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a **PAUL MITCHELL**  
Focus Salon



When Brian Bell of Global Science & Technology wanted to find a mobile platform on which to place weather data-gathering sensors, he had the idea to team up with Greyhound, because the buses are driven around on regular routes, which provides for consistent, comparable data.

Some would make models. Some drew, some wrote songs and poems. We took all these concepts and transformed them into reality and created a natural playground.”

That concept of innovation stuck with Bell as he landed at Global Science & Technology, which he did after he managed the GIS service at Cornell University in Ithaca and then worked at Lockheed Martin. Bell joined the staff at GST in upstate New York in 1999 when he wanted to be closer to home after his father got sick.

His first assignment was to take NASA imagery and data and transform it into applications and products. The job took on a new tone after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center.

“We used NASA technology to help New York City manage the debris field of the World Trade Center,” he said. “The chaos of the destruction allowed us to use some of the NASA technology to do flyovers using planes and special cameras to collect imagery. We did that every day for a couple months. It was an intricate part of the sup-

port system that fed the decision makers at Ground Zero with information that allowed them to see the entire picture.”

The technology could help officials figure out the location of toxic fumes and smoldering areas, Bell said.

“We had some horrifically beautiful imagery of the destruction,” Bell said, noting that in 2005, some of the images were displayed in an art gallery. “That was the reaction, ‘This is horrifically beautiful.’”

Bell worked for GST in Auburn, N.Y. until 2003, when that division went out of business. Then it was back to Lockheed Martin.

A few years ago, Chieh-san Cheng, the CEO and founder of GST, asked Bell to move to West Virginia to head up the company’s West Virginia office. Bell visited Fairmont and met with Tina Shaw, president of the Marion County of Commerce, and then-Fairmont Mayor Nick Fantasia as well as people from GST.

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Global Science & Technology opened its Innovation Lab, or iLab, at the Alan B. Mollohan Innovation Center during the spring and held the grand opening on April 1, which became "Innovation Fools Day." A jester's hat in celebration of the concept can be found on Bell's desk in the large, loft-like space.

"This area reminds me of the Finger Lakes area," Bell said. "I felt very at home here and felt good. I loved my time at GST previously so I came down in 2007 to take over the leadership at GST West Virginia."

These days, Bell feels very at home in the new GST iLab, designed to promote collaboration and, of course, innovation.

In one corner, Bell's desk, overlooking the I-79 Technology Park, holds a jester's hat, which he calls "the innovation fools hat."

Once again, he evokes Apple via its founder, Steve Jobs, who he notes professes a philosophy the workers at the iLab hold dear: "To to be innovative, you have to be foolish," Bell said. "We've adapted that. That's why we had the April 1 event and it's the reason we call ourselves innovation fools."

And it's also why iLab employees might spend a few minutes of a work day flying remote-controlled helicopters around the large office. Bell noted that like the Greyhound buses, the helicopters can be a mobile platform that collects sensory information, maybe at a mall or a warehouse where there might be contamination or radiation.

Of course, there is another reason for the toy helicopters.

"Part of what we do here is we like to have fun," Bell said. "There is no dichotomy between work and play. Even if it seems playful, the intention is to make it useful."



# WVU Vein Center



*Pamela Zimmerman, MD, (right) director of the WVU Vein Clinic, with her staff. Dr. Zimmerman is the region's most experienced VNUS practitioner and the only board-certified vascular surgeon performing the procedure.*

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