

Golisano's \$10M gift to boost sustainability institute

By JANICE B. PIETERSE

With a \$10 million gift from Thomas Golisano, Rochester Institute of Technology officials this week said the university would build on its leadership in the field of sustainable production.

RIT has created the Golisano Institute for Sustainability, honoring Golisano's commitment to RIT initiatives in creating education and development systems for sustainable design, life cycle engineering, remanufacturing and pollution prevention, officials said.

It also expects to become the first technological university to provide a full spectrum of career-focused, integrated and interdisciplinary programs that embody the principles of sustainability in product development.

RIT president William Destler said the institute would expand the school's initiatives in education, research and technology transfer, as well as its world-renowned programs at the Center for Integrated Manufacturing Studies.

"RIT is proud to take a lead role in the

sustainability movement, and we are extremely grateful to Tom Golisano for his unwavering support of this university," Destler said in a statement.

Golisano, founder and chairman of Paychex Inc. and a trustee at RIT, already has contributed \$14 million for the RIT computer science school that bears his name.

"It is imperative that we accelerate strategies to promote a sustainable society and ensure future generations the opportunity to address their own needs," Golisano said. "It is my desire for the Golisano Institute for Sustainability to produce the first generation of professionals with the vision and know-how to deliver on the promise of sustainability, and I am very proud to be associated with this exciting endeavor."

His investment will fund new development and academic programs as RIT works to create one of the world's first doctoral programs in sustainability, officials said. Formation of the degree also is supported by nearly \$1 million in grants from the Henry Luce Foundation and the Chester & Dorris Carlson Charitable Fund. RIT is

working on funding for construction of a "green" facility to house the institute.

The Center for Governmental Research Inc. estimates in a study for RIT that the Sustainability Institute eventually could lead to 6,000 jobs and \$650 million in income. Not all of those jobs would come in the Rochester area, the report states, because the institute will offer services for other regions. The institute will help Rochester retain its role as a leading center for key applied manufacturing research and position the area as a place to contribute emerging products and services, especially alternative fuels and remanufacturing.

The institute is led by Nabil Nasr, RIT assistant provost and director of CIMS. An internationally known expert in sustainability and environmental issues, Nasr has been the catalyst in building RIT's expertise, officials said.

"We have focused on projects that reduce the use of hazardous materials in production, expand the quality and implementation of remanufacturing processes and have

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worked to design production systems that are completely closed-loop with no waste product," Nasr said. "Through our partnerships with industry, government, non-governmental agencies and other universities, we will seek to develop new technologies and processes that will assist in implementing sustainable processes in industry while also disseminating knowledge, education and training in the field."

Edwin Pinero, federal environmental executive with the White House Council on Environmental Quality, said the institute would provide a setting for innovation in practical applications in industry.

RIT president emeritus Albert Simone, chairman of Greater Rochester Enterprise Inc., said the initiative enhances RIT student research opportunities while advancing local economic development efforts.

"Those who aren't part of the sustainability movement may well be left behind in the global economy, and having this institute here at RIT provides invaluable knowledge and assistance to this region," Simone said.

Establishment of the Golisano Institute is consistent with Golisano's support of the William J. Clinton Foundation, officials said.

President Clinton said in a statement: "For the past few years, I have been very proud to have Tom's support for the Clinton Global Initiative, which works to inspire innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. One of our most significant ones is the threat of climate change, and I'm very glad Tom is continuing to look for a solution through the creation of this institute."

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