

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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BUSINESS INCUBATOR BREAKS GROUND MAY 10 IN RIVER FALLS, WI

River Falls, WI – Approximately 100 local, regional and state economic development and government representatives, corporate and small business partners, University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) leaders, and local officials and project boosters will gather from 1-2 p.m. Wednesday, May 10, to break ground for the new St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center in River Falls, WI. A short program will begin at 1:15 p.m. The event will be held at Sterling Ponds Corporate Park, [1091 Sutherland Ave.](#), in River Falls. The public is invited; refreshments will be served.

Ground breaking program (1:15-1:30 p.m., May 10)

- Paul Schwebach, Board Member, River Falls Economic Development Corporation
- Dean Van Galen, Chancellor, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
- Scott Morrisette, Council member, City of River Falls
- Bruce Barker, President, Chippewa Valley Technical College
- Groundbreaking ceremony with golden shovels and hard hats

The St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center will serve approximately 25 new and existing businesses, start-ups, and larger, more established enterprises in the region, offering work and manufacturing space and a myriad of supportive services.

“For years, we have known that River Falls and surrounding areas are magnets for new business,” said Danielle Campeau, project manager and director, Center for Innovation and Business Development at UW-River Falls. “Our location, robust private and public partnerships, educational opportunities, and a ready and growing workforce have attracted significant business and corporate interest to the area.”

The goals of the center are to:

- Foster an entrepreneurial culture
- Create jobs
- Accelerate the growth of new, existing, and spin-off businesses
- Encourage the commercialization of university research
- Provide new opportunities to connect students and faculty with businesses and other resources
- Provide small business access to campus resources including facilities, faculty, and students
- Capitalize on opportunities for partnership and collaboration

The construction phase of the project is underway with completion expected in early 2018. The center will sit on 3.7 acres in the City of River Falls Sterling Ponds Corporate Park. The

building will include 13,000 square feet of general manufacturing space and 18,000 square feet of offices and common areas.

Construction costs total nearly \$4 million. The project received a \$1.4 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and \$250,000 from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. Cash and in-kind supports have been secured from the City of River Falls and the River Falls Economic Development Corporation (RFEDC). A building, room, and equipment naming campaign is underway to raise additional dollars from local and regional donors.

Center services will include:

- Business development services
- Coaching and mentoring
- Financial advisory services
- Market development assistance
- Networking opportunities
- Connection to UWRF resources
- Business software selection
- Export resources

“We have worked hard to create a space where new and growing businesses can find the tools and resources they need to be successful,” said Scot Simpson, executive director of the RFEDC and River Falls City administrator. “They will bring new jobs to our region, and help place local graduates, unemployed workers, and career-changers in rewarding, sustainable jobs.”

“UW-River Falls is excited to see the regional Business Innovation Center dream come to fruition,” remarked UWRF Chancellor Dean Van Galen. “By having the UWRF Center for Innovation and Business Development play an important role in the operation of the incubator, we are confident that we will witness a growth of synergies and opportunities for our university to further connect with the St. Croix Valley.”

Organizing and sponsorship partners for the project include the River Falls Economic Development Corporation; the City of River Falls; UW-River Falls; and Chippewa Valley Technical College.

Supporting partners include the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration; the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation; West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission; and the St. Croix and Pierce County Economic Development Corporations.

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