

UW-Madison Seeks Biotech Edge

By JONATHAN MOSELEY
Staff Writer

Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson recently announced his intention to pour \$317 million into the development of biotechnology programs for the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The Wisconsin proposal mirrors a sentiment in North Carolina that biotech research is crucial to a state's economy.

In his State of the State Address on Wednesday, Thompson gave a detailed plan for improving the university's capital assets, including a proposal for four new research buildings.

He planned to fund a \$105 million interdisciplinary biology building, a \$100 million microbial sciences building, an \$85 million biochemistry building and a \$27 million addition to the University of Wisconsin's Biotechnology Center.

Thompson's initiative, called Biostar, is part of two nationwide trends - the development of the biotech industry and the increased importance of the private sector as opposed to university research.

Charles Hoslet, special assistant to the University of Wisconsin-Madison chancellor, said the means by which the new buildings would be funded typified

a recent tendency toward combining public and private revenue sources.

"This is the next step in a series of public-private partnerships over the past decade to improve the infrastructure of the biomedical field," Hoslet said.

Partnerships between universities and private funds are tremendously important to the future of higher education, Hoslet said.

"Gone are the days when the state can spend the kind of tax dollars to maintain a top-five research university," he said.

North Carolina is also looking to promote top-notch research facilities through construction and renovation of new buildings, said Jeff Davies, UNC vice president of finance.

UNC-system President Molly Broad recently proposed a \$750 million capital improvements plan.

But the proposal includes money for only one biotech research building, an addition to the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine.

Instead, Davies said the UNC system planned to recommend more program-based projects to improve biotech.

Wis. state officials stressed the growing importance of the biotech field.

"In the past there have been a variety of revolutions, for example in comput-

ers and communications," Schmitz said. "Biotech is the next cutting-edge industry."

Representatives hope to budget the project beginning next spring so ground-breaking can start as soon as possible.

"This is money that goes to (the state's) infrastructure, so it's a long process," said Darrin Schmitz, Thompson's press secretary.

"The proposal now goes to the state's billing commission, which the governor is the chair of."

Although the state legislature has not yet officially received the proposal, the idea has bipartisan support, Schmitz said.

"The governor feels confident that others besides himself are willing to make investments in the high-tech sector of the economy," he said.

Even in its preliminary stages, State Democratic Sen. Fred Risser said he would support the university.

"I support the item, and the university supports it," he said. "I think we have a great university here."

"We have some great research going on."

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Officials: Faulty Controls Cause Crash

Associated Press

PORT HUENEME, Calif. - The pilots of Alaska Airlines Flight 261 struggled with a sudden control problem for at least six minutes before the jetliner plummeted into the ocean with 88 people aboard, investigators said Tuesday.

The last minutes of the MD-83's flight Monday may have been witnessed by pilots aboard four other aircraft, and the National Transportation Safety Board was seeking to interview them.

The plane plunged from 17,000 feet and crashed nose-down in the Pacific after the pilot reported problems with the horizontal stabilizer, a wing-like structure on the tail that controls the pitch of the aircraft's nose.

Investigators at the crash site also said Tuesday that they had heard a pinging from the ocean, apparently from the flight recorders, which could reveal what went wrong with the stabilizer.

The search was concentrated on a debris field about 10 miles offshore and about 40 miles northwest of the Los Angeles airport.

Nearly a day after the accident, searchers had pulled four bodies - one man, two women and an infant - from the calm sea, which is 300 to 750 feet deep in the area. Hopes dimmed that anyone aboard Flight 261 survived in the 58-degree water. "This is still a search for human life," Coast Guard Adm. Tom Collins said. "The challenge is time. As time ticks off, risks go up."

On shore in Port Hueneme, passers-by paused to bow their heads in prayer. "It just feels so good to stand out here and pray. It sort of cleanses you out," said Diane Adame, 39.

"You don't realize when you put someone on a plane and give them a hug that you might not see them again. I just feel for the people who lost their loved ones, especially the young ones."

The flight had left Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, for San Francisco and Seattle with 83 passengers and five crew members.

The passengers included three airline employees, four employees of its sister airline Horizon and 23 relatives or friends of the employees taking advantage of free standby flights.

Safety board member John Hammerschmidt released preliminary transcripts of air traffic control communications with the airliner.

The last routine transmission came at 3:55 p.m. PST, when the flight was cleared to continue to San Francisco.

Hammerschmidt said that at 4:10 p.m. the pilots had said they had had control difficulties and were descending below 26,000 feet.

A few seconds later they had advised that they were at 23,700 feet and there was "some discussion about their ability to control the aircraft."

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Kelly McLaughlin

The University of North Carolina and Wachovia would like to congratulate Kelly McLaughlin, the Wachovia Woman of the Week.

Kelly is a senior swimmer from High Point. Serving as the 99-00 co-captain of the currently ranked #17 Tar Heels, Kelly earned ACC Academic Honors for both her freshmen and sophomore seasons; maintaining Dean's List status every semester at Carolina with a 3.7 GPA. She is also the Women's Swim Team representative for ACC-Carolina Outreach and served as a summer camp counselor at Athletes in Action (AIA) national camp.

Wachovia is committed to supporting achievements by women and is proud to celebrate Kelly McLaughlin's accomplishments.



Let's get started.

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