



‘Clemson Cluster’ shows off growing technology hub in Upstate

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By John Staed

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY — Cancer detection technology. A material that makes de-icing possible, and easier. A technology that allows growth of cells in a real-life setting, allowing medical researchers more realistic results.

These technologies all are part of the Clemson Cluster, a group of start-up businesses that have links to Clemson University, are in the Upstate and are affiliated with the Technology Innovation Partnership program run by Clemson.

Representatives of the companies gathered at the Clemson University Advanced Materials Research Laboratory on Wednesday to learn about one another and meet with business leaders.

“If you combine the world-class basic research that’s coming out of Clemson University with some commercialization know-how and capital...you’re going to get an ecosystem of advanced technology, knowledge-based economy companies expanding all along the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson corridor,” said William T. “Bill” Mahoney, chief executive officer of South Carolina Research Authority.

The authority helps bring in jobs and technology to South Carolina by helping technology-based companies.

Eighteen companies were listed as part of the cluster, including Kiyatec LLC, a startup founded by Matt Gevaert and David Orr, both Clemson graduates.

That company is developing technology that will allow growth of cell cultures that can be used in medical and drug research, and eventually for personal medicine.

Kiyatec received a \$200,000 check at the event from SC Launch for seed funding and development. SC Launch provides help to technology firms and access to businesses and universities.

The Clemson Cluster is part of an effort to develop a knowledge-based economy in the Upstate, Mahoney said. As more companies learn of the cluster, chances are good that they may locate here.

Ralph Hulseman, president of Hoowaki LLC, said he looked at several states to find a business incubator before deciding on Clemson’s facilities. He listed the metal foundry, specialized microscope and polymer facilities there as a reason he has set up at the Advanced Materials Research Laboratory.

“We avoid buying lots of equipment,” he said.

His company, Hoowaki, is developing material that can be used to de-ice properties or lessen surface friction. Applications could range from use on antennas on cell phone towers to water skis. An example would be the technology that went into the new Olympic swimsuits but was applied on solid surfaces, he said.

While the majority of ideas may not be adapted for mass business use, there are several ideas in the cluster that are promising, said Chris Przirembel, vice president for research and economic development at Clemson.

“Coming out of this are companies like Kiyatec that are going to be the future of this state,” Przirembel said.