

KSC helps establish technology center to nurture small businesses

by Joel Wells

Kennedy Space Center is assisting with the development of a new technology-based business incubation center geared toward nurturing small businesses and entrepreneurs.

"North Brevard has received the brunt of the defense industry's downsizing in this state. With a high-tech foundation already established in the area, we started thinking about ways to help existing companies

and attract new ones," said Frank Kinney, executive director of Florida's Technological Research and Development Authority (TRDA).

Study establishes interest

Kennedy Space Center and BCC began discussions on the program in July 1995. KSC and TRDA then co-funded a feasibility study to determine the program's value to Brevard County. The program will be lo-

cated at the BCC campus in Titusville.

The study, completed in January 1996, revealed many companies interested in low cost facilities and access to NASA laboratories and expertise. The study's results led to a decision to proceed with development plans for the Florida NASA Business Incubation Center. NASA and TRDA will co-fund the project.

Beyond the financial support, NASA is finding creative ways to make its technological expertise available to budding small businesses.

Managers are encouraging KSC personnel to volunteer their time and knowledge to the incubation center's customers.

Retirees encouraged to volunteer

Retirees can participate as well. "NASA-KSC personnel that plan to retire by Sept. 30, 1996 may have the option to return as re-employed annuitants under phased or trial retirement and offer their experience and knowledge base to the program," said Sharon Lowry, KSC retirement officer.

NASA is participating in the endeavor to accelerate and augment the KSC technology transfer mission.

"Our support of small businesses with our high technology infrastructure is expected to create new jobs and products in Brevard County and throughout Florida," said Kathleen Harer, KSC program manager.

BCC's contributions include a 10,000-square-foot facility, security, utilities, and maintenance support.

"BCC has been a community leader in economic development efforts and we're looking forward to another chance for community outreach," said Dr. Joe Lee Smith, president of BCC's Titusville campus.

The incubation center will provide small technology-based businesses and entrepreneurs with affordable office space, management advice and technical support. It will facilitate access to NASA expertise and facilities at KSC. Resident businesses will have access to BCC's library, computer labs, and shops.

The incubator is scheduled to open in June 1996. Companies, entrepreneurs, and business mentors interested in the program should call 267-0047.

Tenant application forms are available on the World Wide Web at <http://technology.ksc.nasa.gov/FNBIC/>. NASA KSC retirement candidates should call Sharon Lowry at 867-2514 for more information about working at the center.

Contractors receive safety awards



SEVERAL KENNEDY SPACE Center contractors were recognized recently for their safety initiative efforts. The KSC Safety Initiatives Award Program promotes Continuous Improvement principles by focusing on planned improvements with established initiatives, milestones and success criteria that are developed in contractor award program plans. Safety Initiative Award recipients, above from left, are Don Reed, USBI; Jack Bokash, EG&G Florida, Inc.; Ronald Wetmore, Martin Marietta; Jimmy Rudolph, Lockheed Martin Space Operations Company; Jack Lamba, Lockheed Martin Space Operations Company; Caroline Zaffery, I-NET, Inc; and Mike Lewer, Rockwell International Corp. Center Director's Award recipients pictured at right, are Doug Britt of Dynamac Corp. and Sue Spector of McDonnell Douglas Space and Defense Systems.

