

BUSINESS



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We're a high-tech mecca

Report says Capital Region one of strongest for jobs

By LARRY RULISON

Business writer

ALBANY — A national report has named the Capital Region one of the fastest growing areas in the country for technology jobs.

The report, called CyberCities 2010, was released Wednesday by the TechAmerica Foundation in Washington, D.C., and it found

that the area's strength is its research and development labs—such as Albany NanoTech and GE Global Research in Niskayuna.

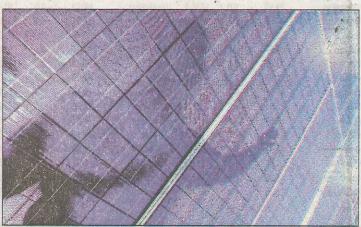
"To be recognized as a national leader in high-tech job and wage growth is testament to the success of New York's pioneering nanotechnology strategy," said Alain Kaloyeros, chief executive officer of the University at Albany's Col-

lege of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, which operates Albany NanoTech.

The CyberCities report, which evaluated 2009 data, found 21,274 high-tech jobs in the Capital Region with average annual pay of \$78,000, which is \$37,000 more than the average local private-sector salary.

The most significant finding was

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AREA HIGH-TECH workers created a solar system test bed, shown in this earlier photo, at GE's Global Research Center in Niskayuna.

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that the Capital Region is the thirdfastest growing high-tech area in the country, behind only Oklahoma City and Huntsville, Ala.

That's on a percentage basis. Albany created only 341 high-tech jobs in 2009, but that was a 1.63 percent increase, enough to rank it third.

Oklahoma City had 5.44 percent job growth in the tech sector, creating nearly 1,000 jobs in 2009.

Interestingly, the largest technology work force is in metro New York City, not Silicon Valley in California. And Washington, D.C., is also ahead of Silicon Valley.

The New York City area has more than 300,000 high-tech workers, while Washington, D.C., has 293,000 workers, which is roughly 70,000 more than Silicon Valley.

High-tech employment in all the major tech cities, including Boston, declined in 2009, according to the report, which makes Albany's gains that much more striking.

The Gapital Region is actually ranked No. 19 on the list of cities with the largest number of employees in high-tech research labs, at 7,731, although the area lost 150 jobs in that area in 2009.

That's double the number of tech R&D jobs in Austin, Texas, — no surprise, since hundreds of jobs from the Sematech semiconductor research consortium have moved from Austin to Albany as the group relocated its headquarters and major programs to Albany NanoTech over the past several years.

And the Capital Region is likely to improve even more as Global-Foundries completes its \$4.6 billion computer chip factory in Saratoga Springs.

The report classified tech jobs as those in the computer, telecommunications, software, electronics and engineering fields. Medical equipment manufacturers were also included, as were biotech research labs.

The CyberCities report counted only 75 semiconductor manufacturing jobs in the Capital Region as of 2009, but once GlobalFoundries starts hiring toward its goal of 1,600 workers by 2013, that number could increase dramatically. Albany would then rank near the top 10 regions in the country in terms of semiconductor manufacturing employment.

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