



## Refining the Refinery

Carol Stewart • published in the December 2021 issue

**T**he Refinery, the first building at the UA Tech Park at The Bridges, is almost done thanks to the hard work of The Boyer Company and CORE Construction. The Refinery is set to open at the beginning of 2022 and will soon be home to a dynamic community of technology companies working alongside University of Arizona organizations.



The Refinery (photo courtesy of Core Construction)

The Refinery will nurture innovation and connect University-founded ideas with companies, developing a streamlined path between idea and impact. This four-story building will provide 120,000 square feet of office space, ideal for small to mid-sized tech-focused businesses and organizations. It will serve as the University of Arizona's innovation and commercialization hub creating a centralized location that bridges resources and accelerates the most promising inventions.

The building was named "The Refinery" because of its proximity to the talent and sharp minds that can be mined from the University of Arizona. This unique opportunity allows leading-edge technology companies to recruit the best and brightest providing graduates with engaging employment and students with hands-on internships. Our purpose-built environment is customized to support businesses of all sizes and facilitate university-industry interaction.

Activities housed at The Refinery will include:

- [The University of Arizona Applied Research Corporation](#), a 501(c)(3) organization that provides products, services and solutions to national security challenges in the U.S. government and industry.
- [Tech Launch Arizona](#), the office responsible for commercializing technology from the University of Arizona.
- [The University of Arizona Center for Innovation](#), an incubator network for science and technology startup companies both from inside and outside the university.
- [Research, Innovation and Impact](#), the office responsible for advancing transformative excellence in research across the University of Arizona.
- [UArizona Online](#), UArizona's online college program (ranked in the top 10 online bachelor's degree in the nation).

The remainder of the Class A office space will be designated to businesses looking to co-locate with the University of Arizona's expertise.

The new UA Tech Park at The Bridges is the vision of UArizona President Robert Robbins to manifest UArizona research and bring it to the market. The University is a driver of innovative discoveries and is recognized as one of the top public research universities in the world. By offering world-class researchers a full continuum of licensing support, startup incubator programs, and an experienced network familiar with how to scale business, innovation will be fast-tracked at The Refinery.

The Park's offerings extend beyond bricks and mortar boundaries to provide customized business development support. The UA Tech Park at The Bridges ensures that companies are immediately plugged into the collaboration and resources of the University of Arizona, a Tier One research university that produces a robust talent pipeline. The world-class research and innovation spurred from the University is a magnet for businesses and has ignited a bustling startup scene.

The opening of The Refinery is just the start! The UA Tech Park at The Bridges is located within an Opportunity Zone and long-term plans call for an estimated 1.2 million square feet of developed office and laboratory space that could support approximately 5,000 knowledge workers. The UA Tech Park at The Bridges is divided into three zones, Technology, Corporate, and University.

We will soon kick off the first research building in the University Zone of the UA Tech Park at The Bridges with the new 5,000 square foot High Bay Facility. This will serve as the ideal location for the University of Arizona Steward Observatory to assemble high-altitude balloon payloads and test components for spaceflight. The facility is being designed by Swaim Associates LTD Architects, and selection of a Construction Manager at Risk contractor is in process. The project is anticipated to be completed in October 2022.

Breaking ground in November will be an on-site Marriot hotel with approximately 100 rooms and will include meeting and conference space for public use. This new space will elevate the offerings, providing greater opportunities for collaboration.

With the first UA Tech Park, located at Rita Road and I-10, being such a success with an economic impact of over \$2 billion, over 80 tenants and approximately 6,000 employees, it is naturally time to expand and develop the second park, UA Tech Park at The Bridges. This location is prime real estate, only five miles from Tucson International Airport and less than three miles from the University of Arizona main campus. The opportunity to establish business and directly link to the assets of the University of Arizona provides the perfect platform for prosperity.

Carol Stewart is Associate Vice President, Tech Parks Arizona, University of Arizona. She is responsible for the UA Tech Park at Rita Road and the UA Tech Park at the Bridges and serves as president of the Campus Research Corporation. She is also president of the UA Center for Innovation, a technology business incubator serving the University of Arizona and Tucson community. She can be reached at [stewartc@uatechpark.org](mailto:stewartc@uatechpark.org).

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