Blackstone LaunchPad at UCF Open for Business

On September 26, UCF’s College of Business opened the new Blackstone LaunchPad at UCF. The acclaimed and innovative program provides students with a network of venture coaches and entrepreneurial support to transform ideas into viable companies. The program, made possible by a $1.4 million grant by the Blackstone Charitable Foundation, is open to all students, regardless of age or field of study.

“As America’s leading partnership university, UCF is proud to participate in an exciting new alliance to launch the next generation of Florida’s entrepreneurs. This effort will greatly benefit our students and enhance the economic prosperity of our community, which is good news for all of Central Florida,” said UCF President John Hitt.

UCF is the 10th school in the country to launch the program. Based on a successful program developed by the University of Miami (UM) and expanded by Blackstone, the Blackstone LaunchPad is an innovative program that treats entrepreneurship as a viable career path. UM’s LaunchPad has created 100 startup ventures and

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UCF License Deal Puts Student-Led Spin-Out on Fast Track

UCF has signed a license agreement with student-led spinout company, Mesdi Systems.

Mesdi Systems specializes in the production and implementation of advanced spray equipment used to manufacture nanomaterials and ultra-thin coatings. The agreement gives Mesdi the tools it needs to increase its proprietary equipment that is currently being implemented to manufacture next-generation lithium-ion batteries.

"Mesdi is a clear example of the benefits of helping our student entrepreneurs enter the marketplace," said Svetlana Shtrom, director of technology commercialization at UCF.

The company is now in position to dominate the world market in the production of large-area electrospray coating equipment that can be used to lower the manufacturing cost of high-technology products such as lithium-ion batteries, solar panels, fuel cells and energy-efficient glass. The spray technology can also improve the quality of medical products such as pharmaceuticals.

Mesdi’s chief technology officer, Brandon Lojewski, co-developed the idea for Mesdi while working on spray technology as a research assistant in Assistant Professor Weiwei Deng’s Droplet and Energy Lab. Deng, from UCF’s College of Engineering and Computer Science, is the head of the lab and was Lojewski’s master’s thesis adviser.

Lojewski realized the great potential for this technology in large-scale industrial applications and formed Mesdi by winning a $10,000 award in MegaWatt Ventures competition, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Lojewski explained, “I am very fortunate to have the resources provided by UCF’s Office of Research and Commercialization and Venture Lab. Being a UCF student and an entrepreneur allowed me to leverage assistance with company formation, venture pitch coaching, document preparation and introductions to a network of professional start-up mentors. The relationships with those mentors led to building the Mesdi executive team and has moved the company forward in many aspects.”

Mesdi went on to win $100,000 in the DOE National Clean Energy Business Plan Competition last year. In January, Mesdi opened a manufacturing center in Melbourne, Fla., and currently employs a full-time staff of four.

Since the license with UCF was signed, Lojewski initiated a strategic partnership with a key player in the field of energy storage. It is Mesdi’s goal to manufacture key materials and components in next-generation energy storage devices such as lithium-ion batteries and super-capacitors. Future plans for Mesdi are to implement advanced spray processes.

Space Technology Leaders Convene

UCF’s Florida Space Institute (FSI) recently held its first annual conference on space sciences and space technology.

Space Tech 1.0, which was held in September at UCF’s Rosen College of Hospitality Management, was designed to bridge the gap between technology, visionary science and progressive space programs to create new approaches to global issues. Nearly 100 scientists, business leaders, researchers and students attended the event, which encouraged collaboration to look at new ways the space industry can solve problems on Earth.

“As a result of Space Tech, we have affirmed some important relationships that will help position the Florida Space Institute as a hub for next-generation space research,” said Ray Lugo, FSI director.

The conference drew in a spectrum of space-related speakers, including Dave Williams, a Canadian physician and retired Canadian Space Agency astronaut who was recently appointed to the Order of Canada; Ray Wheeler, an expert on the benefit of plants for long-duration spaceflight; and Al Ducharme, a former UCF engineering professor and president and CEO of Hoverly, an innovative company making unmanned vehicles and aerial robotics.

As a result of the conference, Dr. Williams has agreed to serve as an adviser for the FSI, which will help the center engage with more national and international-scale projects, Lugo said.

Space Tech 1.0 also featured a student competition, where students were judged on practicality of research, quality of research, pertinence to global issues and unforeseen applicability.

UCF students Patricia Bockelman Morrow and Matthew McInnis won the first and second place awards, and Eric Schulz of the University of Florida won third place.

For more information, visit FSISpaceTech.com.
Researchers Receive $113M in Funding in Fiscal Year 2013

Researchers at UCF received $113 million in grants in FY 2013, a year that was characterized by federal budget cuts and a strong effort by the university’s educators to increase critical science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) training programs.

The College of Engineering and Computer Science received the most funding with $18.3 million, followed by the College of Sciences with $14.2 million. The College of Education and Human Performance received $10.8 million, 36 percent more funding than it received in FY 2012.

“Our faculty did a yeoman’s job in securing funding despite the perfect storm of the federal sequester, state funding cuts for UCF and loss of some key faculty members,” said M.J. Soileau, vice president of the Office of Research and Commercialization.

“Before the sequester we were running dead even with our FY 2012 levels, our best year other than the year of the federal stimulus money,” he said. Federal awards totaled $52.9 million, a drop of 28 percent over FY 2012. The university initiated a slightly different tabulation model in FY 2013, designed to give a clearer picture of industry funding. Funding for industry and other sources, including professional and nonprofit organizations, was $41 million. Combined state and local funding was $19.3 million.

A highlight of the year was NASA’s award of a $55 million grant to Richard Eastes of the Florida Space Institute. The project, the first NASA mission led by a Florida university, will launch a geostationary satellite with an instrument to image the Earth’s upper atmosphere. However, the funding will be received in increments starting in FY 2014 and is not counted as part of the FY 2013 total.

The National Business Incubation Association named the UCF Business Incubation Program (UCFBIP), which is funded in partnership with local governments, as “2013 Incubator Network of the Year.” The UCFBIP is the university’s premier commercialization effort, and this recognition demonstrates that UCF’s economic engagement efforts are being recognized around the country.

“Our faculty did a yeoman’s job in securing funding despite the perfect storm of the federal sequester, state funding cuts for UCF and loss of some key faculty members.”

- M.J. Soileau, vice president for research and commercialization at UCF.
innovator

companies have benefited from their relationship with UCF’s Business Incubation Program,” said Thomas O’Neal, the program’s founder and executive director. “Some have come and gone quickly, while others stayed longer. But Edgefactory and those 99 other graduates came here, took advantage of everything this program has to offer, and leveraged it to streamline and grow their companies.”

Edgefactory is an Orlando-based, award-winning creative video production company that specializes in convention and corporate video production services using cutting-edge technology. Their clientele includes Fortune 500 companies, film production agencies, audiovisual companies, as well as professional meeting planners.

The milestone graduate, which is also celebrating its second Emmy Award nomination for writing and producing from the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, was an incubator client from February 2012 to July 2013 at the program’s downtown Orlando location.

Melissa Wasserman, site manager of the UCF Business Incubator - Orlando, said she is proud to have Edgefactory as the program’s 100th graduate.

“They are a great example of the kind of company we look for… engaged and coachable,” Wasserman said. “We know they are going to continue to grow and be a great engine for economic development in the community and that is why we are here.”

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, only 44 percent of small businesses continue to operate after four years. However, the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA), the world’s leading business incubation and entrepreneurship organization, has found that 87 percent of incubated companies are still in business five years after graduating from their program.

With statistics showing that 84 percent of incubator graduates remain in their communities, the UCFBIP was created to help diversify the Central Florida economy by nurturing companies with the potential to create high-wage jobs.

Since its founding in 1999, the UCFBIP has helped several hundred emerging companies, including more than 120 current clients and 100 graduates. From October 2011 to December 2012, the UCF network of current and graduated clients created a regional output of more than $400 million, resulting in an almost $6 return for every $1 invested in the program by the Central Florida community.

Earlier this year, the success of the UCFBIP was internationally recognized by the NBIA as the 2013 Incubator Network of the Year.

“I am very proud of all that our program has achieved over the years,” O’Neal said.

For more information about the UCFBIP, visit incubator.ucf.edu.

UCFBIP Reaches Milestone Achievement

Events Calendar: December 2013 - May 2014

I/ITSEC 2013: The World’s Largest Modeling, Simulation and Training Conference
December 2-5, 2013
Location: Orange County Convention Center, South Concourse
Website: www.iitsec.org

VenturePitch Orlando
December 4, 2013
Time: Starting at 6:00 pm
Location: The Abbey at Thornton Park, Orlando, FL
Website: www.venturepitchorlando.com

2014 Florida Venture Capital Conference
January 28-29, 2014
Time: 10:00 am – 8:00 pm
Location: Hyatt Regency Orlando, Orlando, FL
Website: www.flventure.org

The 8th Annual ACEEE Energy Efficiency Finance Forum
May 11-13, 2014
Location: Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, DC
Website: www.aceee.org

For Workshops or Programs hosted by the UCF Business Incubation Program, visit www.incubator.ucf.edu

For Workshops or Programs hosted by the National Entrepreneur Center, visit http://www.nationalec.org

The CAT5 Awards celebrate powerful, disruptive product developments and provide Capital for the Acceleration of Technologies to early stage companies. First place winners will be awarded $100,000 and second place winners will receive an award of $50,000, both from Space Florida’s sponsorship.

Application Deadline: November 8, 2013 @ 5PM Eastern

For more information on eligibility criteria or to apply: Visit the CAT5 Awards Page
UCF Ranks Among World’s Leading Universities for Scientific Paper Performance

UCF ranked among the leading universities worldwide for scientific paper performance according to National Taiwan University’s 2013 Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers for World Universities. UCF ranked No. 454 worldwide and No. 140 in the U.S. in the ranking, which evaluates performance based on output of scientific papers.

Formerly known as the Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan Ranking, the Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers for World Universities is an annual performance ranking for world universities based on the production and impact of their scientific papers. The ranking system, also known as NTU Ranking, evaluates and ranks the scientific paper performance for the top 500 universities worldwide.

Of more than 4,000 research institutions obtained from the Essential Science Indicators, the NTU Ranking first selects the top 700 institutions based on the number of published journal articles and number of citations. The ranking is entirely based on statistics of scientific papers based on three categories: research productivity, which accounts for 25 percent of the score; research impact, accounting for 35 percent; and research excellence, which accounts for 40 percent.

In addition to the overall performance ranking, NTU Ranking also offers six field-based rankings and 14 subject-based rankings. UCF had a total of 10 rankings in the 2013 NTU Ranking, with two fields and seven subjects in the top 300. UCF ranked No. 174 for engineering, No. 208 for social sciences, No. 251 for computer science, and No. 291 for physics.

The top-ranking universities worldwide included Harvard, Johns Hopkins University and Stanford University. The top-ranking university in Florida was the University of Florida, which ranked No. 35 on the list.

The NTU Ranking is hosted annually by Dr. Mu-Hsuan Huang, professor of Department of Library and Information Science for National Taiwan University.

For more information, visit NTU Ranking’s website at NTURanking.lis.ntu.edu.tw.

UCF Office of Research and Commercialization Expands Team to Build Funding

Michael Macedonia, the former director of the Disruptive Technology Office for the Director on National Intelligence, has been named an assistant vice president for research and commercialization at UCF.

In his role, Macedonia will focus on building the university’s base of federal and industry funded research. According to M.J. Soileau, vice president for research and commercialization at UCF, the role is important to UCF’s rapid transformation into a major engine of innovation for Florida and the nation.

“Universities, as institutions of learning, develop and host creative people who advance new ideas and research for a better world. At UCF, we have a powerful combination of people and ideas. Mike is going to help us exhibit our talents to the community and to potential partners so that we can go to the next level as a national research university,” Soileau said.

Macedonia has been involved with UCF since 1998 when he served as technical director for the U.S. Army’s Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation Command. Through that role, he helped form early partnerships with UCF’s Institute for Simulation and Training.

“My experience in working in industry, academia, and government enables me to connect with a wide spectrum of audiences and help them understand the potential of the world-class research offered by UCF. UCF researchers are creating a future that is safer, healthier, and more secure. I am proud to be on their team,” Macedonia said.

Macedonia has a Ph.D. in computer science from the Naval Postgraduate School, a master’s degree in telecommunications from the University of Pittsburgh, and a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Debra Reinhart, assistant vice president for research and commercialization, has returned to UCF. Reinhart intends to use the experience she gained with the agency to boost UCF’s competitiveness in submitting winning research proposals.

Reinhart plans to share the experience she gained while managing NSF’s $12 million Environmental Engineering program, reviewing proposals and working with universities across the country to achieve the agency’s goals.

Reinhart has extensive experience with UCF, starting with receiving her bachelor’s degree in environmental engineering here. After receiving her Ph.D. in environmental engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology, she returned to UCF, where she was awarded the university’s most prestigious honor, Pegasus Professor. Additionally, she serves as a professor of environmental engineering and has held numerous key administrative roles including executive associate dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science, and interim dean of the NanoScience Technology Center.

In 2010, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, ranked UCF a research-intensive university, largely because of its strength in working with industry and commercializing technology. Additionally, a leading engineering industry group ranked UCF No. 3 in “patent power.”

“We recognize that our faculty are capable of competing with the best faculty in the country for research funding and we want to give them all the tools we can to help them be successful,” said M.J. Soileau, vice president for research and commercialization.
engaged nearly 2,000 participants since its inception.

The LaunchPad Process can be broken down into four steps. The student entrepreneur starts off by creating an online profile. The student then describes the new business concept, expected market, and competition needs. Once the idea starts to develop, students will have access to meet with the LaunchPad staff, who can provide advice to develop the idea. Finally, the hopeful entrepreneur enters the venture coaching program, where a network of business leaders will help the student and their venture.

“Entrepreneurship is the single most effective way to spur economic growth and job creation. We must all play a role in nurturing talent and through Blackstone LaunchPad, we can foster new generations of entrepreneurs who will transform local economies by creating new and innovative companies,” said Blackstone’s Co-Founder, Chairman and CEO, Stephen A. Schwarzman.

The Blackstone LaunchPad is located in the UCF Student Union, making it easily accessible to students.

The Blackstone Charitable Foundation was founded at the time of The Blackstone Group’s Initial Public Offering in 2007 with substantial commitments from the Firm’s employees. Influenced by the enterprising heritage of the firm and its founders, The Blackstone Charitable Foundation is directing its resources and applying the intellectual capital of the firm to foster entrepreneurship in areas hardest hit by the global economic crisis. Through its investment expertise across several asset classes and geographies, Blackstone has a unique perspective on the global economy and a heightened understanding of how entrepreneurial activity is often the crucial catalyst in the growth of successful businesses, industries and communities.

For more information, visit ucf.thelaunchpad.org.

A team of researchers from UCF’s NanoScience Technology Center has developed the world’s first lab-monitored process to examine muscle function and its response to various treatments. This breakthrough may prove invaluable in furthering research efforts aimed at developing effective treatments for some progressive muscular diseases, such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and myasthenia gravis.

The research is featured in the inaugural issue of *Technology*, a trade journal designed specifically for applied researchers, scientists and engineers worldwide. According to its website, *Technology* will feature the development of cutting-edge new technologies in a broad array of emerging fields of science and engineering.

According to James J. Hickman, Ph.D., professor of chemistry, biomolecular sciences and electrical engineering at UCF, and senior author of the research paper, this breakthrough could help speed up the arduous pharmaceutical development process.

“This technology, while exciting in itself, is part of a larger goal aimed to better mimic conditions in the body,” Hickman said. “The pharmaceutical industry is in desperate need of highly predictive pre-clinical screening systems to streamline the drug development process and shorten current validation protocols, which can take a decade to implement.”

The work builds upon other notable discoveries and breakthroughs by Hickman-led research teams.

Earlier this year, his team developed a method which uses non-embryonic stem cells to explore treatment options for spinal cord injuries and diseases such as multiple sclerosis. In 2011, Hickman’s team developed a process that uses stem cells to grow neuromuscular junctions (key connectors used by the brain to control muscles) between human muscle and spinal cord cells. Recently, development of the first derivation of sensory neurons was published in *Biomaterials* and featured in *Neural Cell News*.

Additional co-authors of the *Technology* paper include Alec Smith, Ph.D., Chris Long, Ph.D., and Kristen Pirozzi. The work was supported by National Institutes of Health grants.

For more information, visit nanoscience.ucf.edu.
FAN Fosters Collaboration, Aims to Streamline Florida’s Funding

UCF’s Florida Angel Nexus (FAN) is on target to meet its goal of investing $1 million in early stage companies in 2013. Over the last year, FAN has been lining up accredited investors and has succeeded in closing three deals with promising early-stage companies.

According to FAN Director Blaire Martin, the network is happy with their current progress and is working to develop a system to transfer their best practices to additional communities across the state.

“We are working with Jamie Grooms from the Florida Institute of Commercialization of Public Research, Tim Cartwright of the Tamiami Angel Fund, and Ned Pope of the Florida Next organization to organize a centralized entity to start and administer chapters,” Martin said. “Our vision is to offer a disciplined and rewarding investment approach for accredited investors, while streamlining the funding process for Florida’s entrepreneurs. Florida is ranked fourth in potential accredited investors per capita. FAN’s statewide network will empower these accredited investors to get involved and will give qualified, high-growth companies access to hundreds of investors and mentors through one application process.”

Michael O’Donnell, executive director for the UCF Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the founder of FAN, says the initiative not only fills a significant need at UCF, it has the potential to help bring additional investment into the state.

“This is a new and exciting era for job and wealth creation. The number of growth companies and the amount of available resources are both on the rise,” O’Donnell said. “There are many people working to close the known gaps. The resulting opportunities that this creates for everyone involved will be substantial,” he added.

The companies presented to investors are vetted by FAN advisors and are presented in a consistent format for individual evaluation. Companies do not require a previous UCF connection; however many companies in the early pipeline have taken advantage of UCF’s suite of services for entrepreneurs, according to Martin.

FAN’s largest investment to date was in AZZLY, a Vero Beach-based company based that delivers Web-based patient care and revenue management services to small and mid-sized doctor’s offices and health providers. AZZLY won best pitch at the Florida Venture Forum 2013 Early Stage Venture Capital Conference and was a client of UCF’s GrowFL economic gardening program.

“AZZLY was attractive to FAN because of the company’s market and user-friendly technology platform,” Martin said. FAN has helped AZZLY identify additional markets and develop a strong sales strategy.

Another FAN investment, flexReceipts, participated in the Igniting Innovation (I2) Capital Acceleration Network, as part of the 2012 Cleantech to Spacetech multi-showcase event, held in partnership with the Florida Cleantech Acceleration Network. The company offers consumers and vendors an online receipt management system that eliminates the need for paper. Retailers are interested in the product because it also offers analytic data on customers’ buying patterns and direct marketing options.

Additionally, FAN invested in ConvergTV, a mobile video aggregation service, to offer programming live and on-demand on mobile devices.

ConvergTV recently announced a partnership with Vidora, a mobile video aggregation service, to offer programming on mobile devices.

Early-stage companies that have revenue and aggressive plans to scale can learn more and apply to FAN through its website. Once a company begins the application process, they can potentially gain access to the UCF Mentor Network. FAN’s advisors and community partners can also help companies research their markets, refine their plans, align pro forma financials, define their financial/intellectual capital needs and perfect their pitch, as well as develop a cohesive presentation to potential investors and/or strategic partners.

In addition to qualified scalable companies, FAN is seeking accredited investors, mentors, and investment groups. For more information visit FloridaAngelNexus.com, email info@FloridaAngelNexus.com or call 407-716-8563.

UCF Facts
Did you know?

- The University of Central Florida and its 12 colleges provide opportunities to more than 60,000 students from all 50 states and 140 countries.
- Researchers at UCF received $113 million in grants in FY 13.
Innovation Concourse of the Southeast Showcases Exciting Energy and Environmental Technologies

2013 Event Successfully Unites Innovation Ecosystem

On September 24—25, UCF hosted the first Innovation Concourse of the Southeast event, combining MegaWatt Ventures, the Florida Cleantech Acceleration Network in partnership with Florida Energy Systems Consortium, and the newly formed Innovation Concourse of the Southeast.

This unique event unveiled new energy and environmental technologies and products with the ultimate goal of developing an innovation ecosystem throughout the southeastern United States. The event brought together up-and-coming small technology businesses, innovative university researchers, industry leading corporations and numerous regional resources, enabling substantial exposure of these small businesses and university researchers to large commercial opportunities.

UCF hosted the event through funding by the U.S. Department of Energy and Economic Development Agency.

The MegaWatt Ventures business plan competition encompassed the first day of the event. Six months ago, 10 teams each won a $10,000 seed grant, and access to coaching and mentorship to compete for a grand prize of $100,000. The winner of the 2013 MegaWatt Ventures Competition and recipient of this year's grand prize is Bio-Adhesive Alliance from Greensboro, NC.

Bio-Adhesive Alliance utilizes swine waste to create a durable construction adhesive that enhances pavement performance and other floor adhesive applications. The technology and student participants are from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. UCF had two finalists — HySense Technology, a faculty-led spin-out from the Florida Solar Energy Center that produces color-changing pigments to identify dangerous gas leaks, and Talawah Technologies, a UCF alumni-led spin-out and UCF Business Incubation Program client company that develops low-power, long-range operating sensor devices.

The exhibition continued for a second day and concluded with a keynote speech from Patrick Sheehan, director of Florida's Office of Energy. Following his presentation, Sheehan met with exhibitors and commented that he had never witnessed such camaraderie and support between the exhibiting companies, the coaching teams and the conference organizers.

The Innovation Concourse of the Southeast event provided exciting connection opportunities for customers, investors and various strategic partners, including some of the country's largest technology companies, to advantageously develop, support and inspire an innovative technology ecosystem in this region.

Event attendees had a firsthand opportunity to meet technical scouts and venture capitalists from Fortune 1000 companies, such as Boeing, Dow, BASF, GE, Siemens and others.

The exhibitors demonstrated a wide array of pioneering technologies that address today's critical energy and environmental concerns such as soil and groundwater contamination, fracking, indoor air quality, high energy/power density storage, hydrogen leak detection and many more with endless applications.

The Innovation Concourse of the Southeast is a recurring program and hosts events to showcase companies and technologies from 10 states in the U.S. The next event is scheduled for June 3 – 4, 2014, and will feature innovations in manufacturing and safety.

To view more details about the participating companies or future efforts, please visit InnovationConcourse.com

UCF Facts
Did you know?

- Entrepreneur magazine cited the UCF Business Incubation Program as one of four best “under the radar” programs – out of more than 1,250 incubators in the U.S.
- The average UCF incoming freshman’s GPA is 3.89.
- UCF is called a “Top Up-and-Coming” national university by U.S. News & World Report, a best-value university by The Princeton Review and Kiplinger’s, and one of the nation’s most affordable colleges by Forbes.
UCF Recognized Among Nation’s Top Innovators

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the region’s economy, promoting a campus culture that can adapt quickly to meet regional needs, and provide effective leadership.

“I am proud that Central Florida exemplifies for the nation how local and state governments, businesses, communities and higher education can unite to advance prosperity,” President John C. Hitt said. “Together, we help to create new companies, grow high-paying jobs, and boost the tax base. We are setting the standard for reinventing Florida’s economy.”

Collaborating with local partners, UCF has achieved significant milestones recently in the areas of innovation and economic development. Among them:

• The university’s Business Incubation Program, which recently graduated its 100th company, was named Incubator Network of the Year in 2013 by the National Business Incubation Association.
• GrowFL, administered by UCF’s Economic Gardening Institute, has helped more than 400 Florida companies grow at a rate three times faster than their peers, adding more than 4,100 direct and indirect jobs.
• The Blackstone LaunchPad at UCF opened last month to empower students who have ideas for businesses with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. The LaunchPad, based in the Student Union, provides one-on-one coaching, seminars and access to a network of mentors and experts who can help students start successful businesses.
• The Florida High Tech Corridor Council, conceived by President Hitt in 1996 as a partnership with the University of South Florida, University of Florida and economic development organizations, has created an estimated 4,000 jobs and served more than 375 companies. The Council also has provided hands-on research experience for 2,500 students.

UCF also offers several academic programs focused on industries vital to Central Florida’s economy. Those include the College of Medicine, Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy, College of Optics and Photonics, Institute for Simulation and Training, and the College of Engineering and Computer Science.

“Universities are economic engines that not only directly employ people, but also generate research-based innovation and technical expertise that allow businesses to start up, grow, and thrive,” said APLU President Peter McPherson. “This designation recognizes universities that are really stepping up to strengthen their local economy.”

The multi-year process initiated by the APLU helped institutions better assess their engagement in economic development activities and better demonstrate the positive impact of such activities.

Applicants also identified areas for growth and improvement for their university’s economic engagement enterprise. This process included representatives from local governments, companies and economic development agencies.

“This recognition demonstrates how our talented faculty and staff members and students serve their communities so well,” said M.J. Soileau, vice president for Research and Commercialization.

“We will continue to look for new and innovative opportunities to fuel our region’s economy.”

APLU is a research, policy and advocacy organization representing 219 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems and related organizations. Founded in 1887, APLU is the nation’s oldest higher education association with member institutions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and four U.S. territories.

Workshop Explores Nanoparticle, Cell Interactions for Cancer Research

The UCF Institute for Simulation and Training (IST), in collaboration with the UCF NanoScience Technology Center, recently hosted a workshop to explore data collection, analysis and modeling of nanoparticle and cell interactions for cancer research.

Highlights of the October 11 workshop included prospects of using complexity sciences towards building computational models of nanoparticle, cell interactions by Ivan Garibay, director of the Complex Adaptive Systems Laboratory at IST and research information systems director at UCF’s Office of Research and Commercialization. Heiko Enderling, an assistant member of the Moffitt Cancer Center, gave an introduction to agent-based models of cancer and Aniket Bhattacharya, associate professor for UCF’s Department of Physics, led a discussion about potential models for particle-cell interactions.

Laurene Tétard, from UCF’s NanoScience Technology Center, discussed nanoparticle/cell interactions and Ozlem Garibay from UCF’s Office of Research and Commercialization examined funding opportunities and high-performance computing resources. Qun Huo and Alexander Balaeff from UCF’s NanoScience Technology Center discussed next steps for broader awareness in nanoparticle functionalization and multi-scale simulations in cancer research.

“We view cancer as a complex biological system and recognize the potential in studying how nanoparticles and nano-robots could be engineered to affect these systems,” Garibay said.

“The synergy at UCF is a perfect platform to create a strong, innovative and interdisciplinary program to advance cancer research,” Tétard said.

Founded in 1982 as a research unit of UCF, IST is an internationally recognized research institute that focuses on advancing human-centered modeling and simulation technology and increasing our understanding of simulation’s role in training and education. In 2012, the Institute celebrated 30 years of modeling and simulation research achievement.
UCF Paper Published in Prestigious Scientific Journal
Discovery Opens Doors for Advances in Biomedical Research

A team of researchers from UCF, along with collaborators from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, have reported an important research finding that opens doors to advances in biomedical research.

The research appears in the September edition of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). The team’s paper is the first by researchers from UCF’s College of Optics and Photonics (CREOL) to be published in the prestigious PNAS journal, one of the world’s most-cited multidisciplinary scientific serials.

The study, led by Ayman Abouraddy, an assistant professor at CREOL, builds upon a technique discovered last year to produce uniformly-sized polymeric particles.

Polymeric particles, whether at the micro or nanoscale, play an important role in medical diagnostics and therapeutics, since they can serve as beacons for detecting pathogens or as vessels to transport drugs. Many approaches have been developed by researchers to produce such particles; however the utility of each technique is typically limited to specific materials and therefore produces particles with particular sizes and structures.

In the methodology used by Abouraddy and his team, polymeric particles from a wide range of substances are produced with complex internal architectures and continuously changeable sizes. Controllable access to such a wide range of sizes enables broad applications in cancer treatment, immunology and vaccines. With a tumor, for example, no single nanoparticle size can reach all areas.

According to Joshua Kaufman, a Ph.D. student at CREOL and the lead author on the paper, “The exciting thing about this work is that we have been able to take our original breakthrough in particle fabrication and extend it into a new range of materials that are useful in biological and medical applications.”

Using heat and a “stack-and-draw” process, Abouraddy and his team can produce cable-like fibers containing multiple round cores made with the polymer of choice all encased in a cladding made of another polymer.

“Our finding builds on a well-known phenomenon seen every day. Think about what happens when you shut off a faucet. The process occurs when the two opposing forces compete: One wants the water to continue as a jet, and the other wants the water to break into droplets.”

- Ayman Abouraddy, assistant professor for UCF’s CREOL.

Biological application of Abouraddy’s discovery was conducted in Ratna Chakrabarti’s laboratory at the UCF Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences. According to Chakrabarti, an associate professor for the school, the research promises significant future applications in biomedical science, specifically cancer treatment and disease recognition.

“A major problem these days is the inability to specifically target cancer cells, Chakrabarti said. “The advantage of this methodology is that it is polymer-independent and allows for the fabrication of a hollow or solid core. The significance of this is that the polymeric particles can be conjugated with antibodies or proteins for specific recognition of a certain type of cancer cells in the body. Also, the shell can be made of a biodegradable polymer, and the hollow core can be filled with a particular drug. This way the particles could target and deliver drugs specifically to the cancer cells without disturbing normal cells.”

“Control of how the particles are made is the whole key,” said Richard Ottman, a Ph.D. candidate working under supervision of Chakrabarti. “With this approach, there’s one standard protocol to make the particles, but freedom to use any polymer. The ability to harness and control the substance used has profound applications.”

The Air Force Office of Scientific Research, the National Institutes of Health Shared Instrumentation and the National Science Foundation Materials Research Science and Engineering Center all supported the research.

To read the paper, visit http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2013/09/04/1310214110.abstract.
Florida SBDC at UCF’s CEO XChange Program

Connects Executives, Cultivates Leaders, Improves Results

Being a small business owner or leader can have many rewards - professional independence, individual accomplishment and financial success to name a few. But it also comes with many challenges, such as limited opportunities for skill development, a circumstantially-narrowed business perspective and the isolation that comes from being alone at the top -- all of which can negatively affect the business results and success of a small business entrepreneur.

A growing body of research has shown the value that peer group coaching brings to developing the skills and effectiveness of entrepreneur business leaders. Furthering this idea, in 2010 the Florida Small Business Development Center at UCF launched the CEO XChange program, a monthly executive roundtable offering a confidential setting for chief executives and business owners to discuss vital business issues, opportunities and trends with their peers. Designed for those at established, second-stage companies, CEO XChange brings together successful entrepreneurs eager to increase their effectiveness as leaders and grow their companies.

Collective Problem-Solving and Knowledge Expansion

The CEO XChange process is straightforward and simple. A group of CEO XChange chief executives gather for a presentation of an issue, challenge or opportunity facing one of their peers. Over the course of the meeting, all of the attendees contribute by brainstorming and problem-solving together, with the goal of solution identification. As a result of the diverse points of view, there is an inevitable expansion of members’ collective knowledge and understanding. Everyone benefits from leveraging the experiences of other CEO XChange members and having a multi-talented sounding board. Freed of their own daily concerns, the leaders avail themselves of the opportunity to think outside their box and engage in an often rewarding, creative thought-and-analysis process.

As one CEO XChange member, the president of a hi-tech, multi-million-dollar security firm, commented, “The CEO XChange aggregates decades of professional experience into a single, dynamic resource. The safe environment promotes both relationships and candid discussion, so the movement from issue to solution is catalyzed dramatically. The healthy group setting is cathartic for peers and, regardless of our respective ability to teach around an issue, we always learn.”

Camaraderie and Decision-Making Confidence

Beyond the benefits of collaborative problem solving and knowledge expansion, members of the CEO XChange also profit from the camaraderie and mutual support that comes from the relationships and network that evolve over time in the meetings. The members realize that they are not alone in the challenges they face. This has contributed to building the executives’ confidence in their decision-making and validation of their strategies. As one member, the president of a training company, said, “It’s also given me confidence and provided new business connections.”

The owner of a product assembly and manufacturing company and a CEO XChange member elaborated on this idea by stating, “When I first started out a few years back, I was very apprehensive that the decisions I was making were really going to get our business somewhere - to know that you’re on the right track really is a load off your back.”

Better Business Results

By helping small business owners and leaders solve problems, broaden their perspectives and build confidence in their decision-making, the CEO XChange members better manage their companies and optimize their business results. For FY 2012, member companies saw their revenues increase by more than $8.9 million, created and/or retained 663 jobs, raised more than $5.8 million in capital and won more than $9.8 million in government contracts.

The FSDBD at UCF’s CEO XChange program connects executives, cultivates leaders and helps its members improve business results and the 100 percent annual renewal rate of the members is indicative of the value members place in the program.

The CEO XChange program currently has memberships available and welcomes applications. For information about qualifications for the program and administrative details, please visit www.bus.ucf.edu/sbdc/page/CEOXChange.aspx. For additional questions, please contact CEO XChange Program Manager Hal Thayer at 407-420-4850 or at hthayer@bus.ucf.edu.
Congratulations
to the Class of 2013
Florida Companies
to Watch
Rock Stars!

Growing Florida Companies
The combined economic impact of the 50 companies selected to the Class of 2013 Florida Companies to Watch is immense. In 2012 alone, the companies generated $388 million in annual revenue and held 1,865 full-time equivalent employees. The companies collectively project the creation of 429 net new jobs for 2013. From 2009 through 2012, these companies generated $1.1 billion in revenue and added 940 employees, reflecting a 126% increase in revenue and 102% increase in jobs for the 4-year period.

For more information contact
FLCTW.GrowFL.com - The Official Event Website
#FLCTW | 407.823.6384

2013 Winners
21st Century Learning Solutions, Inc.
AgileThought
Albu & Associates, Inc.
Alpha-Omega Training and Compliance
Amzur Technologies, Inc.
Apollion
Applied Fiber
Arcadia Aerospace Industries, LLC
AVT Simulation
B&C Technologies LLC
CERTON
College Hunks Hauling Junk
Convergence Consulting Group
COWs Mobile Storage
Creative Sign Designs
Cube Care Co.
Custom Agronomics, Inc.
Custom Control Solutions
Dignitas Technologies, LLC
Doctors Administrative Solutions
Domital Corporation
Envy Labs
First Green Bank
Flagship Solutions Group
Florikan ESA LLC
HNW Global Logistics
IDavix Corporation
IDEAS
Kavaliro
LRM Industries Inc
Mainstream Engineering Corporation
Manufacturers Distributor, Inc.
MBEx
Mercedes Medical
MT Shower Door
Pacer Group, Inc.
Pelican Wire Company, Inc.
Refrigerated Express LLC
Sancillo and Company, Inc.
Seatorque Control Systems, LLC
ShayCore Enterprises, Inc.
Sixto Packaging
Snapt
Solodev
Soltice Benefits, Inc.
SouthTech
Tactical Machining, LLC
Tea Etc.
Therig, LLC
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ACG Florida Capital Connection - Florida Technology Journal - Florida Trend
SCB Marketing - Florida Venture Forum
Student Group Fosters Entrepreneurial Spirit at UCF

Jonathan Deleon understands that being an entrepreneur involves wearing many hats. In addition to founding the Business Leadership Council, which brings together presidents from organizations within the College of Business to collaborate and share best practices, Deleon also serves as president of UCF’s entrepreneur club, CEO Knights.

Established in 2002, CEO Knights is the UCF chapter of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs’ Organization, which supports entrepreneurship at more than 240 chapters across 43 states. CEO Knights provides networking opportunities, chapter activities and conferences — the highlight being the annual National Conference — to students at UCF, regardless of their age or major.

In September, CEO Knights held a special weekly speaker series event, hosting National Entrepreneur Center Executive Director Jerry Ross and CEO and Co-Founder of ALTR, Alexandra Gramatikas. During the event, Ross, a speaker and serial entrepreneur, spoke to students about his personal ventures and the steps he took to achieve success. When asked what advice she would give to aspiring entrepreneurs, Gramatikas, winner of the 2012 UCF Joust Business Plan Competition and owner of collegiate button cover startup ALTR, advised members that a “willingness to share ideas with others yields the greatest benefit.”

This year, Deleon, ‘14, a management major with an emphasis on entrepreneurship, is working with the College of Business to take the Business Leadership Council to a grander scale — with the goal of expanding the network throughout the entire university.

“I come from a diverse entrepreneurial background,” said Deleon, who also is an entrepreneurial intern with the UCF Business Incubator – Central Florida Research Park. “I think entrepreneurial students at UCF have a superior advantage because of the number of resources available within UCF’s entrepreneurial-support organizations. It’s my goal to support as many people as I can and connect them with resources available within our club and at UCF.”

For more information, visit CEOKnights.org.

Florida Companies to Watch Celebrates Class of 2013

Fifty high-performing companies from across Florida were honored at the third annual Florida Companies to Watch awards event October 24 at the Hard Rock Live in Orlando. Hosted by GrowFL at UCF in association with the Edward Lowe Foundation, event sponsors included Cherry Bekaert LLP, Florida High Tech Corridor Council, OUC, SunTrust, Edwards Financial Services, Moneycorp, USF Connect, ACG Florida Capital Connection, FilmScape Productions, SCB Marketing, Florida Trend, Florida Technology Journal and Florida Venture Form.

Florida Companies to Watch is a unique awards program that honors second-stage growth companies for their impressive employment rates and revenue growth. These companies have a reputation for generating a large amount of new jobs and strengthening Florida’s economy.

The combined impact of the 50 companies selected to the Class of 2013 Florida Companies to Watch is immense. In 2012 alone, the companies collectively generated $388 million in annual revenue and held 1,865 full-time equivalent employees. For 2013, the companies collectively project the creation of 429 net new jobs. From 2009 through 2012, these companies generated $1.1 billion in revenue and added 940 employees (both in Florida and out of state), reflecting a 126 percent increase in revenue and a 102 percent increase in jobs for the four-year period.

The winners of this year’s Florida Companies to Watch award were selected based on their growth, entrepreneurial leadership, product innovation, social/community responsibility and competitive business practices. Many of the winners were nominated by commercial service providers and local economic development organizations, making this event a celebration for communities throughout the state.

For complete list of winners, see the event ad on page 12. For more information about the event, visit FLCTW.GrowFL.com.
The Collective Power of Research

Collectively, UCF and its fellow Corridor universities — the University of South Florida and the University of Florida — represent a sizable impact on the Central Florida region and beyond. Not only do these three universities have some of the largest student populations in the country (all three are in the top 20), but their research capabilities and the outputs of those efforts rival other recognized technology hubs around the country.

Each year, the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) compiles a survey of technology transfer data from universities, hospitals and research institutions across the U.S. and Canada. The AUTM 2012 survey collected 299 responses, including a wealth of data on research expenditures, technology licenses, issued patents and new startups.

Looking at the combined power of the three Corridor universities paints an impressive picture of how much they contribute to the output of our nation’s research institutions — as well as how they compare to regions such as Austin, North Carolina’s Research Triangle and Boston’s Route 128.

UCF’s regional partnership in the Florida High Tech Corridor Council extends the impact and stature of the university’s research efforts beyond a regional level to a national scale. It is this partnership that drives the growth of local high-tech industry and achieves national prominence for our Corridor region.

Consider these facts:

- In 2012, the three Corridor universities collectively produced 30 startups compared with only 19 produced by the three Triangle universities (Duke University, North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), as well as the 30 Boston startups created by Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Boston University.
- The nine universities in the University of Texas system plus Baylor University and Rice University don’t overshadow the three Corridor universities when it comes to licensing activity and commercializing research; the Corridor universities collectively executed 191 licenses compared to 185 from the 11 Texas schools.
- The combined total in research expenditures of the three Corridor universities topped $1.2 billion.

UCF Graphene Spin-Out Expands, Opens New Facility

Garmor, Inc., a graphene oxide manufacturing company fueled by UCF technology, has moved to a new 10,000-square-foot facility near the Orlando International Airport.

Officials from UCF and dignitaries from around the state helped cut the ribbon for the new headquarters on October 16, which has begun large-scale processing of the materials.

Jeff Atwater, chief financial officer for the state of Florida, praised the company as an example of how to build productive businesses in Florida. Atwater was joined by Richard Harkey, district representative for Congressman John Mica, and Jamie Grooms, CEO, Florida Institute for Commercialization of Public Research.

Garmor was formed to commercialize technology developed by Richard Blair, a chemist in UCF’s NanoScience Technology Center, and doctoral graduate student David Restrepo. They used a combination of chemical and mechanical processes to break down graphite, found in pencil lead, into graphene, creating an element that is stronger than diamonds, able to conduct electricity and heat better than copper.

Garmor entered the UCF Business Incubation Program (UCFBIP) in March 2013 and, in May, won $300,000 in seed funding from the state’s Commercialization of Public Research’s Seed Capital Accelerator Program.

As a client company of the UCFBIP, “Garmor’s growth is a win for all involved,” said Tom O’Neal, associate vice president for research and commercialization at UCF.

The use of graphene is a cost-effective way to make materials stronger, yet still lightweight. By adding just a small amount of graphene oxide during the production process, manufacturers of plastics, rubber and metal can produce their products far lighter and stronger. Common items that could utilize graphene are automotive bumpers, boat hulls, and bridge components.

In September 2013, Garmor received the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission’s William C. Schwartz Industry Innovation Award representing the City of Orlando.

Since the move into the new facility, the company has grown to eight employees and plans to add ten more in the coming year, said Garmor CEO Anastasia Canavan.

For more information, visit Garmortech.com.
The team of professionals in the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) at UCF works with UCF inventors and industry partners to protect intellectual property and share the benefits of UCF discoveries with the marketplace through commercialization.

New! Industry-Sponsored Innovation Partnership Program

The Office of Research and Commercialization has launched a new program to increase R&D collaboration between industry partners and UCF researchers. The goal is to expedite industry-funded research projects by minimizing uncertainty in intellectual property rights and financial terms. Industry partners can now choose from three pre-determined options to establish intellectual property rights under a sponsored research agreement. For more information, contact Michelle Cristinzio at 407-823-0332 or Michelle.Cristinzio@ucf.edu. We look forward to partnering with you!

Did You Know?

The Office of Research and Commercialization has the resources to help you identify funding sources for your startup company or small business, including Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant opportunities. We can also help identify research funding opportunities for UCF faculty and students. For more information, contact the Venture Accelerator at 407-823-1442 or VentureLab@ucf.edu.

Going Public Infographic

The journey to develop, protect, and commercialize scientific discoveries starts when researchers and scientists are hired. Experience the commercialization process, from idea to marketplace, starting with our helpful infographic.

To view the graphic, visit: tt.research.ucf.edu/news/going-public

AT A GLANCE: FY 2013

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| Patents Issued | n/a | 65 | 4 | 69 |

| Total No. of Patents Issued* | n/a | 619 | 86 | 705 |

License & Option Agreements Executed: 17

Gap Fund

The Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) recently piloted a new commercialization gap fund program to provide up to $100,000 of funding for applied research. The program funded five UCF faculty researchers with projects that have a high chance of being commercialized using gap funding. The intent is to help technologies cross the “valley of death” between academic research and a level of development at which they can attract interest from investors or industry partners.

The funded projects include long-range sensors, in vitro tissues, passive hydrogen detection sensors, a DNA data analysis platform, and clean fuel additives. If funding is available, the OTT will offer this program annually.

HySense Technology

Nahid Mohajeri, a UCF researcher at the Florida Solar Energy Center (FSEC), was one of five recipients of the Office of Technology Transfer’s first commercialization gap fund. This infusion of capital — in addition to the $10,000 she received as a MegaWatt Ventures business plan competition finalist — helped her launch UCF spinout company HySense Technology. HySense manufactures Intellipigment™, specialty chemochromic (color-changing) pigments that visually pinpoint the exact location of a hydrogen leak. Hydrogen is highly flammable and difficult to detect because it is odorless and colorless, making leaks extremely dangerous. This new, low-cost technology has wide market opportunities as the pigment can be added to tape and wrapped around pipes, flanges, fittings and valves carrying hydrogen. If a leak occurs, the Intellipigment™ hydrogen tape immediately changes color to identify the specific leak location.

For more information, visit HysenseTechnology.com.

Experience UCF Research

New discoveries are happening every day at UCF. We connect research and industry — find out how at research.ucf.edu.
Soft Landing Program Helps Freshorize Take Flight

After having the unfortunate experience of sitting next to a restroom during a long flight to London in 2000, Aziz Patel, founder and CEO of Freshorize, was inspired to create a solution for airline passengers and flight attendants who shared a similar fate.

Patel spent the next two years developing a line of unique, patented soap dispensers that includes an aerosol air freshener that is automatically triggered when soap is dispensed. Thus, the world’s first combination air freshener and liquid hand wash was born — Freshorize 3-in-1.

Patel’s innovation took off. In 2005, Freshorize won the International Travel Catering Association’s Mercury Award for best onboard product, which led to more airlines wanting the innovative product.

This rise in interest prompted Patel to remodel the line to make it eco-friendly and more efficient for commercial use. The redesigned Freshorize products use 26 percent less plastic, dispense foam more efficiently, and incorporate Wikidex, a new method of dispersing fragrance at a linear rate that increases the product’s shelf life and maintains consistent freshness.

Freshorize is currently used by 90 percent of British airlines and, with assistance by the UCF Business Incubation Program’s (UCFBIP) Soft Landing Program, the company is extending its reach to the United States. The Soft Landing Program assists foreign-for-profit companies in high-growth fields entering the U.S. market.

Additionally, the UCFBIP has assisted Patel by securing an office and meeting space, and Freshorize is currently in negotiations with two of the world’s largest airlines. Since joining the program, Patel has hired two full-time staff members, Michael Joseph, business development manager, and Cody Swain — formerly with the UCF Venture Lab, now serving as director of business strategy and growth. According to Swain, the company has secured its first customer in North America, Canada’s Sunwing Airlines.

When Patel initially brought Freshorize dispensers into his UCFBIP office, he discovered that the vortex air-conditioning system, which is not used in the United Kingdom, resembles that of an aircraft cabin, causing the dispensers to release fragrance. Freshorize has since developed the first version of its product for use on air conditioning vents, and, with the UCFBIP’s assistance, plans to impact the hospitality and travel industries by early 2014.

For more information, visit Freshorize.com.

UCF Grants Day: Building University and Industry Partnerships

The UCF Office of Research and Commercialization’s Research Outreach Services sponsors a Grants Day each fall and spring semester to promote research opportunities and assist faculty, staff and students with developing winning proposals. This November, Grants Day focused on industry and university partnerships. This theme ties in with UCF’s long-standing commitment to partnerships. In September, UCF trademarked two phrases: “America’s leading partnership university” and “America’s partnership university.”

The event included a UCF faculty and industry panel discussion. Speakers included Jose Rodriguez, Ph.D., senior engineer, Gas Turbine Engineering-Technology; Jayanta Kapat, Ph.D., professor, UCF College of Engineering and Computer Science (CECS); Michael Pepper, vice president of software development, APECOR; Issa Batarseh, Ph.D., professor, UCF CECS; Si Y. Song, East Coast Spacecraft Integrations Lead, United Launch Alliance; and Alain Kassab, Ph.D., professor, UCF CECS.

Additional speakers included Robin Phelps, Ph.D., Andrea Wesser from the UCF Venture Accelerator, and Svetlana Shstrom, Ph.D., from UCF’s Office of Technology Transfer.

Grants Day took place on Monday, November 4 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the UCF Student Union, Cape Florida Ballroom 316AB.

For more information, contact Marisol.Ortega-Perez@ucf.edu.