Project at a Glance

- Support St. Cloud State University’s vision to integrate with the region and bring together the university’s commitment to community, students and employment well into the future.

- The initiative involves three components that support:
  - Science, technology, engineering and math education in area school districts by supplementing curriculum through a Mobile Science Laboratory.
  - The Science Initiative of Central Minnesota, a community effort to organize local leadership and resources to assist science-based companies that seek to locate or expand in central Minnesota.
  - Planning for an innovative science and engineering facility at the university.

Project Description

The Higher Education Support of Bioscience Workforce and Prekindergarten Through 12th Grade Initiative will support a continuum of activities coordinated by the College of Science and Engineering at St. Cloud State University.

The project has three components:

- The first component is to support education in science, technology, engineering and math, topics called STEM for short, in prekindergarten through 12th grade school districts in the region. This project will provide supplementary curriculum support for students and teachers based on the Minnesota Science Standards. Curriculum will be delivered to school districts through a Mobile Science Laboratory using a fully equipped semitrailer donated by Medtronic Corp. This project also will provide annual professional development for in-service teachers using the mobile laboratory at their schools.

- The second component will support the Science Initiative of Central Minnesota, a group of private- and public-sector organizations that convened in 2005 to discuss how to counteract central Minnesota’s loss of traditional manufacturing jobs. The group agreed that creating a new manufacturing focus around the science-based and bioscience industry sector made sense. With three major universities, a technical college and many other supplementary training organizations, the St. Cloud area is uniquely positioned to meet these needs. The initiative will bring higher-wage jobs and more financial security to workers in the community.

- The third component is to support planning for an innovative science and engineering facility at St. Cloud State University. In fall 2005, the College of Science and Engineering evaluated facilities to determine current capacity to support on-campus students, regional school districts and outreach to local science and engineering businesses. The result was a College of Science and Engineering facilities master plan that called for new and
innovative space to support STEM faculty, outreach to prekindergarten through 12th grade students and teachers, and Minnesota businesses.

Capital bonding has been requested for a new integrated science and engineering laboratory facility, which is a two-phase construction project with an estimated cost of $70 million. In 2008, the Minnesota Legislature approved $900,000 of a requested $2.2 million in planning money for the first phase, approximately 100,000 square feet at an estimated cost of $44 million.

In addition to supporting the initiative, this new facility will serve a variety of existing and new cross-disciplinary programs. The facility would be a university-wide hub for interaction and innovation. Faculty and students beyond the College of Science and Engineering, particularly education and business, will be involved with outreach and commercialization of projects that relate to bioscience opportunities.

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- St. John’s University
- College of St. Benedict
- CentraCare Health System
- St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce
- The Initiative Foundation
- The St. Cloud Area Economic Development Partnership
- Minnesota Workforce Center
- Xcel Energy
- Steams Electric Cooperative Association
- East Central Energy
- Gray Plan Mooty, PA
- Netgain Technology
- Medtronic Corporation
- Area K-12 educators