

## **New Industry-Leading Biomedical Simulation & Product Development Center Host VIPs**

The Associated Press

An estimated 150 Northeast Ohio and statewide leaders today viewed firsthand the technology-filled 30,000-square-foot simulation center in the new headquarters of the Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron (ABIA).

The ABIA's open house was the first opportunity for many of the officials to see the headquarters, which is among the leading research and training centers of its kind in the country. The building features healthcare technology and simulation space meant to improve training for the entire medical team and first responders to improve education and patient care, as well as providing space for product development and commercialization. Companies and organizations from across the country and Ohio already have used the new facility to improve their training or test products.

The ABIA's Center for Simulation and Integrated Healthcare Education (CSIHE) is one of the largest of its kind in the country, and offers space that includes a mock hospital complete with triage, nursing, surgical, perinatal, intensive care and emergency and operating rooms.

The center also features a unique bioskills cadaver lab that can be utilized by numerous medical and engineering specialties to work on more streamlined and effective procedures, as well as allowing for the efficient training of industry sales and design teams.

"Thanks to the support of the Knight Foundation and our founding member institutions - Akron Children's Hospital, Akron General Health System, Northeast Ohio Medical University, Summa Health System and The University of Akron - Akron and Northeast Ohio now have a spectacular asset that will impact healthcare training and biomedical device innovation across the country," said Dr. Frank L. Douglas, president and CEO of ABIA. "Our ongoing mantra is 'The patients are waiting.' And this new headquarters will help the healthcare sector improve patient care while accelerating innovation, growing the health and medical device space in Akron and Northeast Ohio and thus create jobs." The headquarters represents a rare combination of research and biomedical product development expertise that few communities possess under one roof.

"Akron, traditionally a manufacturing city, was always at the forefront of developing new products through research and innovation," said Mayor Don Plusquellic. "ABIA continues in many ways that tradition but in a more highly technical, hi-tech arena - as innovators of medicine, biomedical research and materials handling.

The ABIA is the result of the cooperative spirit that exists in Akron and should

ultimately lead to the jobs of the future through commercialization of the new ideas, products, and procedures developed by the world-class researchers at ABIA." During the open house, guests took part in a live disaster demonstration that highlighted just some of the center's many capabilities and included use of a decontamination tent, trauma bay, the intensive care unit, mock operating room, bioskills lab and a standardized patient room. Actors played the roles of patients involved in an emergency, and ABIA professionals demonstrated the functions of each station meant to improve training for the entire team of medical and health professionals.

"The Austen BioInnovation Institute is a magnet for helping attract innovative new companies and technologies to Ohio in the areas of biomaterials and medicine," said Mark Patton, JobsOhio Managing Director for Biohealth. "This powerful asset is helping to leverage the region's expertise while growing highly desired jobs that retain and expand our workforce." "The Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron represents the unlimited potential we see in Northeast Ohio to out-innovate and out-work the rest of the world," said U.S. Rep. Betty Sutton. "Too often we are referred to as the Rust Belt, but the innovation on display today, utilizing our region's strengths in medicine and industrial and materials science, shows we really should be called the Opportunity Belt. I am proud to have been a partner in this progress, helping to deliver the resources necessary to help make today possible, and I look forward to working with the great men and women of this critical part of our community for years to come." When commenting on ABIA's leadership, Knight Foundation President and CEO Alberto Ibarquen said, "We all know that we have hit a home run in that department with Dr. Douglas." "Today we are celebrating a model of excellence in Akron," he added.

"Nobody should be fooled that the ABIA is a done deal. This is just the beginning. That should leave all of us with a great deal of hope." The ABIA facility, built in 1917, was once the original headquarters and train terminal station for the Northern Ohio Traction & Light Company, which was a power company that eventually became Ohio Edison and operated nearly 300 miles of electric railways. After extensive renovations, ABIA executives moved into the headquarters in May and have been adding equipment for the training facilities during the summer. A mix of public and private funding from the Development Finance Authority of Summit County, ABIA, FirstEnergy, Summit County and the State of Ohio helped to finance the project.

"The ABIA may represent the best of our community collaborations and will help position our city and our county for future good-paying jobs and opportunities," said Summit County Executive Russ Pry.

In addition to the simulation center, the facility also houses three of ABIA's other Centers of Innovation -Medical Device Development Center, Center for Clinical Trials and Product Development and Center for Community Health Improvement - and rapid prototyping capability, an auditorium, meeting and educational spaces, an Akron location for the Northeast Ohio Medical University and more. A fifth center, the Center for Biomaterials and Medicine, is located on the campus of The University of Akron.

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"This new facility marks a turning point for Akron, Northeast Ohio and the biomedical device sector," Dr. Douglas said. "In conjunction with our partners, we have the capacity to do some amazing things in Akron.

The culture of innovation is growing here. There are even more exciting times ahead." About the Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron Based in Akron, Ohio, the Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron - a unique collaboration of Akron Children's Hospital, Akron General Health System, Northeast Ohio Medical University, Summa Health System, The University of Akron and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation - is focused on patient-centered innovation and commercialization at the intersection of biomaterials and medicine. The institute is focused on being a global leader in discovering, developing and commercializing biomaterial solutions for patients with orthopaedic and wound healing problems, nationally distinct in improving health outcomes, with a focus on the medically underserved, and recognized for the use of simulation technologies to improve the education of the healthcare team.

To learn more about the Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron, please visit [www.abiakron.org](http://www.abiakron.org).

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