



For Immediate Release: April 3, 2006

Media Contact: Leigh Ann Wilder, Southern Growth Policies Board
919-941-5145, lwilder@southern.org

[Final 3-31-06](#)

Southern Growth Policies Board's *Connecting the Dots* Report Creates Foundation for a Southern Nanotechnology Network

*Report Outlines South's Strengths and Weaknesses in Nanotechnology Assets
and Provides Recommendations for Growing the South's Share in the Emerging Industry*

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC – Southern Growth Policies Board released today *Connecting the Dots: Creating a Southern Nanotechnology Network*, a regional report that maps the South's assets in Nanotechnology and provides recommendations for establishing the South as a leader in the emerging industry. A consortium of Southern research institutions were involved in the report's development and creation. Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Technology Transfer and Economic Development Directorate provided funding for the research and Southern Growth's Southern Technology Council and the Georgia Institute of Technology Program in Science, Technology and Innovation Policy prepared the data and manuscript.

Connecting the Dots outlines the South's strengths and weaknesses in nanotechnology in five key areas – human capital, knowledge generation, patents, funding and commercialization. The report includes data for all of the Southern Growth member states including Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Southern Growth's research revealed that the South performs about 20 percent of all nanotechnology research activity in the U.S. Although Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia have the most highly concentrated activity, every Southern state is participating the nanotechnology industry, from publishing nanotechnology articles to producing dissertations and winning nanotechnology grants. The Southern region is also home to four of the top 25 nanotechnology research institutions – Georgia Institute of Technology, the University of North Carolina, Oak Ridge National Laboratory and North Carolina State University—and nearly 20 percent of all highly cited nanotechnology researchers in the U.S.

The Southern region's weaknesses in nanotechnology assets lie in patents and funding. The South lags the nation in nanotechnology patents with only 14.8 patents per million in population in comparison with 40.9 for the nation. Although the Southern region represents 20 percent of the nation's economic activity, it attracts only nine percent of the total U.S. venture capital in all sectors. Lack of venture funding affects the technology commercialization process and the region's ability to attract and grow new nanotechnology companies.

--MORE--

While Southern research institutions boast strong linkages to international researchers, they lack connections to critical U.S. nanotechnology centers, like those in California and the Northeast. Southern universities and research centers also lack strong connections among institutions in the region. As Scott Doron, director of the Southern Technology Council explained, "Our research suggests that the South can significantly increase its competitive advantage in nanotechnology through regional collaboration among research institutions and with the private sector. No Southern institution or locale has the critical mass of nanotechnology assets to go it alone and achieve global leadership." He added, "We need a Southern Nanotechnology Network to connect the region's assets and increase research, funding and new business creation."

Connecting the Dots offers a framework for the creation of a Southern Nanotechnology Network that includes identifying state policy advocates to incorporate nanotechnology in primary economic development plans. The report recommendations also call for the creation of a Southern Nanotechnology Institute to create research coalitions and develop guidelines for nanotechnology education in pre K-20. Other recommendations focus on increasing funding opportunities for Southern institutions, the need for affordable research tools, and the need for further research to identify the South's market niches.

Connecting the Dots is one in a series of reports and events the Southern Technology Council (STC) is developing for increasing the South's share of technology development. As a follow up to the *Connecting the Dots* report, the STC plans to host a Nanotechnology Summit to develop a regional strategy for supporting the nanotechnology industry. The STC will also release the *2006 Report on the Future of the South* at Southern Growth Policies Board's annual conference, the *Southern Innovation Summit* on June 4-6 in New Orleans. The conference and the report will focus on the creation, accumulation and application of knowledge for the South's businesses, universities, citizens and governments, and develop strategies for increasing innovation as part of the South's economic growth policies. For more information on the conference, or to register, visit <http://www.southern.org/conf.asp>

Connecting the Dots is available for \$20 through Southern Growth Policies Board. To order, send an email to ngos@southern.org with complete mailing and contact information, or download a publication order form at <http://www.southern.org/pubs/puborderform.pdf> and fax the order to Southern Growth. Discounts apply on orders of five or more.

About Southern Growth Policies Board

Southern Growth Policies Board is a public policy think tank based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Formed by the region's governors in 1971, Southern Growth Policies Board develops and advances visionary economic development policies by providing a forum for collaboration among a diverse cross-section of the region's governors, legislators, business and academic leaders and the economic and community development sectors. Southern Growth provides its members, and the region, with authoritative research, discussion forums and pilot projects in the areas of technology and innovation, globalization, workforce development, community development, civic engagement and leadership. To learn more about Southern Growth Policies Board, visit www.southern.org.