

General Electric pledges \$11 million to UConn

STAMFORD, Conn. (AP) General Electric Co. on Tuesday pledged \$11 million over the next five years to help the University of Connecticut become a leader in e-business and engineering.

The donation is the largest single corporate investment in the university.

"Major institutions are known by the company they keep, and we are indeed honored that the world's most admired company is making this generous and broad-based investment in the University of Connecticut," said UConn President Philip E. Austin.

The money will be used to create a lab at the Stamford campus in which students, faculty and GE Capital executives will work together to analyze e-projects. Five senior GE executives will be located at the new facility, which will include an emerging technologies demonstration lab.

An "e-engineering" center will be created for joint research projects to prepare students for the latest developments in industry.

Students will tackle complex e-business issues and will have the opportunity to report to GE management on results and solutions.

The first project involved students studying GE's web sites. Some recommended changes are being implemented, GE officials said.

In the spring, a UConn class will investigate the cost and technology needed to create a paperless work environment.

The contribution also will pay for new "e-learning" approaches to incorporate information technology into effective teaching and learning practices. The partnership aims to support increased enrollment and success of underrepresented minority engineering and business students.

GE Industrial Systems in Plainville will provide \$1.5 million to the School of Engineering. Faculty and engineers will work together on research in materials, circuit breaker technology and energy management projects.

GE officials said the partnership provides the company with access to bright, energetic minds as well as recommendations that can be implemented in the workforce.

"UConn students and faculty will be enriched by an unprecedented learning and applied research experience," said Denis Nayden, chairman and CEO of GE Capital. "GE Capital will benefit from the projects and we hope to take advantage of the direct talent pipeline to tomorrow's e-business leaders."