

## A state of innovation

**March 24, 2020**

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By Michael Carolina

How does Oklahoma become recognized as a “top-tier” state known for innovation that supports our legacy industries while blazing a path to new technologies and new business opportunities?

The Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology has a vision for a future in which our state is a national leader across a diverse, multidimensional innovation landscape that includes biosciences, aerospace, manufacturing and software development.

OCAST is Oklahoma’s agency for technology-based economic development with a mission of growing and diversifying the state’s economy through science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

OCAST is the epicenter of a public-private partnership that has become known as the Oklahoma Innovation Model and includes i2E Inc., the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance, the New Product Development Center at Oklahoma State University and the Tom Love Innovation Hub at the University of Oklahoma.

The OIM is an integrated and seamless entity that connects our research capabilities and commercialization activities across the state. OCAST and its strategic partners have a footprint in most of Oklahoma’s 77 counties.

We see a future in which Oklahoma is known for a dynamic, robust and vital economy that can weather downturns in any one business or industry sector.

OCAST pursues its mission of growth and diversification with a suite of programs that invest in research and innovation that bring millions of dollars of follow-on grants from federal agencies as well as investment from the private sector.

In 2019 alone, OCAST programs resulted in a total economic impact of \$336 million to Oklahoma’s economy. That included total payroll of \$24.4 million, capital investments of \$88.2 million, follow-on funds of \$131.8 million and 20 new companies and 800 jobs.

OCAST and our OIM partners have helped create a number of “bright spots” that were included in our recently released 2020 Impact Report. These “bright spots” include revolutionary prosthetic devices by Martin Bionics, Oklahoma City; precision positioning and alignment systems to support the transportation industry developed by Preston-Eastin in Tulsa; the development of advanced medical diagnostic tools to more reliably predict lupus flares by Progentec Diagnostics, Oklahoma City; and advanced sensor technologies to more efficiently treat industrial water by Advantage Controls LLC, Muskogee.

These are but a few “bright spots” that showcase Oklahoma’s talented researchers and leading-edge businesses that found innovative solutions to today’s problems and, along the way, created new jobs with higher incomes.