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Business Innovation Group (BIG) News

Georgia Southern University

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Georgia Southern's Business Innovation Group opens Innovation Incubator and FabLab

September 12, 2016



Area businesses and entrepreneurs now have access to office and meeting spaces, computers and software, 3-D printers and other tools through the Georgia Southern University Business Innovation Group's Innovation Incubator and Fabrication Laboratory (FabLab) located in downtown Statesboro at the University's City Campus.

A grand opening celebration was held today for the new facility in downtown Statesboro, where guest speakers including State Rep. Jan Tankersley, R-Brooklet, Statesboro Mayor Jan Moore, University President Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D., and Statesboro City Councilman Phil Boyum.

"These resources are available to anyone — from a person with a home-based business idea from Candler County, to the existing businesses or forward-thinking students here in Statesboro, to the thriving and growing businesses and individuals in the Savannah area and the entire Coastal region," said Hebert. "All of this makes BIG a useful and vital place to plant, nurture and harvest the entrepreneurial spirit. That entrepreneurial spirit — that idea of taking your own idea and with support and resources, growing it into something larger than it would have been — is exactly the same kind of spirit, the same kind of culture that exemplifies Georgia Southern."

The event also featured tours of the facility and demonstrations of different machinery and programs offered in the makerspace and incubator.

“The idea that this is now in place demonstrates for rural America, anything is possible. The services you’d normally find in larger urban areas or at institutions like Georgia Tech are now right here in Statesboro and at Georgia Southern,” said Dominique Halaby, director of the Business Innovation Group. “Just in the FabLab component, we have 3-D printing of various types so anyone can come in and manufacture anything that they can imagine, but we also have laser cutters, woodworking equipment and lots of other tools that you might not have in your house but you can have access to right here in this space.”

The space provides many benefits to entrepreneurs and small businesses in the region that may not have access to designated office space. In addition to providing access to meeting rooms, shared office equipment including printers, wireless networks and other business tools, the FabLab and Innovation Incubator is also a place for those creative thinkers and innovators to seek business advisement, coaching and leadership assessment, business consulting and technical assistance, training classes and much more.

“As we open our doors, we are changing the entrepreneurial ecosystem for the region and initiating opportunities for all innovators, creators, thinkers and dreamers to turn their ideas into reality,” said Suzanne Hallman, business advisor for Business Innovation Group.

The Innovation Incubator and FabLab is a joint venture between Georgia Southern University, the Downtown Statesboro Development Authority, City of Statesboro, Statesboro Arts Council and the Economic Development Administration, and is associated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)-established Global FabLab Network. The incubator is designed to create sustainable jobs, increase the number of local businesses and improve and diversify the economic drivers in coastal Georgia.

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