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**PASSAIC COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE UNVEILS
JOHN CURRIE BIOTECHNOLOGY INNOVATION CENTER:**

A New Era of Education and Innovation in New Jersey

Wayne, NJ — In a significant step forward for career and technical education, Passaic County Technical Institute (PCTI) today officially opened the John Currie Biotechnology Innovation Center with a ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony. The state-of-the-art 55,000-square-foot facility, dedicated to longtime PCTI advocate Chairman John Currie, will provide cutting-edge biotechnology training, which includes New Jersey's 1st DNA Learning Center, preparing students for success in one of New Jersey's fastest-growing industries.

The construction of this new facility was made possible by funding from the New Jersey Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act. These funds were allocated to expand career and technical education programs, with the specific aim of preparing students for high-demand fields. The bond act enabled PCTI to upgrade facilities and equipment to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving vocational landscape. The Biotech Innovation Center will increase the capacity for an additional 800 students from grades 9-12, providing them access to high-skill, high-wage career opportunities in the region's biotechnology industry.

This innovative facility is more than just a building; it represents a strategic alignment between PCTI and Passaic County Community College (PCCC). The Biotech Innovation Center will physically connect the high school and college campus, forming the foundation for the region's first high school-to-college dual credit associate degree in biotechnology. This program allows students the opportunity to earn a 60-credit associate degree while completing their high school education.

Of the Biotechnology Innovation Center John Currie expressed, "This center is about giving our students a chance to dream bigger and reach higher. By opening these doors, we're giving them the opportunity to explore their potential and build a brighter future for themselves and our community. Knowing that this center will help young people succeed in ways they may have never imagined is the greatest honor I could ask for."

The dedication ceremony was attended by prominent State and County dignitaries, including Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way; Dr. Steven Rose, Passaic County Community College President; David Miklos, Executive Director of Cold Spring Harbor DNA Learning Center (DNALC); and Passaic County Commissioners, Director John Bartlett and Deputy Director Cassandra "Sandi" Lazzara.

"John Currie is a dedicated public servant who has served Passaic County for decades," said Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way. "It is fitting for a building here to be named in his honor. For generations, John has done so much for young people and I am excited to see how the John Currie BioTech Innovation Center benefits students for years to come."

Among the key highlights of this innovative initiative is the DNA Learning Center a first for the State of New Jersey. This cutting-edge resource is fully equipped, licensed, and operated by Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. Supported by InnovATEBIO, a global leader in biomedical research

and education, the center will provide students with invaluable hands-on experience in biotechnology, ensuring they are well-prepared to excel in this rapidly advancing field.

"The opening of the John Currie Biotechnology Innovation Center marks a transformative step for PCTI, " said PCTI Chief School Administrator John Maiello. "It will serve as a hub of innovation and hands-on learning, where students will earn industry-valued credentials and engage in practical experience to prepare them for the workforce."

The John Currie Biotechnology Innovation Center is not just a milestone for PCTI but an inspiring leap forward for education and industry alike. It's a tangible manifestation of when education and industry work hand in hand to ensure that students have the skills they need to lead in a rapidly changing world.

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