



BURNHAM INSTITUTE
for MEDICAL RESEARCH
at Lake Nona
From Research, the Power to Cure



Burnham Institute's 175,000 sq.-ft. building will bring \$85 million of funding into the local economy.

Burnham Institute

New research facility could bring more hi-tech jobs & major companies to Seminole County

Seminole County is expected to benefit from the new Burnham Institute for Medical Research, which plans to open this summer at Lake Nona. Elizabeth Gianini, Vice-President, External Relations, spoke at the recent monthly breakfast meeting of PBAS about the institute and its economic potential in the region. Burnham is a not-for-profit, bi-coastal institute with operations in California and Florida.

Burnham is establishing a world-class research center dedicated to the study of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular complications. The obesity epidemic is driving an alarming increase in the incidence of diabetes, which has more than doubled in the last 15 years. Heart disease is the leading cause of death among diabetics. The Diabetes and Obesity Research Center was launched in 2007 and is directed by Daniel P. Kelly, M.D., the newly appointed Scientific Director. Dr. Kelly will be responsible for faculty recruitment for the Orlando site,

which is situated in Lake Nona's "Medical City," a newly developed science and technology park with several university and clinical partners.

Burnham's new 175,000 sq.-ft. facility at Lake Nona is one of the three largest Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified scientific buildings in Florida. By the time of its completion, this construction project will have brought \$85 million of funding into the local economy.

Gianini explained the "Life Science Cluster," which is critical to advancing health care research: A strong research institute and university, venture capital to provide funding, management talent and cooperation and involvement from biotech and pharmaceutical companies.

"We're getting key elements of the cluster here now," she said, "and within a few short years all will be in existence here."

The Institute has established partnerships with Florida Hospital, M.D. Anderson

Cancer Center Orlando (Orlando Health), Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Scripps Florida, University of Central Florida and the University of Florida.

"We're the research arm that's been missing in Central Florida," Gianini said. Burnham is the fourth largest biotech company in the nation, with 80% of its budget coming from the National Institutes of Health. She said for every \$1 spent, \$6-8 is generated for the economy.

Burnham was awarded a \$98 million grant to create a drug screening and molecule library in Orlando. The institute will test compounds to see the reaction of cells and create a library of data. Scientists at Burnham do basic research, Gianini explained, looking at cells and then animals. Then they pass their data on to other research organizations. She said it can cost \$1 billion and ten years to go from basic research to an approved drug on the market. A genetic cancer drug now being tested at Burnham, which could turn on the "death gene" in a cancer cell, forcing it to commit suicide, is in the Food & Drug Administration process, she said.

In one year, Burnham scientists have successfully attracted almost \$40 million of NIH grants and other research funding to Orlando. Burnham ranks among the top four institutions nationally for NIH grant funding and among the top 25 organizations worldwide for its research impact.

Burnham's presence in Orlando at Lake Nona will employ over 300 scientists and support personnel in high-wage, high-value jobs, paying 130% of the average private sector wage in Orange County.

Seminole County will also benefit because "It's easier for a scientist to live in Oviedo and drive down 417 to Lake Nona than from downtown Orlando," according to Gianini, which means more highly-paid workers will be moving here.



Elizabeth Gianini



William Owen

“Seminole County has great connectivity to our site,” she said. Gianini explained the importance of “creating a package to attract employees, which includes a base of transportation.” Health researchers come to Central Florida “because of the collaborative nature of Burnham,” she said and will help draw more hi-tech firms to the 417 corridor, known as Seminole Way.

How SeminoleWay Can Benefit

Bill Owen, President and CEO of Real Estate Research Consultants, recommended the following for SeminoleWay in a report prepared for the Seminole County Commission at the behest of the Seminole County Regional Chamber of Commerce:

- Help incubator companies graduate and survive into the stage where they can manufacture their own products locally.
- Recruit and foster life sciences companies that help to “fill out” the regional life sciences ecosystem.
- Embrace a generalized definition of life sciences for training, marketing and economic development activities, but focus on the the confluence of green biotech, biofuels, the UCF incubator system and a new “green biotech” zone in conjunction with the Orlando-Seminole International Airport.
- Prepare for a long-term economic development effort; the current industry base is relatively shallow and young and it may be a decade or more before a strong and comprehensive industry base can be fostered. However, there are immediate prospects for success among existing UCF entrepreneurs and company partners that will be responsive to the recommendations listed in this proposal.
- Develop contract manufacturing and local production solutions to help small life sciences companies develop and manufacture their products locally.

“We’re more than just ‘medical city’- we’re about the community,” Gianini said.

William Owen, President and CEO of Real Estate Research Consultants, said the Medical City development “is one of the most exciting economic engines to emerge in Central Florida since the opening of Walt Disney

World in 1971.

“It is my opinion that this cluster will emerge rapidly and, upon maturation, will spread across southeast Orlando and Orange County and Seminole County, growing to rival some of the nation’s finest biomedical centers,” Owen said.

Owen estimated that there

are over 2,000 biotech companies in the region and in a report prepared by Real Estate Research Consultants in association with the research firm, Innovation Insight, of Tampa, prepared for the Seminole County Commission at the behest of the Seminole County Regional Chamber of Commerce, Owen wrote, “the SeminoleWay region can develop a viable life sciences strategy that complements the Lake Nona / Medical City / Innovation Way Corridor. However, it will have to embrace a focused strategy and commit to specialized resources and investment to pursue this cluster. There is a perceived window of opportunity resulting from the combination of the new medical school, the Medical City complex, the Burnham Institute, Scripps, and entrepreneurial / research activity out of UCF that can be capitalized upon if swift and committed steps are taken.”

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<http://home.wachoviasecurities.com/erin.watford>



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