



# INNOVATION PARK

A RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

## NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Leon County Research and Development Authority Awards Three Grants for Technology Commercialization** *Funding allows local technology firms to expand in Leon County*

**TALLAHASSEE** – A radio frequency technology anti-theft device, a pharmaceutical start-up company and a local information technology firm were chosen for this year's Innovation Park Technology Commercialization Grant Program. The entrepreneurs behind the technology each received \$15,000 from the Leon County Research and Development Authority (LCRDA) to expand their research-based products and services into the commercial arena.

“The Tallahassee area is filled with entrepreneurs developing technology that can achieve commercial success and make a significant impact on our economy,” said LCRDA Chairman Tom Barron. “For the past three years, we’ve been choosing products and services with a strong promise for growth in the marketplace. Our past grant recipients are proof of our success in growing local technology companies.”

The three \$15,000 grant recipients are Comm-Engines, Inc., DiscoverRx, LLC and Seva Technologies.

Todd Franklin, president of Comm-Engines, is the former Director of Engineering for Talla-Com Industries and former Chief Engineer of Talla-Tech. Comm-Engines has designed and patented an anti-shoplifting device using radio frequency technology that will be affordable for small retail stores.

“Similar systems are currently on the market and in use in large department stores,” said Mr. Franklin. “The existing systems are price prohibitive for smaller stores. This is why we developed a system that is affordable and easy to install.” Comm-Engines plans to use the grant funds for mechanical design and prototyping, a manufacturing test station, and website upgrades. “We demonstrated the prototypes to potential marketing partners in south Florida a few weeks ago. They were very impressed with the system’s performance, and asked us to provide a quote for several thousand systems”

Todd Franklin recently established an office for his company in the Incubator at Innovation Park, which puts him in close proximity to engineers at Florida State University (FSU). Todd Franklin has a license agreement to work for FSU on a shipping container scanning technology currently under patent application.

“A paper design has been completed, and we are working to develop a marketing strategy for this product,” said Todd. “This is the only technology we know of that is capable of being embedded into the trailer, and is fast enough that every container coming to the country can be scanned without affecting the rate at which containers are handled today,” he adds.

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## **Innovation Park Grant Winners – Page 2**

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DiscovRx, LLC is a pharmaceutical start-up company established in 2005. Karunya Kandimalla, R&D President of DiscovRx, is a professor at the Florida A&M University School of Pharmacy. He says the company will use the \$15,000 grant award to secure office and lab space and develop marketing materials, such as a website and brochures.

“The grant will provide us with the extra support that we need. Our next step is to hire two research associates to further our research and development capacity,” he said.

Seva Technologies is local information technology firm that specializes in the development of database-driven web-enabled software application for data collection, analysis and reporting. The Tallahassee-based company developed a software package for the Leon County Sheriff’s office, which is now being adapted and marketed to other criminal justice agencies in Florida. Company president Jim Tillman says they will use the grant award to fund hardware and software costs, internet hosting services and technical subcontracting assistance.

Innovation Park Executive Director Linda Nichol森 coordinated the grant program and participated on the selection committee. EDC executive director Beth Kirkland, Chris Workman of the Florida A&M University Small Business Development Center and Dr. Betty Presnell of the Jim Moran Institute served on the selection committee to determine the grant award recipients.

The winning proposals were chosen based on specific criteria established by the Authority to determine if the technology-related product or service has commercial potential and the ability to create jobs in Leon County.

Proposals for the 2008 Innovation Park Technology Commercialization Grant Program will be accepted in January. To learn more about Innovation Park and the Leon County Research and Development Authority, log onto [www.innovation-park.com](http://www.innovation-park.com).

*Innovation Park is a 208-acre research park located in Southwest Leon County. Its mission is to promote scientific research and development and broaden the economic base of Leon County in affiliation with the local universities. Over 40 public and private organizations currently call Innovation Park home and employ more than 1,700 citizens from the Tallahassee area in high-paying, technology-based jobs. For more information, visit [www.innovation-park.com](http://www.innovation-park.com)*

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