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## Delaware Technology Park

### What's Good For Delaware Is Good For DuPont

[Michael McCoy](#)

Like much else in northern Delaware, the Delaware Technology Park has deep ties to DuPont.

The laboratory and office park began operating in 1993, an outgrowth of a high-technology task force convened by then-Delaware governor Mike Castle. It was built on 40 acres of unused farmland owned by the [University of Delaware](#) next to its main campus in Newark.



Michael  
McCoy/C&EN

**Home Base Building addresses at Delaware Technology Park reflect what goes on inside them.**

J. Michael Bowman, now the park's chairman and president, was at the time vice president and general manager of a [DuPont](#) business, advanced material systems, that was charged with developing new applications for high-tech materials.

A member of the task force, Bowman agreed to jump-start the park by moving his business there. The thinking at the time, he recalls, was that the park would become a place where advanced materials businesses of big local companies could incubate and develop their own corporate cultures.

In DuPont's case, the advanced material systems business was eventually disbanded and folded back into existing parent company operations. And over the years, the focus of the park shifted to smaller companies while broadening beyond advanced materials to include the life sciences and information technology.

Although the park is serving a different group of companies than originally expected, it has adapted and become a success, Bowman states. He estimates that the park has created 2,000 jobs since it was established. About a third of its companies have roots in DuPont, he figures, and an even greater proportion of their employees have worked for DuPont.

In the park's early days, Bowman acknowledges, some DuPonters saw the park as competition. Today, though, he says the consensus is that the park is a salvation. "That ability to absorb talent and redeploy money and ideas has turned out to be wonderful for the area and for people," he says.

Uma Chowdhry, DuPont's chief science and technology officer, says she agrees with Bowman's assessment. She explains that having a critical mass of science-based companies in Delaware helps attract employees who appreciate that there are other opportunities in the region if things don't work out at DuPont.

"We have a lot of creative people with great ideas who want to see the impact of their ideas," she says. "Sometimes what they are working on is not thought of as core to the company's future interests. So there are always people who leave us and choose to go out on their own, and we see that as positive."

DuPont has been known to donate technology to departing employees, Chowdhry says, or to license it for small fee. Some businesses, such as the DNA-based microbial testing firm [Qualicon](#), have even left DuPont labs, only to be bought back by the firm later after achieving critical mass.

"We want a vibrant, entrepreneurial atmosphere both inside our Experimental Station as well as around us she says.

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