

PARTNERSHIP HELPS CELEBRATE NIAR'S 40 YEARS AND HAMR RIBBON-CUTTING

Wichita, KAN., Dec. 15, 2025 – Today, national, state and regional leaders gathered in Wichita to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Wichita State University's National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) and the ribbon-cutting of the new Hub for Advanced Manufacturing Research (HAMR).

The Greater Wichita Partnership (Partnership) played a key role in bringing together federal officials, industry representatives and regional partners to recognize NIAR's global impact on innovation, advanced manufacturing and workforce development.

U.S. Senator Jerry Moran invited U.S. Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy to Wichita for the celebration, underscoring NIAR's significance to the aviation, defense and manufacturing sectors.

The program featured remarks from:

- **Dr. John Tomblin**, WSU Executive Vice President for Research and Industry and Defense Programs and NIAR Executive Director
- **Dr. Rick Muma**, President of Wichita State University
- **Jeff Fluhr**, President of the Greater Wichita Partnership
- **U.S. Senator Jerry Moran**
- **U.S. Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy**

Fluhr emphasized NIAR's unmatched influence on the region's economy and competitiveness. He highlighted the unique partnership between NIAR, Wichita State University and the economic development community, one that consistently brings global prospects to Wichita and drives long-term industry investment.

"NIAR's work strengthens the foundations of our region's economy," Fluhr said. "Its global credibility opens doors. When companies visit Wichita and experience NIAR's expertise firsthand, their confidence in our region rises. That's why we've seen companies like Shield AI, Novacoast, Bloc Digital and Bell Flight choose to invest here. NIAR's leadership is shaping where innovation happens and where the workforce of the future is built."

Fluhr also recognized Senator Moran's leadership, noting his long-standing commitment to advancing Wichita's economic growth.

"Senator Moran is a constant champion for Wichita, NIAR and our region's innovation ecosystem," Fluhr said. "His dedication has brought some of the nation's most influential companies to Wichita and helped grow new business for our local suppliers. We would not be where we are today without his unwavering support."

The ribbon-cutting for HAMR, the world's largest additive manufacturing research center, marked a significant expansion of NIAR's capabilities in automation, materials research, defense modernization and applied innovation. The facility will help industry partners solve complex manufacturing challenges and accelerate technological advancement across aviation, defense and emerging industries.

The event concluded with a reception and media availability.



For more than a decade, the Partnership has worked closely with Wichita State University, NIAR and regional industry leaders to advance Wichita's competitiveness, strengthen the local workforce and attract investment.

###

About the Greater Wichita Partnership
The Greater Wichita Partnership is dedicated to fast-forwarding regional economic growth in Wichita and south-central Kansas. The organization works within three key priorities – jobs, talent and quality of place – to accelerate this objective. For more information, visit https://greaterwichitapartnership.org/home.