

SIUE Research Center Receives \$1.9M to Expand Research Capabilities

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NCERC at SIUE

Advancing Biorenewables Research



EDWARDSVILLE – The National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center (NCERC), located in University Park of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, has been awarded \$1.9 million through the Rebuild Illinois Wet Lab Capital program by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). NCERC joins seven other laboratories from across the state who received a total investment of \$15.4 million.

“Last year, my administration launched a Wet Lab Capital program to meet the technical needs of startups, incubators, and universities across the state,” said Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker. “Today, after receiving so many brilliant applications from project developers across Illinois, I am excited to announce \$15.4 million in grants that are funding \$90 million worth of wet lab expansions throughout Illinois—in Chicago but also at both of Southern Illinois University’s campuses, at Rosalind Franklin University in the heart of Illinois’ biopharma ecosystem in northern Illinois, and at life science hubs up and down the state.”

As a renowned research and development (R&D) center that leads the nation in commercializing biotechnologies, NCERC’s facility houses fermentation and processing vessels ranging from bench- to pilot-scale that allow companies hoping to introduce their biotechnology to the marketplace to perform all their research at the same facility using NCERC’s leading staff of researchers, scientists and engineers. NCERC plans to utilize award funding to dramatically expand its intermediate-scale R&D capabilities.

“The equipment that will be purchased using these award funds will be placed in NCERC’s Fermentation Laboratory and Fermentation Suite, two areas of NCERC’s facility that receive the most attention from startups and companies doing cutting-edge research in the biorenewables sector,” said John Caupert, NCERC’s executive director. “We’re extremely excited by the expansion of our research capabilities and look forward to leveraging these assets to attract new clients. We also want to thank our partners on this project, especially the Illinois Corn Growers Association who has generously contributed to the matching funds on the project.”

Mark Wilson, chairman of the Illinois Corn Marketing Board (ICMB) and farmer from Toulon, Ill., said, “ICMB is pleased to provide matching funds to expand the wet lab capabilities at NCERC. We look forward to the new consumer industrial and healthcare products from corn empowered by this investment.”

Randy DeSutter, president of the Illinois Corn Growers Association and farmer from Woodhull, Ill., added, “We commend DCEO and the governor for providing this opportunity to grow the biotech industry in Illinois.”

Since opening its doors in 2003, NCERC has been a leader in corn-to-ethanol research. As technology evolves, NCERC's fermentation capabilities have expanded to reach new markets, including corn-to-bioproducts research.

A portion of the award received by SIUE will be dedicated to expanding the analytical capabilities at the Biotechnology Laboratory Incubator, which currently houses the Shimadzu Innovation Laboratory at SIUE (SILS). SILS is a partnership between SIUE and Shimadzu, a leading-edge science and analytical technology company, that supports student and industry research at the University through the Shimadzu's Partnership for Academic Research and Quality of Life program.

About the NCERC

The NCERC at SIUE is a nationally recognized research center dedicated to the development and commercialization of biofuels, specialty chemicals, and other renewable compounds. The Center's fully functional dry grind pilot plant and laboratories are equipped with advanced biofuels capabilities including corn fractionation, pretreatment, and a fermentation suite with 5, 30, 150, and 1500L scale-up. Facilities are staffed by industry veterans with more than 100 years of collective experience in fermentation and biofuels production. This knowledgeable team has the flexibility and expertise to design and carry out projects in any region of the advanced biofuels or specialty chemicals space. For more information contact Jackie Hayes at jhayes@ethanolresearch.com, or visit ethanolresearch.com.