



## Buffalo sees medical research as best hope for economy

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BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — The city's hopes that medical research will stimulate the economy the way manufacturing once did grew Friday with the opening of a life sciences complex that will focus on new treatments for cancer, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and other diseases.

The goal of the Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences is not only to discover breakthrough treatments but to reap economic rewards by bringing them to market.

The two-building complex opened Friday includes space for small businesses expected to spring from the work, said Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, who attended the opening along with Sen. Charles Schumer, Gov. George Pataki, U.S. Rep. Tom Reynolds and others.

A third building, the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute, opened across the street last year.

"The Center of Excellence represents a concentrated effort to keep new medical breakthroughs and technologies in Buffalo Niagara," said Bruce Holm, the center's executive director. "We want to develop a large pipeline of medical treatments and devices coming out of the region."

The Center of Excellence, one of seven high-tech centers around the state which promote university and private business ventures, is a collaboration of the University at Buffalo, Roswell Park Cancer Institute and the Hauptman-Woodward Institute. It also houses the Hunter James Kelly Institute, named for the son of former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly, who died last year at the age of 8 from Krabbe disease, a rare nervous system disorder.

Roughly \$320 million has been invested in the center by public and private entities, including the state and federal governments, Hewlett-Packard, General Dynamics, Pfizer, Corning, Bristol Myer Squibb and IBM.

"The whole concept of the Centers of Excellence is truly economic revolution," said Pataki, who proposed the centers in 2001, "preparing and leading the way to the jobs of the 21st century."

Bioinformatics is an emerging field that uses high-performance computing to analyze biological data in the search for new drugs. City leaders see the competitive field as the best hope for revitalizing an economy stung by deep losses in its manufacturing base.

"We've had to readjust and recalibrate. We've had to figure what is the future," Schumer said. "Well here we are."

The public-private collaboration over the last several years already has led to the launch of 29 new life sciences company, Clinton said, "including several with billion-dollar market potential."

Total employment at the Buffalo Center of Excellence is expected to be 500, including more than 120 Roswell Park researchers recruited since 1999. It is hoped spinoff businesses will create many more well-paying jobs.

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