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Tech park growing

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CRANE, Mar 28, 2009 (Washington Times-Herald - McClatchy-Tribune Information Services via COMTEX) -- SEAP | [Quote](#) | [Chart](#) | [News](#) | [PowerRating](#) -- The WestGate [Technology](#) Park welcomed a new addition during a ceremony Friday.

Science Applications International Corporation opened a two-story steel and concrete building at the technology park, which [spreads](#) across Daviess, Martin and Green counties. SAIC will provide support to the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Crane.

Dale Ankrom, of the WestGate@Crane Development Company, said the 37,000-square-foot building employed 275 in its construction.

Ankrom said two more buildings are planned for the tech park and would bring an additional 125 jobs.

Local and state political figures attended the opening and spoke to a packed [conference room](#)

before the ribbon-cutting outside.

Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman said it was an exciting day for the state of Indiana, with [SAIC](#) bringing about 160 jobs to the area.

"Even in uncertain economic times, this is giving us a dose of much-needed optimism," she said.

Rep. Brad Ellsworth, D.-- Eighth District, recalled that four years ago the construction of a tech park started with little more than a tent in a field and people were unsure if it would happen.

"It goes to show the dedication of everyone here," he said.

Sen. Evan Bayh was unable to attend but sent a letter congratulating SAIC and wishing them well.

Capt. Chuck LaSota, commanding officer at Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane, said he was amazed to see all the buildings springing up in the tech park and that southern Indiana was a good choice for industry.

"We look forward to a long, continuing partnership," LaSota said.

Loogootee mayor Don Bowling kept the crowd laughing with remarks about his age and status as the oldest serving mayor in Indiana.

Bowling said Southwestern Indiana was an unlikely place for a tech park. He said progress moved slowly the first three or four years and now the tech park employed 450 people.

"It's all about jobs," Bowling said. "It won't happen overnight but it will happen."

Washington mayor Larry Haag said SAIC and the tech park would have a positive impact on Washington and Daviess County.

"We will have high-paying jobs within a 30-mile radius of Washington," he said. "We look forward to supporting whatever we can. We're looking at our housing. We expect to grow in Washington as well as in the region."

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