

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

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Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's New Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center Created to Stimulate Local Economy Incubator program will nurture growth of entrepreneurial start-up companies

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The College of Business at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has established the Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center to stimulate job growth by encouraging entrepreneurial economic development of companies that, once established, are committed to remaining in the Coastal Bend.

The Innovation Center was approved during the last legislative session with strong backing from state Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, and state Reps. Todd Hunter, Abel Herrero and Solomon Ortiz Jr. A key component of the Center is its innovative incubator program that will nurture entrepreneurial startup companies by providing targeted resources and services to accelerate their growth and ensure long-term success.

“Because the future prosperity of the University and the Coastal Bend community go hand-in-hand, it is imperative that we strengthen our existing partnership through the pursuit of common goals,” said Dr. Flavius Killebrew, president of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. “With the creation of this Center, our elected officials have provided an outstanding avenue for mutual cooperation that allows the University to invest in the community just as the community has invested so much in our growth and pursuit of excellence.”

The business incubation program promotes cross-disciplinary academic and entrepreneurial programs utilizing University faculty and staff to maximize the potential for success. By extending the services and expertise to help them become financially viable, the program helps new companies create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, commercialize new technologies, and strengthen local and statewide economies.

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“By funding this Center, the legislators and other community leaders have given a great opportunity to the College of Business to create the mechanism necessary to establish new businesses on a sound basis,” said Dr. Moustafa Abdelsamad, dean of the College of Business. “Our faculty, students, community organizations, and center staff will provide the necessary guidance for member companies to enhance their chances for success. The Center will be able to provide the business aspect necessary to supplement the technical side of new ventures to increase their viability. This is a great partnership with benefits to all concerned.”

The Center has already accepted its first two clients into the incubator program. Plasma Technologies, Inc. is a medical technology company that develops, designs, patents and markets medical devices to be used in wound healing, tissue regeneration and sterilization. The local company works in close collaboration with Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pa., as well as Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Ensemble Group, a Web site design and application developer, uses the latest technology to assist clients in Internet marketing. Using database technologies, the company provides custom-built systems to increase productivity and economic returns.

“In two years time our goal is to be hosting 25 resident and 100 affiliate (non-resident) clients, subsequently creating new job opportunities in the Coastal Bend area,” said Richard Bell, director of the business incubator. “This is a great opportunity for the University to provide a positive economic impact to a community that has supported higher education while at the same time provide educational opportunities for university students to work in an entrepreneurial environment.”

Under the program, fledgling businesses receive appropriate rental space and flexible leases, shared basic business services and equipment, and technology support services. Additionally, they have access to professional Ph.D. level consulting, student internship programs, coursework modeling and interaction, executive-level education classes and assistance in obtaining the financing necessary for company growth.

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The Innovation Center also offers professional continuing education, seminars and workshops for Coastal Bend businesses. For more information, or to apply for admittance to the Incubation Program, go to www.coastalbendinnovation.com.

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