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Wednesday, August 18, 2004

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UCF receives gift worth \$24 million from defense company

The Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. - A California defense company gave the University of Central Florida \$24 million worth of patents, cash and equipment to help the school become a leader in developing smaller computer chips.

Northrop Grumman made the donation Tuesday after receiving the technology - which could make computer chips ten times smaller than normal - as part of a business acquisition. A line of related research was already under way at UCF's College of Optics and Photonics.

"It was a natural for us to donate that technology here," said Tom Romesser, a Northrop Grumman Space Technology vice president. "It forges a very strong partnership with UCF."

Computer production relies on ultraviolet-light lasers to imprint tiny technical features on a chip's surface. The

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new technology - called extreme ultraviolet lithography - uses shorter wavelengths to make smaller chips.

The gift includes 11 patents and 10 applications in ultraviolet technology and related fields, valued by an independent appraiser at \$22 million, in addition cash and equipment worth \$2 million to develop the technology.

With the donation, "UCF stands taller than national programs in Europe and Japan," said optics professor Martin Richardson, professor of X-ray photonics at UCF. "We now have this very great strength in patents."

The school's optics college will name a lab in honor of Los Angeles-based Northrop Grumman, which will also get a tax break for the donation to a nonprofit state university. The details of the tax break weren't released.

On the Net:

Northrop Grumman: <http://www.northgrum.com>

University of Central Florida: <http://www.ucf.edu/>

Information from: The Orlando Sentinel, <http://www.orlandosentinel.com>

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