Micron Foundation Pledges $1.25 Million for USTAR Building

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Salt Lake City , Tuesday, February 12, 2008 – The University of Utah today announced a $1.25 million pledge from the Micron Technology Foundation to support the development of a nanofabrication teaching and research laboratory as a core facility in the new Utah Science, Technology and Research (USTAR) building now under development on the university's campus. Micron's investment will help leverage nearly $130 million in state and private dollars, and launch an exciting new era of scientific discovery and technology innovation.

"With this gift to the University of Utah's USTAR building, the Micron Foundation helps support research and education in microelectronics," said Dee Mooney, executive director of the Micron Foundation. "We find that relationships with universities offer unique opportunities for students and faculty to enhance research activities that support the roadmap of the semiconductor industry."

The nanofab lab is one of several highly specialized facilities planned to support research teams on the leading edge of technology development and commercialization. The goal is to create a best-in-class university nanofab lab that will support world-class semiconductor, nanotechnology and electronics research. The lab will be accessible to researchers at other Utah universities and businesses. The nanofabrication laboratory is also critically important to some of the nanotechnology faculty including those who have been hired under the USTAR program, who will apply nanoscale constructs in nanomedicine, biosensors, brain probes, artificial eyes, etc.

Micron's total support for students, faculty, equipment and research at the University of Utah has exceeded $2.2 million during the past decade. The Micron Technology Foundation is a private, non-profit organization established by Micron Technology, Inc., to fund education efforts and charitable activities.

According to Michael K. Young, University of Utah president, "Micron's support has made a significant difference in the quality of research and education at the University of Utah and throughout the state. This most recent gift will help to assure that the goals of the USTAR project will be realized."

In 2006, the Utah legislature voted to invest significantly in university research at the University of Utah and Utah State University by enacting the $400 million legislative USTAR Initiative. The funding, which is administered by a state-appointed board, supports faculty and buildings, with benchmarks for performance in technology commercialization. Through the recruitment of international experts, USTAR is aimed at turning research funding into patents, marketable products, services, companies and jobs.

In order to achieve the USTAR objectives and to attract world-class researchers in microelectronics and nanotechnology, the university must improve its nanofabrication facilities. Microelectronics research is a major emphasis at the University of Utah, which is well-aligned with the region's semiconductor related companies.

Corporate partnerships can have a critical influence on a university's research and education. According to Richard B. Brown, dean of engineering, "Micron's involvement in the College of Engineering has been a motivating force for more than a decade. The Micron members of our advisory board and the company's technical leaders have helped us develop a relevant and rigorous curriculum. Micron-funded scholarships and capstone projects consistently represent the highest level of academic achievement. Micron jobs are an important and highly sought-after source of professional employment for the college's top graduates."

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