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## Ole Miss Insight Park Opens April 5

MARCH 27, 2012 BY ERIN GARRETT



OXFORD, Miss. – University of Mississippi officials are set to celebrate the grand opening of Insight Park, a world-class research park, at 3 p.m. April 5 on Insight Park Avenue (formerly Hathorn Road), just past the Ole Miss Soccer Stadium.

“The purpose of Insight Park is to enhance the commercialization of the university’s research, to

establish partnerships with the private sector to encourage innovation, and to become an economic node for the state and region,” said William Nicholas, assistant director.

The research park provides a place where technology and research-based companies can work with the university’s research faculty and students to take advantage of opportunities for collaborative research and easy access to academic resources, equipment and services.

Besides attracting established firms and startup companies, Insight Park accelerates the creation and growth of new commercial enterprises emerging from the university’s research.

“I think that one of the most interesting aspects of Insight Park is the timing,” Nicholas said. “There is an entrepreneurial and innovative spirit at the University of Mississippi, and we provide a collaborative and resource-rich environment in a state-of-the-art facility to allow new or experienced entrepreneurs the opportunity to pursue commercialization of university research.”

The building itself has interesting aspects, said Jake Jenkins, manager of facilities and technical services.

“From a physical infrastructure standpoint, I think the most exciting aspect of the park design is the design of the building and how it encourages interaction among our diverse group of clients,” he said. “On a less tangible level, I think the park’s location on the University of Mississippi campus in Oxford is a very interesting aspect of our operation. Both of these, the design and the location, work together to increase the sense of community and the diversity of ideas among our clients. This is a very powerful advantage for our clients at Insight Park.”

One of the noteworthy features of the building is its geothermal heating and cooling system. The system handles approximately 70 percent of Insight Park’s heating and cooling needs. The system, located under the parking lot, circulates water at various temperatures to heat and cool the building. Other unique aspects include solar shading, an energy-efficient gearless elevator and a Cisco data network.

Four tenants have located in the park:

- Randall Commercial Group LLC is a commercial real estate investment firm. Elizabeth Randall, the firm’s CEO, is the park’s executive in residence.
- SOAIR is a company that is working to develop a device that uses ultrasonic waves to gather biometric data from people for health monitoring.
- Sweet Cheeks, owned by Elizabeth Hiatt, is preparing to launch its first two natural body care products into the marketplace within the next 60 days.
- Sherpa Solutions LLC offers embedded systems design and consulting.

Officials have big plans for the park, Nicholas said.

“Our goal is to remain intently focused on enhancing the survival of startups admitted to our incubator, while providing a collaborative environment for our industry and government partners,” he said. “The park

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For more information on Insight Park, visit <http://insightparkum.com/>.

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