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## Welcome to e-news for NEXT

NEXT is the resource collaborative that specializes in developing the region's fast-growth entrepreneurial sector. The mission of NEXT is to create a new culture of entrepreneurship in the region and dramatically increase the number and quality of fast-growth, entrepreneurial companies headquartered in our region. NEXT pursues three key initiatives to achieve its mission: client services to technology-based entrepreneurs; infrastructure; and voice/advocacy.

For additional information, contact Brenda Laakso at 864-239-3711.

### ▶ EVENT CALENDAR

**NEXT Best Practices Forum "Operational Metrics"**. Manfred Gollent, CEO of QLI International will be our speaker. Monday, July 7, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., held in the Greenville Chamber Boardroom. RSVP to [gmckenzie@greenvillechamber.com](mailto:gmckenzie@greenvillechamber.com). Lunch is provided.

**FastTrac® NewVenture™** FastTrac NewVenture is ground zero for anyone interested in starting a business. An education program created by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs, FastTrac NewVenture is designed to help you evaluate and perfect your business concept. Taught by seasoned entrepreneurs in your community, FastTrac's hands-on program uses your idea as a case study, giving you an opportunity to "workshop" your venture in a safe and supportive environment. FastTrac NewVenture is a nine-module, 31.5 hour, program. The cost for the NewVenture course is \$195. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount! **FastTrac NewVenture – Greenville**. Meets Mondays for 10 sessions. Next session for Greenville to be announced at later date. [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates.

**FastTrac® TechVenture™** What do you get out of FastTrac TechVenture? That's easy. The tools you need to advance your technology venture to the next stage of business, whether that is seeking your last round of financing before going public, or moving beyond the start-up stage. Graduates of FastTrac TechVenture describe the program as one that encourages technology entrepreneurs to determine the economic feasibility of their business concept, reevaluate the feasibility of the technology, design a business model that matches a personal vision, and create a business plan to communicate the opportunity to investors. The cost for the TechVenture course is \$395. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount! **FastTrac TechVenture – Greenville**. Meets Thursdays for 10 sessions beginning September 10, 2008, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. [Register here](#). [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates.

**FastTrac® GrowthVenture™** What do you get out of FastTrac GrowthVenture? That's easy. Control of your business and your life. Graduates of FastTrac GrowthVenture describe the program as one that encourages entrepreneurs to streamline their business processes, analyze strengths and shortcomings, and achieve more balance in their work and personal lives. By working closely with other entrepreneurs in the intensive, FastTrac GrowthVenture environment, you'll interact with a group of people with whom you can share ideas, strategies, and successes. You'll also hone business skills that you'll use to shape your business for years to come. The cost for the GrowthVenture course is \$295. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount! **FastTrac GrowthVenture – Greenville**. Meets Tuesdays for 10 sessions beginning September 11, 2008, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. [Register here](#). [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates.

**NEXT Best Practices Forum "TBD"**. Monday, August 4, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., Greenville Chamber Boardroom.

## NEXT PARTNER SERVICES and EVENTS

Downtown Greenville cultural events:

[http://www.greatergreenville.com/visitors/events\\_cal\\_resultsGG.asp?Start\\_DateM=06&Start\\_DateD=15&Start\\_DateY=2007](http://www.greatergreenville.com/visitors/events_cal_resultsGG.asp?Start_DateM=06&Start_DateD=15&Start_DateY=2007)

### ▶ UPDATES

#### PRESS RELEASES

**Customer Effective Inc. Announces User First Design Formula Approach focuses on user adoption, acceptance of CRM software.** *Greenville, S.C., June 27, 2008* – Customer Effective, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and implementer of Microsoft Dynamics CRM, announced the release of its User First Design Formula™, the company's field-proven CRM implementation approach for delivering project objectives on time and on budget. The User First Design Formula focuses on user adoption as the single most critical aspect of CRM software implementation from smaller, single-site businesses to larger, sophisticated enterprises.

The "User First Design" approach involves the deployment of CRM software in four phases. First is the Defining phase, which involves getting needs defined directly from the users themselves, as opposed to IT or Sales Management alone. Second is the Design phase, where Customer Effective's CRM team designs simple workflows and management dashboards to boost productivity and organize information, as well as drive user recognition. Next is the developmental stage in which a system is developed to provide a 360-degree view of all customer interactions. The final phase is the actual system deployment, where Customer Effective's implementation team sets up a pilot, tests and trains employees to make sure they understand and embrace the CRM system as part of their daily business processes.

"The success of any CRM implementation depends on it being embraced by the people it is designed to support - the employees," said Scott Millwood, CEO of Customer Effective. "That is the very reason our company has developed this unique approach to our CRM implementations by making the users our primary focus during the process."

A typical implementation of Microsoft CRM software ranges from three to six months for small-to-medium sized organizations, although the timeline is dependent on the number of users in the organization. Each CRM implementation includes all the phases identified in the User First Design Formula, including employee pilots, training and existing data migration.

"Our extreme focus on end users applies to all CRM software implementation projects regardless of size or scope," continued Millwood. "The User First Design approach is a proven method for increasing user adoption derived from hundreds of implementation projects that we've conducted over the years."  
About Customer Effective

**Customer Effective Inc. Partners with Experlogix to Improve Organizational CRM Performance** *Product collaboration to expedite business processes, improve order accuracy.* *Greenville, S.C., June 2008* – Customer Effective, Inc., a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and value-added reseller of Microsoft Dynamics CRM, announced a partnership with Experlogix to provide customers a complete quote-to-order automation solution. The combination of Microsoft Dynamics CRM and Experlogix's Sales Configurator solution brings customers a holistic system that serves the needs of front and back office users by enhancing the usability and functionality of the CRM sales and service modules.

The Experlogix Sales Configurator allows sales representatives and/or channel partners to automate their quote-to-order process by leveraging an advanced guided-selling and rules capability, which guarantees 100 percent accuracy among all product and pricing configurations. Product options, rules and their associated pricing are typically housed in separate systems or listed in paper catalogs, which increases the time it takes to create quotes and often results in human errors. The integration of Experlogix's Sales Configurator and Microsoft Dynamics CRM makes the product option selection and pricing process faster and more precise, thereby increasing order volumes and improving order accuracy. This translates into enhanced profitability and higher levels of customer service and customer loyalty.

customer loyalty.

"Our partnership with Experlogix to offer the Sales Configurator to CRM software clients is a valuable service enhancement which seamlessly integrates with Microsoft Dynamics CRM and expedites the product ordering process," explains Scott Millwood, CEO Customer Effective. "CRM users benefit from a faster, more precise product order process which lowers overall costs of sales and shortens manufacturing lead times. The system's ability to be uniquely tailored to specific business requirements is valuable to many industry verticals, including insurance and electronics."

Microsoft Dynamics CRM users can also use Experlogix remotely. Traveling sales executives can use Experlogix to configure products and services in an off-line mode. When working away from their office, sales reps can easily synchronize configured quotes back to their corporate office CRM server. This gives salespeople the flexibility of using Microsoft Dynamics CRM and Experlogix remotely, either off-line or on-line via a web browser.

"The Experlogix Sales Configurator incorporated with Microsoft Dynamics CRM offers an array of functionality and business offerings that benefit our customers," said Jeff Holway, vice president of Sales and Marketing at Experlogix. "Customer Effective's expertise in the CRM space has been favorable to our organization, as they remain a driving force with Microsoft Dynamics CRM."

**About Experlogix:**

Experlogix, Inc. is the leading developer of web-based sales and manufacturing configurator solutions for the Microsoft Dynamics platform. With headquarters in Santa Barbara, CA, Experlogix Configurators are in use in more than 500 companies worldwide, spanning a wide variety of markets, including heavy equipment manufacturers, material handling, electronics, custom cabinet makers, door and window manufacturers, furniture, apparel and more. Available both online and un-tethered, the Experlogix Configurator improves sales rep productivity and eliminates costly re-quotes. For more information, please visit [www.experlogix.com](http://www.experlogix.com).

**About Customer Effective, Inc.:**

Customer Effective, with headquarters in Greenville, S.C., is a leading innovator in customer interaction solutions based on Microsoft Dynamics Customer Relationship Management (CRM). The company is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, CRM Consultants and Solution Implementers having completed hundreds of Microsoft CRM implementations and development projects in financial services, manufacturing, technology, professional services and more. For more information, visit [www.CustomerEffective.com](http://www.CustomerEffective.com).

**CONTACT:**

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Customer Effective, Inc.  
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**Gnoso Team Wins Product Design Competition with Log for Life** *Greenville, SC, June 26, 2008* - DiabetesMine (<http://diabetesmine.com>) announced on Friday that a panel of judges awarded top honors to Log for Life in the 2nd Annual DiabetesMine Design Challenge.

DiabetesMine.com is a popular weblog focused on the daily challenge of living with diabetes. The DiabetesMine Design Challenge (<http://www.diabetesmine.com/2008/06/2nd-annual-diabetesmine-design-challenge-vote-here.html>) is "a competition designed to foster innovation in diabetes design and encourage creative new tools that will improve life with diabetes." The design contest was co-hosted by MedGadget (<http://medgadget.com>) and supported by IDEO, the famed design firm. Prizes for the contest include a monetary award, a ticket to the Health 2.0 conference this fall and a free consultation with IDEO designers.

Log for Life is an online diabetes logbook that makes logging diabetes information easier than ever. In addition to full-featured web logging, the product includes an iPhone application for remote logging, and supports logging by text message and email. Log for Life is currently in private testing and will be opened to the public in the summer of 2008. To see the Log for Life video contest entry and find out more about the upcoming product go to (<http://logforlife.com>) or (<http://www.diabetesmine.com/2008/06/diabetesmine-design-challenge-meet-the-winners.html>). For more information, visit <http://www.logforlife.com> or contact Ethan Mullis, Lead Designer ([ethan@gnoso.com](mailto:ethan@gnoso.com)); Alan Johnson, Lead Software Engineer ([alan@gnoso.com](mailto:alan@gnoso.com)); Peter Waldschmidt, CEO ([peterw@gnoso.com](mailto:peterw@gnoso.com))

**About Gnosio Inc.:**

Gnosio is a software product development company located in Greenville, SC. Gnosio takes a unique creative approach to finding, crafting and launching software product ideas. Gnosio also sells NCover, the market-leading code coverage tool for Microsoft's .NET platform. NCover helps software development teams measure the effectiveness of their quality testing programs by pinpointing untested code.

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**Selah Technologies and University of South Carolina Forge Collaboration to Advance Cancer Detection, Greenville, SC, June 24, 2008** - Selah Technologies and the University of South Carolina (USC) announced today the signing of a definitive cooperative research agreement to investigate the use of Selah's carbon quantum dots in biological diagnostic applications. The collaboration will permit USC access to Selah's proprietary Selah Dots™ while allowing Selah access to world-class research at the USC NanoCenter.

"Since the creation of Selah Technologies as a consequence of licensing two platform nanotechnologies from Clemson University, we have focused on the need to expand the breadth of our technologies through partnerships and collaborations. The NanoCenter at USC offers a distinctive opportunity to leverage our joint expertise to do just that. Selah is thrilled to be advancing Clemson technologies via this collaboration with USC," said Michael Bolick, President & CEO of Selah Technologies. Dr. Chris Przirembel, Vice President for Research & Economic Development at Clemson University, added, "With the recent groundbreaking for the innovation center at the Clemson University Advanced Materials Center, the Upstate is rapidly expanding its emphasis on advanced materials technologies. We applaud Selah's commitment to advancing this important Clemson discovery from the laboratory to the marketplace. This agreement sends a strong message of collaboration among the research universities and the private sector for economic development and, in this particular case, for application in critical health care issues."

"USC is excited by our collaboration with Selah. Combining Selah's unique nanomaterials with the outstanding researchers at the USC NanoCenter creates a win-win situation for USC, Selah and indeed, the State of South Carolina. Collaborations such as this one are a primary objective for USC and a driving force behind the development of Innovista," says Dr. Harris Pastides, Vice President of Research & Health Sciences at USC. Selah Dots™ are carbon-based quantum dots that can be used for various applications, including life sciences, solar cells and anti-counterfeiting, among others. Selah Tubes™, enriched carbon nanotubes, have a number of applications due to their impressive electrical conductivity properties.

**Selah Technologies Receives Patent for Selah Tubes, Greenville, SC, June 17, 2008** - Selah Technologies, an advanced materials manufacturer, announced today that it has received a patent covering the carbon single wall nanotube enrichment process to produce Selah Tubes™. Selah has the worldwide exclusive license for US Patent No. 7,374,685 from Clemson University. "The issuing of the patent covering our process to produce Selah Tubes™ is a significant technological and valuation milestone in our young company's history," said Ken Morgan, COO of Selah Technologies. "We have also recently received the International Preliminary Report on patentability for the patent that covers Selah Dots™, our second platform technology. That report states that all of the claims meet the criteria for patentability. These two technologies are the cornerstones of our business."

Selah Dots™ are carbon-based quantum dots that can be used for various applications, including life sciences, solar cells and anti-counterfeiting, among others. Selah Tubes™, enriched carbon nanotubes, have a number of applications due to their impressive electrical conductivity properties.

**About Selah Technologies:**

Located near Greenville, SC, Selah Technologies, LLC is a privately held advanced materials manufacturing company founded in 2006. Selah's mission is to consistently deliver high quality nanomaterials and nanotechnology enabled products to the global marketplace. For more information, visit [www.selahtechologies.com](http://www.selahtechologies.com).

**About the University of South Carolina NanoCenter:**

The USC NanoCenter is the University's focal point for science and engineering studies of nanometer-scale structures, their unique properties, and their integration into functional units. It fosters multidisciplinary research and education efforts involving faculty whose combined expertise spans the disciplines of a comprehensive research university, including the arts and sciences, engineering, and medicine, as well as other professional schools. For more information, visit [www.nano.sc.edu](http://www.nano.sc.edu).

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**SCRA's SC Launch!® Awards \$863,936 In SBIR/STTR Phase I Matching Grants To SC Knowledge Economy Companies** *Columbia, SC, June 4, 2008* – SCRA affiliate SC Launch! announced today that it has awarded nine SBIR/STTR Phase I Matching Grant awards, totaling \$863,936, during the last 12 months to South Carolina Knowledge Economy start-up companies. The grants have been awarded to the following companies, which represent intellectual property from South Carolina commercial ventures and from all three research foundations at South Carolina universities: Clemson University, The Medical University of South Carolina and The University of South Carolina (USC):

Luke Ulrich, Agile Genomics, LLC - Charleston  
Kelvin Brockbank, Cell & Tissue Systems, Inc. – North Charleston  
Spenser Robert, First String Research, Inc. – North Charleston  
Brian Morin, Innegrity, LLC -- Greenville  
Dr. Harold May, Microbial Fuel Cell Technologies, LLC – Mt. Pleasant  
Rubina Asif Khan, Nitek, Inc. -- Irmo  
Michael Bolick, Selah Technologies, LLC -- Simpsonville  
Remis Gaska, Sensor Electronic Technologies, Inc. -- Columbia  
Jeffrey DiMaio, Tetramer, LLC -- Pendleton

A ceremony was held at 11:30 a.m., hosted by SCRA and USC, at the USC Innovista Discovery Plaza Atrium, to recognize the SC Launch! SBIR/STTR grant recipients. Speakers at the event included Harris Pastides, Ph. D., Vice President for Research & Health Sciences, USC; Doug Woodward, Ph.D., USC Director of Division of Research and Professor of Economics at the Moore School of Business; Bill Mahoney, CEO, SCRA. Dr. Woodward announced the results from a recent study of the economic impact of SCRA in fiscal year 2007.

The SC Launch! SBIR/STTR program provides matching funds to South Carolina-based companies that have been granted a Federal Small Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business Technology Transfer Program (SBIR/STTR) Phase I award. The program is expected to expand in duration and scope in a trailing time frame.

The SC Launch! SBIR/STTR Matching Grant Program is designed to foster job creation and the Knowledge Economy in South Carolina by increasing the competitive position of South Carolina small businesses in attracting SBIR and STTR grant funding. The program also provides incentives for companies that have been awarded Federal Phase I feasibility research support to participate in the Phase II program.

"These programs are important vehicles for the commercial technology emerging from our research universities," said Dr. Pastides. "Today's announcement is a great example of how we are moving faculty knowledge down the path towards job creation in South Carolina. Much of this would not be possible without the SC Launch! program," he said.

Each grant award in the Program may be up to \$100,000. A total of \$1,000,000 is available for the trial phase of the Matching Grant Program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008. Grants will become available again as the program extends into its second year, through June 30, 2009, on a first-come, first-served basis. To learn more about the Program and how to apply, visit <http://www.sclaunch.org> to download the Match Solicitation, Program Guidelines and the Application form.

"Our intent for the SC Launch! Matching Grant Program is to further increase the number of South Carolina small businesses that apply for Federal research dollars within the state," said Bill Mahoney, SCRA CEO. "This program can also increase the productivity of Phase I research for South Carolina start-ups, which can make them more competitive when they apply for Phase II funds," he said. "Winning phase II awards allows start-ups to further develop innovative technology into expanded commercial offerings within the state."

SCRA CEO Bill Mahoney presented a Knowledge Economist award to Dr. Harris Pastides at the event. The SCRA Knowledge Economist Award Program recognizes outstanding citizens who have made significant contributions to South Carolina's Knowledge Economy "where the value of the mind shapes the successful profile of progress and great prospects for the future," said Mahoney.

For more information about the SCRA Knowledge Economist Award Program and a list of persons who have been recognized as a South Carolina Knowledge Economist, please click on this link:

[http://sclaunch.org/knowledge\\_economy\\_awards.shtml](http://sclaunch.org/knowledge_economy_awards.shtml)

**SCRA Garner \$6,000,000 in Industry Partnership Fund Contributions on Behalf of SC Launch! Program**  
*Companies, Individuals Invest to Spur Knowledge Economy through S.C. Tax Credits. Columbia, SC, June 2008 –* SCRA in partnership with its affiliate, SC Launch!, has garnered \$6 million in private donations toward the Industry Partnership Fund, which will help fuel the Knowledge Economy through strategic investments in technology start-ups within the state.

The \$6 million figure represents the maximum amount of tax-creditable donations for calendar year 2008 allowed by the 2006 Industry Partners Act, which went into effect in July 2006. Businesses and Individuals who contributed to the fund received tax credits toward their South Carolina income tax for 100 percent of the donated amount. Seventeen corporations and 145 individuals contributed to the Industry Partnership Fund in 2008. The total of 162 contributors compares to 116 in 2007 and 16 in 2005.

SCRA utilizes the funds to accelerate entrepreneurial growth of technology start-ups that are creating high-paying jobs and building equity in the future for all South Carolina. SCRA support of the SC Launch! program supplies high-potential entrepreneurs and researchers with key tools for success, a mix of mentoring and seed money of up to \$200,000. The SC Launch! program also provides matching grants of up to \$100,000 for companies awarded SBIR/STTR Phase I awards. Additional SC Launch! programs include grants for pre-company and university start-up initiatives, landing parties and demonstration projects.

"The sustained success of the Industry Partnership Fund symbolizes the commitment of insightful legislators, businesses and individuals in South Carolina to drive growth in the Knowledge Economy," said SCRA CEO Bill Mahoney. "Our business, economic and political leaders in this state understand the need to build a competitive Knowledge Economy that invigorates South Carolina business. Support of the Industry Partnership Fund provides the foundation for South Carolina's future success."

SC Launch!, a private nonprofit SCRA affiliate has, since its April, 2006 inception, provided 53 companies with seed funding in the form of grants, loans or equity investments and provided counsel and support to more than 80 start-ups. The average salary of jobs created to date by these start-ups is \$77,000. Additionally, SC Launch!-supported companies have to date secured more than \$42 million in follow-on venture capital and private equity financing. Funds contributed to the Industry Partnership Fund are combined with the \$12 million from SCRA's strategic cash reserves committed through SCRA'S execution of the Innovation Centers Act. SC Launch! was created by SCRA to effect this legislation. SC Launch! is an unprecedented collaboration with the research foundations of Clemson University, the Medical University of South Carolina and the University of South Carolina to advance the commercialization of research and technology.

In calendar year 2008, and for calendar years thereafter, the individual donation limit eligible for tax credit is \$2 million, and the total maximum in tax creditable donations allowed is \$6 million. Inquiries concerning 2009 donations are already being received, according to Dave McNamara, SCRA Senior Vice President and SC Launch! Program Executive. The intent of the Industry Partnership Fund is to sustain Knowledge Economy development beyond 2008, when SCRA's cash reserves are fully deployed. "These donated funds are important for all South Carolinians because they help create new technology businesses, higher paying jobs and a stronger knowledge economy," he said.

"With such enthusiastic response in 2006,2007 and 2008, we are preparing for successfully soliciting \$6 million for the 2009 Industry Partnership Fund drive," McNamara said. "It's remarkable that we've already raised the full state tax-creditable amount in the first half of the calendar year." Tax dollars eligible for designation to the Industry Partnership Fund are being accepted on a first-come, first-accepted basis. SC Launch! encourages early commitments by individuals and corporations.

**SCRA Economic Impact More Than \$1.4 Billion for 2007** *Columbia, SC, June 4, 2008* - SCRA, a global leader in applied research and commercialization services, announced results of a study today showing that SCRA plays a critical role in achieving a higher level of knowledge-based economic development within South Carolina. The economic impact study was conducted by Douglas P. Woodward, Ph.D., Director of Research in the Division of Research and Professor of Economics at the University of South Carolina Moore School of Business; and Paulo Guimaraes, Ph.D., Clinical Associate Professor in the Moore School.

SCRA's efforts "contribute to the state's development in a myriad of ways: promoting technology capabilities, managing research parks, and helping generate small business and entrepreneurial development through SCRA affiliate SC Launch!," said Woodward. "These activities produce tangible results: jobs and income for South Carolinians." Findings include:

The total economic impact of SCRA operations, technology parks and SC Launch! is \$1.4 billion in 2007. On average, the direct jobs supported by SCRA pay three times the state's median annual wage. Spending from this substantial income produces ripple effects for the state, encompassing 11,765 jobs generating \$521 million per year in labor income for the state's economy.

"Entering its 25<sup>th</sup> year of operation, SCRA has been fully self-sustaining since a one-time contribution from the state of South Carolina of \$500,000 and 1,400 acres of land in 1983," said Bill Mahoney, SCRA CEO. "We are pleased that this initial investment continues to create economic activity and Knowledge Economy growth throughout the state. As a 200-employee, quintessential Knowledge Economy company in its own right, SCRA will continue to deliver higher leverage to build the Knowledge Economy in South Carolina than comparable, but much larger organizations."

#### **About SCRA**

SCRA is a global leader in applied research and commercialization services with offices in Anderson, Charleston and Columbia. SCRA collaborates to advance technology. SCRA provides technology-based solutions with assured outcomes on behalf of industry, government, and research universities like Clemson University, the University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina. For more information please visit [www.scra.org](http://www.scra.org)

#### **About SC Launch!**

SC Launch!, an SCRA collaboration, assists entrepreneurial start-up companies with up-front counseling, seed funding, and access to a powerful resource network. The SC Launch! mission is to help generate knowledge economy jobs in South Carolina, enhance the state's quality of life and provide opportunity for all South Carolinians in the new economy. For more information please visit [www.sclaunch.org](http://www.sclaunch.org).

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**Five Upstate South Carolina Colleges Announce Collaboration on New Curriculum for Workforce Needs,** *Spartanburg, S.C May 21, 2008* - TechReadySC™, a collaboration of five Upstate South Carolina technical and community colleges and the South Carolina Technical College System office, announced the launch of a new mechatronics curriculum for the fall 2008 semester. The announcement was made at a press conference on May 21, 2008, at the BMW Zentrum in Greer. Greenville Technical College, Piedmont Technical College, Spartanburg Community College, Tri-County Technical College and York Technical College will offer this new technical degree program developed with a grant from AdvanceSC.

"AdvanceSC is proud to serve the needs of our community and recognizes this collaboration as a necessary approach for our state to produce a skilled and proficient work force," said Carol Burdette, AdvanceSC president. "Our board agrees that this grant will make an impact on local communities and better serve employers throughout the region." AdvanceSC is funded with profits from Duke Energy's Bulk Power Marketing program has awarded a \$2.5 million grant to the colleges and the South Carolina Technical College System office since November 2006 to encourage a regional approach to workforce development training for the Upstate. From that grant, the Upstate Alliance for Technical Education was formed and was later re-named TechReadySC™.

"This project represents the critical phase of the TechReadySC™ initiative to create a ready pool of technicians with mechatronics and maintenance skills needed to work in advanced manufacturing," said Cynthia Eason, vice president of corporate and economic development for Greenville Technical College and chair of the TechReadySC™ board of directors.

A widely accepted career in Europe since the nineties, mechatronics has only recently been recognized as a new training opportunity in Upstate South Carolina. The term mechatronics refers to an interdisciplinary field involving control systems, electronic systems, computers and mechanical systems that integrates product design and automated manufacturing processes. Because industrial applications are becoming more and more complex, industry needs technicians with skills that cross a variety of disciplines. Many existing job categories currently or will soon require mechatronics skills and problem solving abilities for professionals who design, implement, manufacture, service and repair a wide array of equipment.

"TechReadySC™ is an exciting initiative for Upstate South Carolina," said Dr. Barry Russell, president of the South Carolina Technical College System. "The need for employees skilled in mechatronics is great and continues to grow. The collaborative of the five colleges and the System office will be instrumental in meeting this workforce need while also providing a blueprint for cooperation that can be utilized throughout the state."

The mechatronics program will provide training for certificates and an associate degree. Mechatronics students will train on state-of-the art equipment from suppliers including Kuka, Festo and Siemens. The collaboration among the five colleges ensures students are trained on the same standardized curriculum and tested to meet industry standards. The training also includes apprenticeships and outreach activities designed to provide real-world experience for students. Professional development for individuals already working in related fields will also be available through continuing education courses at each of the five colleges.

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## **MIT DVD BROADCASTS AVAILABLE FOR CHECK-OUT**

Are You Ready for IPO? Strategies and Steps for How and When to Take Your Company Public, January 24, 2008

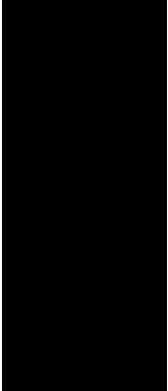
Enterprising Georgia Energy, Security & the Economy, October 24, 2007

Entrepreneurship: Success, Failure, Greatness A Fireside Chat with Ann Winblad and Jason Pontin  
September, 27, 2007

A.B.L.E. Tech: Achieving Better Life Experiences for People with Injury, Disability and Aging Challenges Through  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Technologies, June 6, 2007

Financial Markets: Outlook 2007 moderated by Liz Claman, CNBC, January 25, 2007

A Very Special Evening with Geoffrey Moore, November 15, 2006



Angel Groups in Action: Funding Early Stage Innovation, June 1, 2005

Forecasting Markets: The Capital Update for 2006, January 26, 2005

The dvd's can be checked out for 2 weeks. Please contact Ginger McKenzie [gmckenzie@greenvillechamber.org](mailto:gmckenzie@greenvillechamber.org) if you are interested. You will need to pick them up from, and return to, the Chamber

For more information on the services of NEXT partner organizations, visit: [NEXTGreenville.com](http://NEXTGreenville.com)

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