

NEWS

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

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ST. CLOUD, Minn., Aug.--High technology and the benefits of a strong partnership between government, education and private business will be the focus as St. Cloud State University (SCSU) dedicates its new Engineering and Computing Center Friday, Sept. 12.

Herbert Johnson, chairman of the Data Myte Corporation of Minnetonka, will be the keynote speaker for the 4 p.m. ceremony in the building's auditorium. The ceremony will follow tours of the building, which start at noon.

The Engineering and Computing Center (ECC) is the product of a \$3 million remodeling of the old Gray Campus Laboratory School, which last operated in 1983. The building has been extensively remodeled, and a two-story wing containing new offices and classrooms has been added to the building's north end.

The building is home to three academic departments--the departments of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, and Mathematics and Statistics. It is also home to advanced equipment in all three fields brought to SCSU through discounts and donations from numerous firms in the field of high technology.

"What we have in the ECC is the product of a remarkable partnership between the state and private industry," says SCSU President Brendan J. McDonald. "The state's recognition of the need for leadership in the fields of engineering and computer science and the assistance and advice given to us by leaders in industry have produced in one building the faculty and equipment needed to help prepare students for careers in the new technologies that are transforming our society."

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The discounts and gifts--which total more than \$1 million--have also increased the capacity of the Academic Computer Services located in the Engineering and Computing Center. With 160 work stations located in the "Beehive," the one-time gymnasium of the laboratory school, Academic Computer Services provides access to computers for students whose coursework requires it. Users of Academic Computer Services range from students enrolled in economics and social science courses to those taking classes in management and finance or quantitative methods and information systems.

Among those attending the dedication will be representatives of 16 high technology firms that have offices in the state. Those firms have provided assistance to SCSU not only through donations and discounts but through membership on the Industry Advisory Council for the university's new electrical engineering program, providing counsel on equipment and curriculum.

The dedication of the new ECC is significant not only for the building and the programs it contains, but for its implications, says Dr. Stephen Weber, SCSU vice president for academic affairs.

"The renovation of the campus school is an example of how universities respond to changing societal needs," Weber says. "This university has reconfigured itself in response to a demand by society for the training and education of engineers, and that kind of reconfiguration goes on constantly.

"Universities in the United States are now finding themselves more and more in the position of renovating existing structures instead of building new ones, and that--along with the function of the ECC itself--makes the building doubly significant."