ncubator for innovation

Innovation Center to grow businesses from research, technology transfer

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Manhattan-K-State Innovation Center at K-State Research Park took place June 27. Leaders from K-State, Manhattan and state organizations took part in the dedication. Photo courtesy of Dan Donnet, photograpic services.

Celebrating innovation at K-State

Read about the center’s Wall of Innovation on Page 4.

are outgrowths of the university.

"I think literally just being up the hill from the College of Veterinary Medicine was a key component in allowing those companies to be conceived and launched," Glasscock said.

The National Institute for Strategic Technology Acquisition and Commercialization was founded in 1994 under the auspices of K-State and the state of Kansas via the Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation. The institute also is co-sponsored by the city of Manhattan and the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce. The institute fosters startup businesses based on research and development done at K-State as well as those based on technology and patents donated by corporations no longer using them. One of the goals is for these businesses to grow and sustain the local economy.

"We think it’s important that we create a pipeline of innovation into the state from around the world," Glasscock said. "We have effectively done that through the donated corporate portfolios. We think it’s important that as innovation is attracted to Kansas, Manhattan and our region that we couple that with the university’s capabilities, strengths and talents to foster opportunities for further education and return on our investments."

In addition to supporting the local and regional economies, the institute shares K-State’s focus on global outreach.

"We understand that the reach of K-State is global, and part of our mission is to take university innovation and technology and find a productive home for that in the marketplace around the world," Glasscock said. "We want to create a pipeline that brings innovation into our region and at the same time find a home and marketplace for innovation from our region."

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UNGAR ON SABBATICAL AS PART OF PHASED RETIREMENT

Elizabeth Unger, who for 13 years has been K-State’s vice provost for academic services and technology as well as dean of continuing education, started a six-month sabbatical July 1 as part of her phased retirement. When she returns she will take up an advisory role related to learning and technology in the university’s Information Technology Assistance Center.

Unger’s new title will be professor of computing and information sciences, and vice provost and dean emerita. She plans to research and develop innovative technology for learning, teaching, research and outreach.

STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM MODULE UP AND RUNNING

The implementation of the admissions module of the new student information system was completed the first week of June. This is the first step of the phased plan for the student information system, which is on target for completion in July 2008.

The admissions module will be used by internal administrative staff to process applications for the fall 2008 semester. There are many new features of the admissions module that will streamline the student application and admit process and allow for data to be stored and organized more efficiently.

The timeline for other modules includes the financial aid module, February 2008; the student enrollment module, March 2008; and the student financials module, June 2008. In July 2005, the financial information system was the first to go live.

For more information, visit http://www.laste.k-state.edu
Human Ecology faculty lend their expertise in Greensburg

Five weeks after a 1.7-mile-wide killer tornado hit Greensburg, two programs from the College of Human Ecology remained on site, helping the rural community cope.

Briana Nelson Goff and Charlie Griffin, leaders of the Kansas All-Hazards Behavioral Health program and the Kansas Rural Family Helpline respectively, praised the community's strength, volunteers' generosity and their co-workers' tenacity.

Wearing bright green vests, the Kansas All-Hazards Behavioral Health team was on duty two days after the tornado destroyed 95 percent of the southwestern Kansas town.

Team members came from around the state, each a professional specially trained in the behavioral health needs of disaster survivors.

Goff called what they did "therapeutic presence."

They drove all-terrain vehicles through debris that used to be a town, handing out water, food and supplies.

They worked out of tents and makeshift shelters, easing chaos and helping survivors reconnect with each other and with possessions the tornado's 205-mph winds had flung around the countryside.

Goff recalled the stacks of photo albums in the trailer that served as city hall and the community's lost and found department. "There were picture albums everywhere," she said.

Goff estimated the team provided free outreach and crisis counseling to more than 13,000 tornado survivors the first two weeks.

The Greensburg area is the first response for the newly formed Kansas All-Hazards Behavioral Health Program. In 2005, Goff and Griffin were charged to develop a state plan for disaster behavior health in Kansas.

When the rare F5 tornado, the strongest designation, hit Greensburg on May 4, the Kansas Rural Family Helpline already was in place.

"We have been active in southwestern Kansas since the Dec. 31 blizzard," said Griffin, referring to the storm that killed livestock and left farms and ranches without power for as long as three weeks.

The tornado destroyed 961 homes in Greensburg. But lesser known, according to Griffin, is the damage to agricultural operations and rural homes in Kiowa, Pratt, Edwards and Stafford counties.

"This tornado has had a dramatic impact on the financial stability of many farms," he said.

The land was littered with piles of roofing, splintered wood and parts of tractors. Volunteers walked shoulder-to-shoulder, clearing fields so farmers could get back to farming.

"One woman called and told me, 'I don't even know what questions to ask,'" Griffin said.

Despite the sea of Federal Emergency Management Agency trailers, the exhaustive work of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other organizations, Griffin was most impressed with the "good-old-boy network."

"Farmpeople are doing what they always do," Griffin said. "They are helping each other."

Griffin said a Kansas Rural Family Helpline crisis counselor met with them that first week.

"What do you need?" she asked.

"Ice," they said. They got ice. That quickly let them know somebody was paying attention to their needs," Griffin said, summarizing the counselor's role.

Goff said some will face posttraumatic stress, perhaps for the rest of their lives. They don't have to face it alone, she said.

"We're in it for the long haul," Goff said of the two K-State programs.

"The quality and volume of helping is phenomenal and heartwarming in the face of tragic loss," Griffin said.

Tornado damage in Greensburg is documented in photos taken by Briana Nelson Goff, who leads the Kansas All-Hazards Behavioral Health program, and Charlie Griffin, who leads the Kansas Rural Family Helpline. Photo courtesy of Goff and Griffin.