

November 11, 2015

Illinois Science + Technology Park Update

Innovations are in progress at the Illinois Science + Technology Park (IS+TP) in Downtown Skokie. Owned by Forest City Enterprises since 2005, the IS+TP is home to more than 25 established firms and startup companies in 450,000 square feet of leased space. IS+TP tenants specialize in nanotechnology, biotechnology, pharmaceutical research and manufacturing and healthcare, and collectively employ approximately 1,400 people onsite.

Vetter Development Services USA, Inc., a German pharmaceutical firm that opened its first United States operations in the IS+TP in 2009, recently completed expansion activities at the park. When announcing adding an additional staff shift for daily manufacturing operations and doubling capacity for performing important quality control functions, Vetter Managing Director Peter Soelkner said, “We are extremely pleased with our past years performance at this facility, as well as our overall success to date.” Vetter is a contract development and manufacturing firm that specializes in aseptic filling. Drugs under development by Vetter’s customers include advances in treatment of blood cancer, dwarfism, wound healing and muscular dystrophy.

Longtime IS+TP tenant Polyera recently announced development of The Wove™ Band, the world’s first flexible display product that can be used flat or wrapped around a wrist. The Wove™ Band is the result of 10 years of development, spanning fundamental science, engineering and design, with commercial launch planned for mid-2016.

The 29-year-old Technology Innovation Center, or TIC, business incubator recently relocated to the park and is described as “A community of entrepreneurs bringing innovation to market.” One new TIC resident company, Hazel Technologies, has patented technology to extend the quality shelf-life of fresh produce, thereby conserving resources and reducing costly spoilage. Another TIC startup company, SIM solutions, has expertise in fluid delivery devices for medical, aerospace and related industries and is now designing a low-cost system for peritoneal kidney dialysis.

The IS+TP also houses the Oakton Community College Nanotechnology Education, Employment and Economic Development Initiative (NE3I), which offers nanotechnology lab assistant training through a two-year curriculum initiative. Since being established in 2012, the NE3I has received over \$2 million in public and private grant funding. Area high school students are able to take courses for dual credit at the NE3I lab and Oakton works with local employers to provide internships and jobs for students during and following completion of the two-year Nanotechnology Certificate program.

Forest City recently reported its intent to sell or secure financing partners for the IS+TP. Forest City has assured the Village they remain committed to the IS+TP, and a sale or partnership situation could include Forest City’s continued involvement in the park.