

# Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology Celebrates Groundbreaking

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Huntsville, Ala. - Governor Bob Riley, Congressman Bud Cramer, Mayor Loretta Spencer and Jim Hudson addressed community and business representatives today for groundbreaking ceremonies of the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology (HAIB). Officials met at the institute site in Cummings Research Park. Irma Tudor, vice chair of economic development for the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County and chief executive for nearby Analytical Services, Inc., emceed the groundbreaking ceremony. "Not only is Huntsville/Madison County gaining an exciting, new enterprise, I personally will be gaining a neighbor that is a dynamic addition to our community's economic make-up," said Tudor.

Governor Riley commented, "When I ran for Governor, I said we could propel Alabama's economy forward by leveraging state dollars to attract biotechnology research. That's exactly what we've done. Today, we're positioning Alabama to be a national leader in biotech, which opens up new opportunities like never before seen in our state. The hundreds of jobs this project will create are high-wage jobs that won't be exported overseas."

The mission of the HAIB is to use biotechnology to improve human health, stimulate economic development and inspire Alabama's youth to seek careers in science. Jim Hudson, president of HAIB, is excited about the progress the Institute has already made. "The groundbreaking today marks the first physical phase of our development, but much work has already been done behind the scenes," he said. "With an exemplary board of directors, outstanding scientific advisory board, a distinguished HAIB investigator, and our first research fellow in place, research and plans for the future are already underway."

According to HAIB representatives, the four-story, 260,000 square foot building will house up to 900 employees and is due for completion in mid-2007. The facility will contain state-of-the-art laboratories for biotechnology research and development in the areas of genetics and personalized medicine. In addition, space will be allocated for high school- and college-level outreach and training programs.

"This community is known for its creativity and innovation. I have no doubt the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology will greatly contribute to that reputation," noted Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer.

Representative Bud Cramer, long time supporter of the institute, commented, "I would like to congratulate Jim Hudson and his team on this phase of the development of the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology. I am excited about the potential the Institute holds for our community. It will not only be a welcomed addition to our strong scientific and research community already in place throughout North Alabama, but could also be an engine for future economic development and growth across the Tennessee Valley. I believe that our community is an ideal place for this kind of endeavor and I'm proud to have been able to help Jim make the Institute a reality."

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"Biotechnology is an exciting field with many facets—The Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology offers this community a tremendous boost in creating new business opportunities and attracting a diverse working public," remarked Mike Gillespie, chairman of the Madison County Commission.

Six local biotechnology companies have already committed to leasing space within the HAIB, and additional companies are being recruited to locate on the campus. The six companies planning to lease space include local startups Open Biosystems, Genaco Biomedical Products, Applied Genomics, Inc., Expression Genetics, New Century Pharmaceuticals and SourceCF. Nektar Pharmaceuticals has an existing building that will be adjacent to the new HAIB campus. In addition, Operon Biotechnologies, Inc. will be relocating its headquarters from Maryland to Huntsville and plans to build a facility on the HAIB campus.

The ground breaking was attended by officials from across North Alabama, including representatives of the six biotechnology firms planning to lease from the Institute. Brian Pollock, CEO of Open Biosystems was enthusiastic about the HAIB: "The Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology offers us a unique opportunity to work in close proximity with top researchers and other growing companies in related fields. We expect productive collaborations and new product ideas to emerge."

#### **About the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology**

The Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology was founded in 2005 to pursue the objective of developing and using biotechnology for personalized medicine, while creating economic growth and inspiring Alabama's youth to pursue careers in science. The HAIB will foster cooperation between its scientific research staff and biotechnology companies to shorten the time between the development in the lab of new and promising technologies and their availability for application in the clinic.

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