

*Em Knobbe, senior in animal sciences and industry, works in the training laboratory at the Biosecurity Research Institute.*

## Making connections

*K-State Innovation Partners contributes to record year of economic engagement*

*By Erin Pennington*

The numbers show it: Kansas State University engagement is reaching new heights.

The Kansas State University Research Foundation and the Institute for Commercialization merged in July 2019 to form K-State Innovation Partners. By collaborating with the university, industry and community, Innovation Partners is making great strides in economic development, technology transfer and community engagement.

The collaborative efforts are succeeding.

In fiscal year 2020, Innovation Partners posted a near-record \$3.2 million in licensing revenue and 35 licensing or options agreements. Those agreements include four technologies that are directly involved in the fight against COVID-19. The technologies include both therapeutic and vaccine candidates to fight the disease and are based on many years of research leading up to their commercial deployment, which further demonstrates the relevance of K-State work in world-class facilities such as the Biosecurity Research Institute. See page 31 to learn more about the therapeutic and vaccine candidates.

“Commercializing technology is one step in K-State’s process of translating ideas, discoveries and technologies from the lab to the marketplace,” said Chris Brandt, chief tech innovation officer with Innovation Partners. “Our recent commercialization successes are reflective of how K-State addresses the challenges facing society while also driving economic growth.”

According to AUTM, a nonprofit comprising more than 3,000 members and more than 800 universities around the globe, K-State ranks in the Top 50 for intellectual property disclosures, total licensing revenue and license revenue per active license.

“In this time of economic uncertainty, it is more important than ever to protect innovations and license the technologies to existing companies and startups,” said Peter K. Dorhout, vice president for research. “Our emerging technologies can help current companies or be the foundation of new industries in Kansas.”

In addition to technology commercialization efforts, Innovation Partners has advanced economic development in the region by assisting with 174 economic partnerships, attracting 24 companies to establish or expand a presence in Kansas, and launching or investing in 18 K-State-related companies.

Economic development efforts have additionally created 600 new jobs in the region with average salaries of more than \$56,000 and totaling more than \$33 million in annual payroll.

“Innovation Partners continues to promote the successes of K-State faculty, researchers and students to ensure that technologies developed at K-State can get into the hands of the public where they can create jobs and improve lives,” said Kent Glasscock, CEO of Innovation Partners. 