

MEDIA RELEASE

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**North Carolina's
Northeast Commission**
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Microcell Brings 100 Good Paying Jobs to Martin County *Economic Developers Work to Bring High Tech Companies to Northeastern North Carolina*

Edenton, NC - Economic Development Commissions, educators, and local officials were on hand Monday morning to celebrate the official announcement of Microcell's 80,000 square foot fuel cell production facility opening in Martin County, NC. The company's headquarters, including research & development, will remain in the Research Triangle Area. Located in Robersonville, the facility, equipped with clean room production areas, will focus on manufacturing the company's automotive and distributed generation fuel cells to meet product orders from its strategic partners and other customers.

The new facility will also bring over 100 new jobs to North Carolina's Northeast region, an area rich in workforce and educational resources, yet lagging in good-paying jobs. "The new Microcell facility will provide an outlet for local technicians, engineers, and production workers. Our trained workforce often leaves the area for higher paid technical jobs, but this is an opportunity in our backyard. It's an opportunity to allow our most well-trained people to remain in Northeastern North Carolina," said Gene Rogers, Chair of the North Carolina's Northeast Commission.

Abandoning traditional approaches to building fuel cells, Microcell's technology focuses on extruded fiber technology which is easier to manufacture and can be used in many applications, including automotive alternative energy. With its research beginnings at Centennial Campus of North Carolina State University in Raleigh, Microcell needed a manufacturing facility with access to plenty of space and good workers. They found both in Martin County.

Representative G. K. Butterfield, a member of the US House Energy and Commerce Committee, working to develop new energy policies and bring more fuel efficiency to the automotive industry, stated, "One of the greatest innovations to come along is the hydrogen fuel cell." Tommy Bowen, Chair of the Martin County Commissioners expressed his excitement that the new technology is being built in Martin County. Microcell has "taken technology and made it a reality and provided 100 good-paying jobs for 100 families," he stated.

Microcell employees are being trained in teams during the start-up operation with more employees being added every few months. Once the plant is fully operational, they expect to employ 120 workers, the majority of those being local residents. The new employees undergo intense training before making their first fuel cell. Martin Community College and the Employment Security Commission are committed to developing additional training opportunities for Microcell.

"This is what it's all about," stated Vann Rogerson of North Carolina's Northeast Commission. "When we talk about diversifying our economy and expanding the capacity for new jobs, we are talking about businesses like Microcell, who bring to the table technology, research, good paying jobs, and the opportunity for more growth. Northeastern North Carolina can supply the workers for high tech jobs, so we will continue to attract new businesses to the area." Microcell fits into the region's automotive marketing cluster that includes the North Carolina Center for Automotive Research (NCCAR). NCCAR, under development in Northampton County, will provide a site for automotive testing to be used by vehicle related industries. "North Carolina's Northeast region is ready to move forward, and this company is going to help us do that," said Stan Crowe, Chair of the Martin County Economic Development Corporation.

About North Carolina's Northeast Commission:

North Carolina's Northeast Commission is dedicated to increasing the standard of living for citizens in its sixteen-county region through tourism, industrial, and business development. The 16 counties that comprise the regional Commission are: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington. For more information about the North Carolina's Northeast Commission, contact us at www.ncnortheast.com and www.visitncne.com.

About Microcell:

Microcell is the world leader in proton exchange membrane (PEM) microfiber fuel cells that operate on a cylindrical platform for applications ranging from back-up power to automotive. The company's extrusion-based scalable process for cost-effective, large-scale production distinguishes it from other fuel cell technologies. For more information about Microcell, visit www.microcellcorp.com.

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