



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **PEDA awarded \$55,000 for life sciences research project focused on regional growth**

#### ***Massachusetts Life Sciences Center Board approves state funding for project***

PITTSFIELD, Mass. – The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) announced today the approval of a \$55,000 capital planning grant to support a research project at the William Stanley Business Park in Pittsfield. The business park is the site of a proposed Berkshire Life Sciences Center, a 20,000-square-foot facility on former General Electric (GE) property that is managed by the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority (PEDA).

The project the grant will fund is a formal study of opportunities to catalyze life-sciences-related economic development in Western Massachusetts. The study will be conducted by New England Expansion Strategies, a third party selected through an RFP process.

The MLSC is the agency charged with implementing the state's 10-year, \$1 billion Life Sciences Initiative, proposed by Governor Deval Patrick in 2007 and approved by the Legislature in 2008. \$6.5 million in capital funding was designated in the legislation for a project in the William Stanley Business Park in Pittsfield.

"As we pursue our mission of accelerating growth in Massachusetts, we are very focused on making investments across the entire Commonwealth that promote life sciences-driven economic development," said Dr. Susan Windham-Bannister, President & CEO of the MLSC. "The city of Pittsfield is an important partner in that effort, and we are pleased to award this funding to support their forward-looking plans for life sciences growth in the region."

"This grant will enable Pittsfield to examine the most effective life-sciences-related potential at the William Stanley Business Park by leveraging the inherent strengths and relationships in the Berkshire region of Western Massachusetts," said Pittsfield Mayor Dan Bianchi. "I am optimistic that the planning for a life sciences business presence in Pittsfield will offer enhanced opportunity for employment and will be the first step in making the Berkshires a meaningful part of the dynamic Massachusetts life sciences industry."

"This is one of the many steps in the process," said PEDA's Executive Director, Corydon Thurston. "It will help the City and PEDA validate its vision for the facility and lead to the creation of a sustainable business model for its operation. We have been diligently pursuing this effort for more than a year now under the guidance of the MSLC, and we are very pleased that the Board of the MLSC has recognized our progress, and I thank them for this funding."

Thurston credited his Board, and foundation partners, Nuclea Biotechnologies and Berkshire Community College, for playing a major role in developing the vision and local collaborations that resulted in this initial MLSC funding. “We truly appreciate the care and level of review given all funding requests to the MLSC, and I think their track record speaks for itself,” continued Thurston. “With that enviable record, I take comfort that this planning grant is an indicator that we are, in fact, on the right track for Pittsfield, and I am very excited about the prospect for expanding the Life Sciences ecosystem in Massachusetts into the Berkshires”.

“I am very excited that New England Expansion Strategies was selected to conduct the feasibility study for the Berkshire Life Sciences Center,” said planning consultant Rod Jane. “This project can be an extremely important catalyst for economic development in the region. As former Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office of Business Development, I had the opportunity to assist Nuclea Biotechnologies with their successful startup in Pittsfield. During that process I found the city officials and local businesses from Pittsfield to be exceptionally helpful, proactive and responsive, which was instrumental in helping the project succeed. I look forward to working with the City of Pittsfield and PEDDA to help make the Berkshire Life Sciences Center a success.”

“I am excited at the opportunity this grant represents,” said State Senator Benjamin B. Downing (D-Pittsfield). “This investment is the first step in building the Berkshire Life Sciences Center and deepening the ongoing regional collaboration in science and technology here in Berkshire County. From the MCLA Center for Science & Innovation to countless other steps, we are working hard to capture the jobs and opportunity presented by the life sciences. These resources will help us to do just that.”

“I am so pleased once again with the results of the state’s strong partnership with local business and government leaders, which will continue to foster innovation and economic growth here in the Berkshires,” said State Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier (D-Pittsfield). “We are confident that life sciences will become an important local industry that will grow opportunities for high-paying STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering and Math] jobs in the region.”

For more information on this project, visit [www.williamstanleybp.com](http://www.williamstanleybp.com) or [www.PittsfieldEDA.org](http://www.PittsfieldEDA.org).

#### **About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center**

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is a quasi-public agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts tasked with implementing the Massachusetts Life Sciences Act, a 10-year, \$1-billion initiative that was signed into law in June of 2008. The MLSC’s mission is to create jobs in the life sciences and support vital scientific research that will improve the human condition. This work includes making financial investments in public and private institutions that are advancing life sciences research, development and commercialization as well as building ties among sectors of the Massachusetts life sciences community. For more information, visit [www.masslifesciences.com](http://www.masslifesciences.com).

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