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ASCTE Announces \$3 Million Gift to Launch First-of-Its-Kind Research Institute & Cuts Ribbon on New Facility

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (April 17, 2026) — The Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering Foundation today announced a \$3 million investment from philanthropist Hank Isenberg to establish the **Isenberg Institute**, a new research institute and center for academic excellence at ASCTE.

The research institute, the first of its kind at the secondary education level, will focus on advanced fields including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, cyber ranges, and big data. ASCTE leaders say the institute will expand the school's role as a hub for innovation, workforce development, and applied research across Alabama.

The project also includes a new 64-bed residence hall for female students, expanding access to ASCTE's programs.

"I believe the future of our workforce depends on how early we invest in innovation and talent," said Hank Isenberg. "ASCTE is already leading the way, and this institute will give students the opportunity to explore advanced technologies and solve real-world problems. Expanding residential capacity for female students is just as important. It helps ensure more young women have access to this experience and can see themselves in these fields."

The announcement was made during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the school's new Sentinel Center, attended by State Senator Arthur Orr, Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle, ASCTE Foundation Board Chair Alicia Ryan, and community partners.

"This new research center positions ASCTE to drive innovation not just within our school, but throughout Alabama's educational landscape," said Ryan. "It's an investment in the future workforce of our state."

Additional details include:

- Size: 25,877 square feet
- Cost: \$12 million
- Location: Southwest corner of established ASCTE campus
- Project partners: Brasfield & Gorrie, McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture, and TCU Consulting Services
- Timeline: Construction to be completed by January 2027

The announcement follows the opening of the Sentinel Center, a \$12.5 million, 1,100-seat student activity facility constructed by Birmingham-based Brasfield & Gorrie. The facility supports athletics, student programs, and collaborative space.

"This is about preparing students for what comes next," said PeggyLee Wright, Executive Director of the ASCTE Foundation.

About the Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering Foundation

The ASCTE Foundation supports the Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering, a tuition-free public residential high school serving students statewide and preparing them for college and careers in cyber, engineering, and related fields.

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