in Anderson, Charleston and Columbia. SCRA collaborates to advance technology. SCRA provides technology-based solutions with assured outcomes on behalf of industry, government and research universities like Clemson University, the University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina.

See [10048 other posts](#) submitted by [John Warner](#). Find articles, people, and videos related to: [Entrepreneurship, Innovation](#)

