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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

## BU to open new engineering center to develop, manufacture products

Posted by Matt Rocheleau January 22, 2014 01:44 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Boston.com Staff

Boston University on Thursday will open a \$9 million facility focused on training engineering students how to develop and manufacture innovative new products.


Key corporate sponsors of the new center, including GE Aviation, Procter & Gamble, Schlumberger and PTC, plan to offer internship and job opportunities to qualified students, [campus officials said](#). The companies will also send representatives to the center to give guest lectures and will provide case studies and projects for students to work with.

The 20,000-square-foot facility is named the Engineering Product Innovation Center, or EPIC, and is located at 750 Commonwealth Ave. It will feature flexible teaching space, demonstration and materials testing areas, laboratories, and fabrication for students studying a range of engineering specialties – from computer and electrical engineering to biomedical engineering and nanotechnology, officials said.

The center will offer students access to: 3-D printers; rapid 3-D prototyping and additive manufacturing tools; laser processing; multi-axis computer numerically controlled machines; multiple mills and lathes; metrology tools; industrial robots; a

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complete woodworking shop; a metals foundry, and a computer-aided design studio.

There will also be advanced product design, product management and supply chain management software, according to BU. Needham-based company PTC donated \$18.8 million worth of product design and lifecycle management software.

Officials from that company and the other key corporate sponsors of the center plan to attend a ribbon-cutting Thursday afternoon alongside BU President Robert A. Brown, College of Engineering Dean Kenneth Lutchen and Boston-area officials.

A representative from each of those principal corporate sponsors will also sit on an advisory board for the center offering suggestions about the undergraduate curriculum, officials said.

BU engineering professor Gerry Fine will be the director of EPIC.

“We’re hoping to set a standard for the training of engineers for the future manufacturing economy in this country,” Fine said in a statement. “We want to create as many options for our graduating students as possible. By teaching them some of the things that regional industry wants, we think we’re giving our students more options. And we’re making our students more desirable to potential employers.”

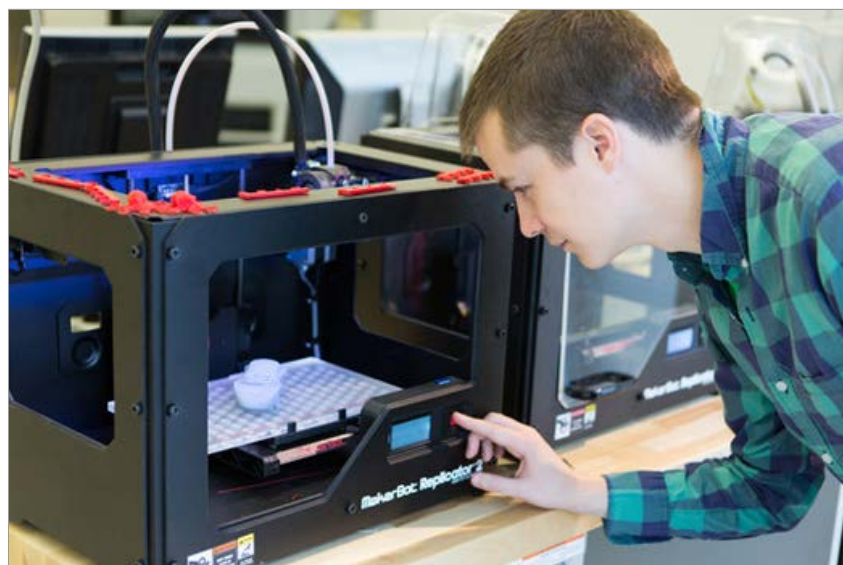
He said the facility, built on the site of what was previously a Guitar Center retail store, is among the most advanced of its kind at a university because it goes beyond basic manufacturing research and allows students to actually make potentially-useful products.

“We’re not aware of anyone who’s invested in this scale and made this commitment to undergraduate education,” said Fine.

Michael Campbell, a BU engineering alumnus and executive vice president of PTC’s computer-aided design segment, will serve on EPIC’s advisory board.

“I always felt that my engineering education lacked that real-world perspective, that real-world exposure to the challenges, processes, and complexities of collaboration and the sophistication of tools,” he said in statement. “Now we have a chance to share all of that with students.”

*Matt Rocheleau can be reached at [matthew.rocheleau@globe.com](mailto:matthew.rocheleau@globe.com). Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus](#) pages.*



(Mike Spencer / BU Today)

BU College of Engineering junior Timothy Jackman with one of EPIC’s 3-D printers, which he used to create a miniature car from a digital model.

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