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**\*\*\*MEDIA RELEASE\*\*\***

## **Durham Chamber announces Vision 3D Campaign**

*\$1.25 million already raised in \$2.5 million goal*

DURHAM, NC – On Tuesday, Feb. 17, Dr. Victor Dzau – President & CEO Duke University Health System and John Stallings - President Central North Carolina Region SunTrust Bank announced the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce's Vision 3D Campaign to nearly 500 in attendance at the Chamber's Annual Meeting. Dzau and Stallings, the campaign co-chairs, also announced Vision 3D had secured \$1.25 million of its \$2.5 million fund-raising goal.

The Annual Meeting marked the kick-off of the organization's Vision 3D Campaign, a four-year economic development strategy that calls for the creation of 10,000 jobs, with many of those jobs paying at or above the average in Durham County. In addition to wages, by the end of the plan, these new jobs could generate \$569 million annually throughout the Durham area in consumer expenditures for food, shelter, clothing, automobiles and other items and services.

"In recent years, attracting quality jobs has become a very sophisticated and highly competitive endeavor," said Stallings.

"In order for Durham to further compete in a global environment, we need an aggressive and targeted business strategy that enables us to successfully pursue and secure new business opportunities for our community," said Dzau.

Additional business goals of the economic development plan include assisting in the location of 40 new companies, aiding 150 existing businesses in expansion, training and support, and facilitating an increase in capital investment by \$1 Billion dollars.

The Vision 3D Campaign launched last September by focusing on securing investments from large local companies, to lay the foundation for the campaign, followed by the kick-off to build additional financial support from small and mid-sized companies. Vision 3D will continue through summer 2009.



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“We have been overwhelmed by the strong positive response we have received during the early stages of our campaign,” said Bob Ingram, Vice Chairman, Pharmaceuticals GlaxoSmithKline and Vision 3D Honorary Chairman. “AICPA, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of NC, Duke University & Duke University Health System, Duke Energy, Fairway Outdoor, Independence Park Apartments, Morgan Motors, The Research Triangle Park & Foundation and SunTrust Bank have stepped up to the plate and showed their vote of confidence in Vision 3D and its tremendous economic impact on our community.”

The Chamber’s Economic Development Staff have proven success in working with its economic development partners: the City of Durham and Durham County; the Research Triangle Park & RTRP; North Carolina Department of Commerce; Utility Companies and Site Consultants; by attracting quality companies to our region and by supporting initiatives for developing tomorrow's workforce, which help drive our community's economic growth.

“The Chamber partnering with us is a vital element in enabling the region to recruit the highly skilled and diverse talent required for our continued growth. We view our funding of Vision 3D as a core investment,” acknowledged Rick Weddle, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Research Triangle Park.

From 2003 - 2008, the Durham Chamber has assisted in the creation of 14,300 new jobs and the expansion, training and support for 300 companies. Over \$1.6 Billion has successfully been generated in new or existing industry capital development with \$20 million in tax revenue and over \$580 million of spending generated in the Durham area.

Aligning the Durham region, along with the Research Triangle Park as a single region is a major focus of the aggressive four-year economic development initiative.

“Focusing on our region as opposed to individual cities unifies our resources and strengthens our position when competing for new businesses and the jobs that come with them,” said Casey Steinbacher, President & CEO of the Durham Chamber. “Our competition for projects tends to be communities much larger than our area. By working as a Corridor we provide more advantages that help level the playing field.”

“Given the response we have seen to date, we have great expectations,” said Dzau and Stallings. “We are confident that area businesses will give a vote of ‘yes’ to our Vision 3D plan by making a financial investment.”

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**About the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce:**

The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce is Durham County's leading business organization, serving more than 1,000 business, government agency and non-profit member firms. Through its community collaboration, programs and activities, the Chamber strives to help create and sustain a healthy economic climate ensuring that Durham is a great place to live, work and play. The Chamber also serves as the economic development entity for Durham County. In the last decade, the Chamber's economic development efforts have assisted numerous companies relocate operations or expand current operations in Durham, resulting in more than \$3.3 billion of investment in Durham and thousands of jobs.