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## Small business 'incubator' planned

By: **JOHN ANASTASI**  
Bucks County Courier Times

TEXT SIZE

Drexel University announced Tuesday that it will expand its presence at Bristol Township's Bridge Business Center by leasing nearly 15,000 square feet of space, where it will nourish small green energy start-ups.

"As an academic institution, we see it as an excellent place to plant our flag," said Anthony Lowman, associate dean of research and graduate studies at Drexel.

The school is still hammering out the details of its lease agreement and working to line up the funding it needs to operate at the business center, but Lowman said he hopes Drexel's small business "incubator" would be up and running by next spring.

It would provide support to fledgling companies that conduct research and development work on technologies that promote energy independence and energy security. In addition to providing access to Drexel's resources, the school plans to build a small power grid where entrepreneurs can try out their products.

"That will help (the center) become a draw for companies that work in power, because we're giving them a platform to test," Lowman said.

Doylestown's Keystone Redevelopment Group LLC owns the Bridge Business Center. The developer is rehabbing several former Rohm and Haas buildings whose space totals 300,000 square feet. It also expects to build an additional 60,000 square feet of space on the 35-acre site.

Keystone Redevelopment plans to lease the space mostly to life sciences and technology companies as well as academic institutions that want laboratory or work force development space.

Congressman Patrick Murphy, D-8, helped Drexel move forward with its plan for the center and, on Tuesday, he said the benefit of the small business incubator would be two-fold. First, it would support companies whose work, if successful, would contribute to the nation's push to reduce its dependence on foreign oil.

"Also, it's creating jobs and growing the local manufacturing base. That's why this partnership is so important," said Murphy.

While it was being used by Rohm and Haas, the facility was a center for innovation. Murphy said initiatives like the Drexel plan could help bring that innovation back.

The school is modeling the small business incubator on a similar program it launched in Camden a decade ago. The Applied Communication and Information Networking center now employs more than 300 workers in over 100 companies.

"In Bristol, we can do better," Murphy said.

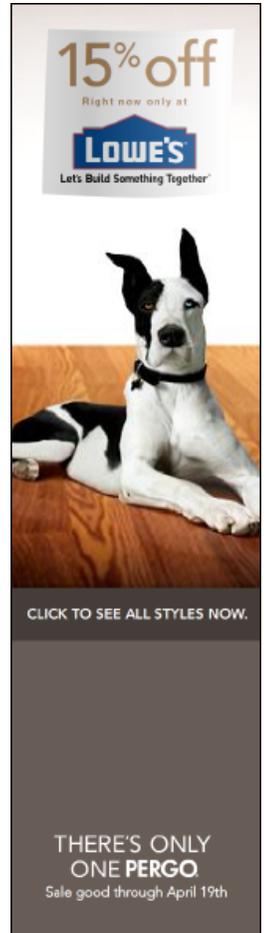
Drexel's fingerprints already cover the Bridge Business Center. It is part of the Green Jobs Academy, a public/private initiative to train Bucks County workers to perform green collar jobs. The academy is being

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operated by the Bucks County Community College, but Drexel is one of its several academic partners.

Another Bridge business - a nanotechnology company Y-Carbon - was founded by Drexel professor Yury Gogotsi, who is also director of the A.J. Drexel Nanotechnology Institute and Ranjan Dash, who last year received Drexel's Young Alumni Entrepreneur Award.

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