



Associate Professor at Drexel University of Medicine Anand Mehta talks with visitors about the advantages of added space and resources given to his staff and projects during a tour of the newly opened Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County in Doylestown on Sept. 7.

Mixing healthy minds

Pa. Biotechnology Center of Bucks County opens, brings innovators together

By Aaron Becker

Trend Leader

Timothy Block, Ph.D., president of the Hepatitis B Foundation and the newly opened Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County believes in it.

"Tim has been preparing for this day for many years," commented Roseann Rosenthal, president of Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Legislators and officials such as Pennsylvania senators Joe Conti and Stewart Greenleaf and Bucks County commissioners James Cawley and Charles Martin support it.

"It is a grand day for the people of Bucks County and Pennsylvania," said Sen. Conti.

So, what is it, exactly? It is the collaboration of more than \$12 million in resources, multiple public health, non-profit organi-

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organizations and academic partners such as Drexel University of Medicine and Delaware Valley College. All of it makes up the newly-opened facility neighboring the Doylestown Airport.

"I promise you great things are going to be discovered here," said Block during the grand opening of the Biotechnology Center on Sept. 7.

The center brings together a wealth of resources with the mission to search for cures and diagnostic markers for such diseases as viral hepatitis and multiple forms of cancer. The Doylestown center now houses 20 labs and expects to expand to about 30 in the upcoming year. The center also expects to create at least 120 full-time jobs in total. Students and staff from Delaware Valley College in Doylestown and Drexel University in Philadelphia are already hard at work at the center.

Block spoke about the importance of this collaboration during an interview after the grand opening ceremony.

"I think it is crucial we have input from multiple organizations," said Block.

One example of this is Drexel's ability to utilize equipment from companies in proximity to the University's lab, right next door, that could normally only be seen in much larger universities or companies. Drexel has use of a mass-spectrometer, used to more accurately look at markers in cells.

"We look for early markers to liver cancer," explained Drexel University of Medicine Associate Professor Anand Mehta. "This place has allowed us to more effectively do that type of research."

A partner in the installation of the center, Delaware Valley College has long worked with the Hepatitis B Foundation. Now, within the same building and not separated by almost an entire township, the partnership is not just expected to, but is already yielding advantages for the college.

"Delaware Valley College will use this space for classes," said Block.

"Establishing this center enhances the potential of our programs and allows us to prepare students for careers in biotechnology in a practical, cutting-edge setting," commented Dr. Thomas Lerner, president of Delaware Valley College.

The benefits to the schools are not the only academic advantages. At the grand opening, the center received \$250,000 and acceptance into Pennsylvania's Keystone Innovation Program recognizing the center as a Keystone Innovation Zone — Pennsylvania's 19th.

The Keystone Innovation Program is designed to help generate growth among partnerships between academic institutions of higher learning and economic development organizations.

"It really has taken a village, or a state, to accomplish this," said Block.

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Photos by Aaron Becker/Trend Leader

The Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County, a collaborative effort between the Hepatitis B Foundation and Delaware Valley College opened its doors during a grand opening Sept. 7 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Pictured are, from left to right, Charles Martin, Bucks County Commissioner; Dr. Joshua Feldstein, former President of Delaware Valley College; Chuck McIlhinney, Pennsylvania State Representative; Joe Conti, Pennsylvania State Senator; Dr. Thomas Leamer, President of Delaware Valley College and Dr. Timothy Block, President of the Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County and Hepatitis B Foundation.