



High tech company TreisD announces move to Knoxville,
innovative research partnerships with University of Tennessee

**News Coverage Highlights
July-September 2025**

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Knoxville NEWS SENTINEL

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KERN'S FOOD HALL ON UPSWING

Manager: 'We think of this as year one'



A customer waits for his meal at T. Ralph's Burgers and Fries in Kern's Food Hall. PHOTOS BY ANGELINA ALCANTAR/NEWS SENTINEL

From parking to marketing, Kern's is looking for a better second year

Joanna Hayes Knoxville News Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Dustin Cochran served more than 100 meals during a recent Tuesday lunch rush at his newest restaurant in Kern's Food Hall, Disco Chicken and Donuts. It blew him away. • Cochran already had three other businesses inside the food hall, Myrtle's Bakehouse, T. Ralph's Burgers & Fries and Richey Krems, before opening his entirely gluten free chicken and doughnut spot July 4. He told Knox News succeeding inside a new food hall can be difficult, and he never expected Disco Chicken's first days to be so successful.

Cochran is looking to build up all aspects of his growing food hall empire. He said the success of the food hall is based on the sum of all its parts. Vendors have to do a ton of work to do well, and so do the managers.

Kern's Food Hall opened in April 2024 and hit roadblocks in its first year, manager Grant Belback told Knox News, but it is working to learn from the pitfalls that slowed business down.

Now it's on the upswing. May was the food hall's best month to date, and July is on pace to match it, hospitality manager Cross Fuller said.

A rollout similar to Marble City Market?

Cochran isn't a stranger to the food and beverage business, and it is an expert in food halls. He originally had two concepts, Myrtle Bakehouse and The Donut Theory, at Knoxville's first food hall, Marble



Dustin Cochran has experience in both of Knoxville's food halls and in other locations throughout the community. He argues it's all about creating a special brand and working hard to market it.

City Market.

He pulled his two businesses from Marble City Market in December 2022 because of disagreements over deposits and fees paid prior to

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WHAT'S THAT?

Burger Boys site ripped up for food hall entrance

Joanna Hayes
Knoxville News Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

If you're driving to Kern's Food Hall from downtown Knoxville across the Tennessee River, turning left across oncoming traffic can get complicated. But next month, revamped traffic lights will replace the current entrance.

The new intersection near the current Kern's entrance used to be home to Burger Boys, a fast-food restaurant that operated as a one-man show but closed in May to make room for the traffic lights. Owner Andre Bryant was locked into a lease until 2027 but agreed to let go of his claim on the property for the sake of the food hall.

The former burger-drive through is now a ripped up parking lot, with Knoxville construction company Nail Partners spearheading the project. The new intersection will become an entrance to the food hall.

Right now, the Kern's has just one entrance north of the intersection of Chapman Highway and Fort Avenue, where the spotlight and former

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3D tech startup set to bring 50 jobs here

Knox County 'perfect' for manufacturing hub

Keenan Thomas
Knoxville News Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Atlanta technology startup TreisD Corporation is setting its three-dimensional sights on Knox County for the launch of its futuristic manufacturing hub.

The company is taking over a 20,000-square foot-facility in the Eastbridge Business Park in Mascot to craft products using polymer plastics. TreisD focuses on turning two-dimensional images into 3D images people can view with the naked eye. TreisD can then print the images on a film that can't be replicated.

TreisD's images are incredibly complex. Humans use both eyes to see 3D images and can easily differentiate between 3D and 2D. A driver's license printed with TreisD's 3D security features would be instantly recognizable and impossible to duplicate with 2D printing technology.



"I feel like Knoxville is a perfect place for startups. You've got the university. You have all this intellectual talent. You've got a very pro-business environment. They want tech jobs. I knew it was going to be good, but it's been better than I expected."

John Brandon
TreisD Corporation CEO

Using the 3D technology also makes it impossible to tamper with packaging and branding through conventional means. And future applications are on the horizon. Doctors, for instance, could use the technology to better diagnose patients.

The company has grown since starting prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and finding a centralized location to build up manufacturing was key.

That's when Silicon Valley-based CEO John Brandon thought about Tennessee.

"I actually have a friendship with Gov. Bill Haslam," Brandon told Knox News. "I remember when Gov. Haslam used to go recruit companies to move from other states to move to Tennessee."

He called Haslam and connected with the right people, narrowing down TreisD's search to three cities in Tennessee. TreisD, Brandon said, was wowed by the presentation about Knoxville and the partners who cinched the deal: Knoxville Chamber, UT, Three Roots Capital, Mollenhour Gross Real Estate, Launch Tennessee and Pinnacle Financial Partners.

It was clear Knoxville wanted TreisD, and the company's leaders felt welcomed. For a startup "you need as many friends as you can get," Brandon said, and the partnership between UT, the Chamber of Commerce and the

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Nissan plans to close its 'mother factory' in Japan

Japanese plant has been open since 1961

Stuart Dyos

Nashville Tennessee
USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Nissan announced July 15 the company will close its flagship factory just south of Tokyo in Oppama, Japan, the latest step in the company's cost-cutting efforts.

The move is part of a larger company shakeup that includes cutting 11,000 jobs and closing seven of its manufacturing plants worldwide.

The automaker's U.S. manufacturing plants in Smyrna, Tennessee, and Canton, Mississippi, remain in full swing, producing Nissan Pathfinder, Murano, Rogue, Altima, Frontier and Infiniti QX60.

"Nissan will restructure production operations at the Oppama plant and plans to transfer and integrate into the Kyushu plant by end of fiscal year 2027," a Nissan spokesperson said. "This step supports our goal of building a resilient and responsive global manufacturing footprint."

The Japanese automaker will also close two doors at its Nissan Shatal's Shonan factory by March 2027, CEO Ivan Espinosa said.

"It was a difficult decision for both myself and the company," Espinosa said at a news conference in Yokohama. "However, we believe it is necessary for Nissan to overcome its current challenging situation."

The report follows an abysmal fiscal year for the Japanese automaker. The company reported a 200 billion yen, or about \$1.35 billion, operating loss in its first quarter, a 88% drop in operating profits, according to Reuters.

Opening in 1961, the Oppama site was one of Japan's first large-scale auto factories. Employing 3,900 workers, the site dubbed Nissan's "mother factory" has manufactured more than 17.8 million vehicles to date. Oppama operations will be consolidated at Nissan's Kyushu plant.

The facilities and functions in the district such as the Nissan Research Center and the crash test site, among others, will remain unaffected and continue to operate as usual, the spokesperson said.

"Our manufacturing operations in Tennessee and Mississippi are strategically important to the company's future in this crucial market," Nissan Americas Corporate Communication Director Kyle Bazemore told The Nashville Tennessean in May after the job cuts announcement.

Contributing: Reuters



Nissan's U.S. manufacturing plants in Smyrna, Tennessee, and Canton, Mississippi, remain in full swing. ALAN POJNER/FOR THE NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN FILE

Kern's

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opening in the food hall, Knox News previously reported.

Amaryllis Taqueria unexpectedly left Kern's in June, breaking its five-year lease after only one year, and the move felt eerily similar to the Marble City Market dilemma.

Joseph Root is the founder of both Amaryllis and Clean Smoke BBQ and told Knox News he had to go because traffic patterns around the South Knoxville food hall discourage people from coming and communication with food hall management has been awful.

When Amaryllis was operating, Root said, the business might make only \$300 a day. Even on "Taco Tuesday," he said, sales were only about \$600.

The food and beverage business is notoriously difficult, Cochran said, and being inside a food hall can actually make success harder, not easier. While he was at Marble City, The Donut Theory had days with just over \$100 in sales.

"There's some insane statistic like 80% of entrepreneurs fail. Why would you ever do it? And then there's an even more insane statistic about restaurants," Cochran said.

He rebranded The Donut Theory into Disco Chicken, and brought the new concept, along with three others, to Kern's, hoping to get a fresh start.

'There's no longer a barrier to entry'

Amaryllis' departure feels like a call-back to vendors leaving Marble City Market three years ago, but the problems Kern's faced in its first year are quickly resolving.

Kern's added paid parking for a while and customers could only enter the parking lot when coming from an unprotected turn off Chapman Highway.

Now, parking is free for Kern's customers, and the intersection of Fort Avenue and Chapman Highway, which used to be the home of Burger Boys, is under construction to become a new traffic light-equipped entrance. The light



What was once the site of Burger Boys along Chapman Highway is now being turned into a new entrance for Kern's Food Hall.

SAUL YOUNG/NEWS SENTINEL

Entrance

Continued from Page 1A

entrance for Burger Boys is being reconfigured. The improvements are expected to be finished sometime in August, according to Kern's.

The redesigned intersection means drivers will have a traffic

should be ready by mid-August.

"There's no longer a barrier to entry, and that's what parking was," Fuller said. Belback added that the stoplight will remove a "physical" barrier for drivers, too.

It's not just about the product, but how you market it

While the ease of access will be resolved, vendors inside Kern's are learning how to best market their businesses in a location that can be hard to promote. Even if it's easier to get to the food hall, it doesn't help if no one knows you are

light to help them make that left turn into - or out of - Kern's parking lot through Chapman Highway traffic.

"Having it done before football season will be phenomenal," Kern's manager Grant Belback told Knox News.

Joanna Hayes is the restaurant and retail reporter. Email: joanna.hayes@knoxnews.com.

there, Awaken Coffee owner Sarah Lutts told Knox News.

After creating a quality, sought-after product, you have to market your unique brand, Cochran said. Because Kern's is a historic building, no signage can be placed on the Chapman Highway facade.

"I think Knoxvilleans ... are very habitual. They have the same habits. They have the same routines," Fuller said. "For many years, Kern's was just a literal building that was empty. We drove by it for decades ... People's habit was driving past Kern's and being like 'Man, that used to be really cool' and, 'bam, I'm going to keep going on Chapman.'"

Disco Chicken sits at the entrance of the food hall. Its pink LED signs can be seen from outside the front doors.

"The food quality is high. And you're going to eat it, you're going to like it. But if the brand is eccentric and eclectic enough that you'll remember it, you'll stand out from all the noise," Cochran said. "So that's what I wanted to do. I wanted you to be very eccentric and loud. I kind of think I nailed it."

Richy Kreeme, another of Cochran's businesses, is located at 7699 S. Northshore Drive. He has a \$3,500 sign on the street, and yet, people walk inside the donut shop saying they had no idea it was there, Cochran said.

"Signage is not ever easy anywhere," he said. "It's crazy to me. So, I think the facade in the front just saying 'Kern's Bakery' makes it very difficult. How do you represent 20 different businesses, right?"

He said 85% of marketing is just the brand itself, not the food. Lutts echoed the same sentiment, saying so much of attracting a customer base to Awaken Coffee is through Instagram.

As of mid-July, Awaken had 8,044 Instagram followers and Disco Chicken had 78 followers.

"I can get a taco in here. I can go across the street to this truck and get a taco, whatever. And I can get a chicken tenix anywhere. I can go to Raising Cane's, Chick-fil-A, McDonald's, Wendy's, right? But it's about a total experience, the whole thing," Cochran said.

Kern's has four available stalls, including the taqueria's former spot. One of the stalls is being used as Kern's management office space, and the other three have new vendors in the works.

Kern's is hoping to overcome Knoxville's negative perception of food halls. Belback said working through early hiccups makes it feel as if the food hall opened "for real" a year after the grand opening in April 2024.

"We're happy with where Kern's is at, but we think of this as year one. Let's get after it with year one," Belback said.

Joanna Hayes is the restaurant and retail reporter. Email: joanna.hayes@knoxnews.com.

Startup

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financial institutions in the city made it a desirable location.

"It also turns out that the University of Tennessee has one of the best polymer science departments in the world, which we didn't know at the time, and since we print on polymer, the relationship with the University of Tennessee in the early days has been fantastic," Brandon said.

TreisD seeks to build up manufacturing, keep jobs local

At its new facility, TreisD will focus on three applications of its 3D technology and manufacturing:

- Visual models to use in health care, satellite imaging and smartphone applications

- Anti-counterfeiting measures on product packaging

- Commemorative memorabilia such as physical versions of UT football tickets

"When you see our images, we've got our own intersection of art and technology," Brandon told Knox News. "Our stuff that we create is truly beautiful. It just happens to be incredibly secure and very hard to duplicate."

He compared the equipment - supplied by COLLIN Lab & Pilot Solutions in Germany - to a big printing press, but instead of paper it creates thin plastic film made from polymer resin that will be supplied by Eastman Chemical Company in Kingsport. TreisD will then print 3D images onto the film.

The facility is expected to be operational by the end of 2025, and Brandon wants to hire around 50 people in the next two years.

Some will work in the accessible manufacturing portion, and most will

be tech jobs filled by UT graduates. He wants to hire people from Knox County and East Tennessee for these positions, and he hopes to hire about 100 people total if TreisD becomes more successful.

The company's leadership is split between Silicon Valley and Georgia now, and some key leaders will move to Knoxville.

Knoxville is 'perfect' for startups

Brandon is based in Silicon Valley, but he expects to travel often to East Tennessee to work with the Knoxville-based leadership team.

He compared Knoxville to an "undiscovered gem" for startups, and TreisD is getting ahead of the crowd with its manufacturing facility. The company will have more announcements in the future, matching Knoxville's "very bright future as being a tech hub," he said.

TreisD's investment in the region

aligns with new innovations and research happening nearby, like the "nuclear renaissance" in Oak Ridge from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Y-12.

UT Chancellor Donde Plovman has plans to expand the university's research capabilities and wants to build new innovation districts in the Maplehurst neighborhood, Oak Ridge and the Research Park at Cherokee Farm.

"I feel like Knoxville is a perfect place for startups," Brandon told Knox News. "You've got the university. You have all this intellectual talent. You've got a very pro-business environment. They want tech jobs," he said. "I knew it was going to be good, but it's been better than I expected."

Keenan Thomas reports on higher education for the Knox News business growth and development team. You can reach him by email at keenan.thomas@knoxnews.com.

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Knoxville News Sentinel

USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

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Startup

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Vols plan with 'Georgia brand of football' at top of mind

SPORTS, 1B

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'COLLEGE GAMEDAY'

Who's your pick to be guest picker?



Country singer and East Tennessee native Kenny Chesney kisses Smokey as the "College GameDay" guest picker in 2012 as analysts Lee Corso and Kirk Herbstreit laugh about their predictions. NEWS SENTINEL FILE

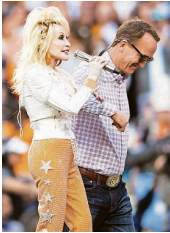
8 options for ESPN's broadcast in advance of UT-Georgia game

Mike Wilson Knoxville News Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Will it be Dolly Parton's time on set? Or is Dalton Knecht the slam-dunk choice? • Parton and Knecht are two of the options to be the guest picker as Tennessee is hosting ESPN's "College GameDay" before the No. 15 Vols (2-0) play No. 3 Georgia (2-0) on Sept. 13 (3:30 p.m. ET, ABC). The show will air on ESPN from 9 a.m. to noon from Ayres Hall on the UT campus. • Here are eight options to be the "GameDay" picker:

Dolly Parton

This would be a dream scenario for East Tennessee. Parton is the Queen of Country and surely the region's most-adored figure. Parton would be a roaring hit on stage because everyone loves Dolly. From hit-making musician to humanitarian, Parton is as good as it gets.



Dolly Parton is escorted by Peyton Manning after performing "Rocky Top" with the Pride of the Southland Band at Neyland Stadium in Knoxville on Nov. 18, 2023. BRIANNA PACIORKA/NEWS SENTINEL



Scan to vote for who you want to see as guest picker on "College GameDay."

ics and is familiar with being on set with her work as an analyst on TNT.

Dalton Knecht

Knecht is one of the most adored Vols this decade. The Los Angeles Lakers second-year guard has one of the best seasons in Tennessee history in 2023-24, cementing his place in the program's record books and the fan base's hearts. It's the offseason for

See GAMEDAY, Page 8A

Candace Parker

Candace Parker is an icon in women's basketball. She won multiple national titles at Tennessee and kept her success going at the professional level, where she kept winning titles and MVP awards before she retired in 2024. Parker is an avid supporter of Tennessee athlete-

Meet Oklo, Oak Ridge's new nuclear startup firm

Roane County wins big on jobs

Mariah Franklin Knoxville News Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Oklo, a nuclear startup promising a \$1.68 billion investment, and about 800 jobs, will land in Oak Ridge alongside decades-old institutions and a suite of new nuclear businesses. The California company intends to build a nuclear fuel recycling facility in a phased expansion.

The announcement was the biggest jobs news in the history of Roane County and would represent the first private nuclear fuel recycling center in the U.S.

Here are four things to know about the company's plans.

What does Oklo make?

Oklo is in the process of building advanced micro-reactors to generate power. Right now, it has U.S. De-

See OKLO, Page 8A



Sam Pol, executive vice president of technology at TreisD, teaches a course inside the new headquarters in the Innovation South Building on the University of Tennessee Research Park at Cherokee Farm on Sept. 3. CAITIE MCKEMER/NEWS SENTINEL

Tech startup TreisD is moving its HQ to UT Research Park

Keenan Thomas Knoxville News Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Georgia-based tech startup TreisD isn't just launching its manufacturing facility in Knoxville County; the company is moving its headquarters right across the Tennessee River in Knoxville.

The company will operate in an office inside the Innovation South building at 2730 Cherokee Farm Way located on the University of Tennessee Research Park at Cherokee Farm. TreisD uses polymer plastics to turn two-dimensional images into 3D images viewable by the naked eye, printing the images onto a film

See TREISD, Page 8A

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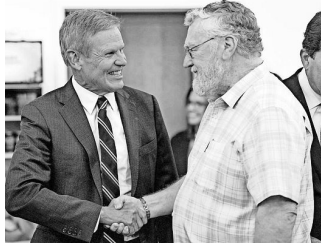
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Gov. Bill Lee shakes Oak Ridge historian Ray Smith's hand during a Sept. 4 press conference announcing Oklo, a nuclear fuel recycling business, is investing nearly \$1.7 billion and creating more than 800 jobs in Oak Ridge.

ANGELINA ALCANTAR/
NEWS SENTINEL

Oklo

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partment of Energy's approval for a concept design of a fuel fabrication center in Idaho, and it's seeking a license for a reactor at Idaho National Laboratory after the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission rejected its license application in 2022. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission said the company was free to reapply in the future.

Oklo is also working on fuel recycling technology, hoping to build up the American fuel supply and power its own reactors.

Why recycle nuclear fuel?

Almost all nuclear fuel – about 95% of it – isn't split for energy. Changing that percentage by reusing fuel could shift the economics of the nuclear game.

The nuclear fuel supply is a topic of strong national interest. The federal government announced in August that it was looking for companies to join a new supply chain group aimed at cutting fuel dependence on other countries. The government's move comes as energy demand in the U.S. spikes over growth from the artificial intelligence industry.

When will the Oklo facility come online, and where will it be?

The recycling plant will start operating by the early 2030s, Oklo CEO Jacob DeWitte said.

It will come online in Oak Ridge's Heritage Park on former K-25 land, which was cleared for industrial use by the Department of Energy and its cleanup contractor, United Cleanup Oak Ridge. It will sit on 247 acres and its executives are in talks with local officials about transferring the land, according to David Wilson, the chair of Oak Ridge's industrial development board.

The recycling facility is a first step in Oklo's plans, according to a company press release.

Oklo will benefit from Tennessee's nuclear fund

Oklo is the fifth company to be contracted for a grant under the state's nuclear fund, which exists to incentivize nuclear energy innovation. With the award it joins East Tennessee institutions including the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Roane State Community College, along with nuclear companies with an East Tennessee presence like Type One Energy.

A spokesperson for the state's department of economic and community development said over email that the amount of the award to Oklo would be made public on the department's website within 30 days of the announcement. Other contracted grant-winners received \$4.5 million (Type One), about \$1 million (Tennessee Tech University), \$1.5 million (UT) and \$462,000 (Roane State).

Mariah Franklin is a growth and development reporter focused on technology and energy. Email mariah.franklin@knoxnews.com.

TreisD

Continued from Page 1A

that can't be replicated. The images are complex and make it impossible to tamper with packaging and branding through conventional means.

The move plants the high-tech company in Knox County, and less than 30 minutes away from the future site of TreisD's manufacturing facility in Mascot, Tennessee. Additionally, the company is working with the university and the research park to teach a capstone project course with students and lead a feasibility study visualizing sinkholes.

TreisD will lead study on sinkholes

East Tennessee is a region susceptible to sinkholes – scientifically called Dolines – which can occur because of soluble rocks like limestone located under the surface soil. The rocks dissolve when groundwater flows through them, forming underground cavities that lead to sinkholes.

TreisD comes into play with its 3D imaging technology, merging artificial intelligence capabilities with its image capturing to use large language and large vision models to capture 3D images of sinkholes underground. In other words, the goal is to create real 3D images to assess and visualize sinkholes, rather than taking multiple 2D images to craft a visual.

The study will help experts see the depth, magnitude and position of sink-

holes, allowing for a better understanding and prediction of when sinkholes will occur. And with sinkhole damages in the country averaging \$300 million a year, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, the study could be a game-changer.

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TreisD leading course with University of Tennessee

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The capstone is in partnership with the College of Emerging and Collaborative Studies. Students use Nimslo 3D analog cameras – developed in the 1980s by TreisD founder and chairman Leslie "Jerry" Nims – to develop 3D images, digitize them and then train AI models with the photos. The course launched this summer and concludes Sept. 16, but a second course has already started.

The cameras use four lenses to cap-

Hawaii on alert for life-threatening surf

Hurricane Kiko passing to the north of islands

Christopher Cann
USA TODAY

Hurricane Kiko is forecast to weaken further in the central Pacific as it approaches Hawaii this week, steering clear of the archipelago but still threatening the islands with dangerous surf and rip currents.

Last week the hurricane hit Category 4 strength but has steadily weakened in recent days as it encountered cooler waters. It was expected to continue losing strength and possibly be downgraded to a tropical storm by late Sept. 8, forecasters said.

Still, Kiko could bring life-threatening surf and rip current conditions to the islands as it passes north of Hawaii beginning Sept. 9.

The state of Hawaii issued an emergency declaration on Sept. 5 – an administrative action government agencies often take before tropical storms, hurricanes and other impending weather disasters. Such declarations pave the way for emergency measures and resources that allow officials to respond quickly during emergencies.

The National Hurricane Center says while there are no coastal watches or warnings in effect, people in Hawaii still should monitor the storm's progress.

"Based on the new forecast and accounting for typical errors, there is currently less than a 10 percent chance of tropical-storm-force winds occurring at any location on the Hawaiian Islands, and tropical storm watches are not required or expected at this time," the National Hurricane Center said in its latest update.

Meanwhile, forecasters were also watching a disturbance in the eastern Pacific, just off the coast of southern Mexico. The National Hurricane Center said an area of low pressure could form by the end of the week, and "some slow development" is possible as it moves north. The disturbance has no chance of forming over the next 48 hours and a



The National Hurricane Center says while there are no coastal watches or warnings in effect, people in Hawaii still should monitor the storm's progress. HUGH GENTRY/REUTERS FILE

low 20% chance of forming over the next seven days, the hurricane center said.

Last week, Kiko was one of two hurricanes spinning in the Pacific basin. The other, Lorena, weakened into a tropical storm before striking western Mexico, causing power outages, floods and mudslides that swept cars away.

Despite Atlantic lull, forecasters expect active hurricane season

While there are currently no active storms in the Atlantic, forecasters say warm seas and a West African Monsoon will fuel an "above-normal season."

The National Weather Service recently updated its 2025 Atlantic hurricane season outlook to include 13 to 19 named storms, of which 5 to 9 could become hurricanes. The hurricane season runs from June 1 through Nov. 30.

In the Atlantic, the only storm to reach hurricane strength this season has been Erin, a Category 2 storm that flooded North Carolina's Outer Banks and caused dangerous rip current conditions for the entire Eastern Seaboard, leading to multiple deaths.

Contributing: Dinah Voyles Pulver, USA TODAY

ture the images, using a method called "autostereoscopy" to make the image appear to have depth and movement without 3D glasses. Typically, it looks like the subject is rotating slightly. A good example can be found by searching "Nimslo" on GIF websites like giphy.com – or you can wait for TreisD to complete development on a new app for Nimslo GIFs.

TreisD is working with local professional photo print lab f/32 Photo to process and develop the film captured by students.

"I was so excited by the fact that Jerry Nims and his colleagues were working with UT students," Nathan Dault, marketing manager for f/32 Photo, said in a press release.

"We process 35mm and many other types of film, including film for Nimslo GIFs, and those of us in the industry are very familiar with the dedicated following for these cameras and their resurgence in order to leverage their unique 3D depth of field to create modern digital GIF images. This reputation precedes them, and it's incredible to have Jerry and his team collaborating and innovating here in Knoxville."

TreisD part of UT Research Park at Cherokee Farm growth

Before the UT connection, TreisD was feeling welcome in Knoxville through the Chamber of Commerce and financial institutions. UT's research in polymer science – highly ranked in the world by U.S. News and World Report – became a foundational element for the company to work with UT.

TreisD plans to manufacture optical polymer material in the manufacturing facility in the Eastbridge Business Park.

But the presence of TreisD in the research park adds to Cherokee Farm's growing portfolio, which includes companies like Volkswagen Group of America.

It ties into the park's overall growth with plans to open a new entrance, connect the park to the UT Medical Center via a bridge and develop a 20-year vision for the future.

An element UT Chancellor Donde Drowman wants to develop is a new innovation district on the property.

"We have counterparts who we work with to help introduce our technology companies to the university system. That's what makes the research park a compelling destination, because we have that strong tie into all the resources of the university," Malone said.

TreisD is using its space on the research park now, and plans to open the facility later this year. When it opens, TreisD will be firmly planted in Knoxville.

"We're fully committed to Knoxville, and we're committed to partnerships with Brett and the research park," Nims told Knox News. "And we see an opportunity there in the future where we believe the university is going to end up being an innovative center. No question about it."

Keenan Thomas reports on higher education for the Knox News business growth and development team. You can reach him by email at keenan.thomas@knoxnews.com.

GameDay

Continued from Page 1A

the NBA so Knecht could be available.

Keisea Ballerini

Keisea Ballerini could call dibs on being the guest picker. Ballerini is a Knoxville native and a popular country music artist, which means no one would be blindsided by the choice. She is not currently on tour, with her next dates slated for December in Australia.

Jarrett Guarantano

Jarrett Guarantano has surged back into the Tennessee sphere with his on-line presence recently. He has started breaking down Tennessee film, adding to the way he engages with fans. Guarantano weathered some brutal eras of UT football and wasn't always the most beloved player, but he has made a come-back.

Tony Vitello

Arguably the most popular person in Knoxville, the Tennessee baseball coach wins on the field and on the set.

He has led the Vols to their best standing in program history and won the 2024 College World Series. He's also excelled in media settings and has been on the set of the MLB Draft multiple times in the past few years. Bank on a Will Ferrell movie reference if he gets the gig.

Eric Berry

Eric Berry is a Georgia native who starred at Tennessee. He was the 2009 Jim Thorpe Award winner as the best defensive back in college football, 2008 SEC Defensive Player of the Year and a two-time All-American after coming to

UT as one of the highest-ranked prospects in program history. He overcame cancer during his NFL career and was inducted to the College Football Hall of Fame in the 2023 class.

Kenny Chesney

Kenny Chesney is a known name as a longtime country singer and a Knoxville native. He also has been the guest picker before as the choice in September 2012 for the show's Knoxville stop. Chesney also was the guest picker for Missouri at South Carolina in September 2014.



Sam Pol, executive vice president of technology at TreisD, teaches a course inside the new headquarters in the Innovation South Building on the University of Tennessee Research Park at Cherokee Farm on Sept. 3.

CAITIE MCMEKIN/NEWS SENTINEL

Tech startup TreisD is moving its HQ to UT Research Park

Keenan Thomas

Knoxville News Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Georgia-based tech startup TreisD isn't just launching its manufacturing facility in Knox County; the company is moving its headquarters right across the Tennessee River in Knoxville.

The company will operate in an office inside the Innovation South building at 2730 Cherokee Farm Way located on the University of Tennessee Research Park at Cherokee Farm. TreisD uses polymer plastics to turn two-dimensional images into 3D images viewable by the naked eye, printing the images onto a film

See TREISD, Page 8A

TreisD

Continued from Page 1A

that can't be replicated. The images are complex and make it impossible to tamper with packaging and branding through conventional means.

The move plants the high-tech company in Knox County, and less than 30 minutes away from the future site of TreisD's manufacturing facility in Mascot, Tennessee. Additionally, the company is working with the university and the research park to teach a capstone project course with students and lead a feasibility study visualizing sinkholes.

TreisD will lead study on sinkholes

East Tennessee is a region susceptible to sinkholes – scientifically called Dolines – which can occur because of soluble rocks like limestone located under the surface soil. The rocks dissolve when groundwater flows through them, forming underground cavities that lead to sinkholes.

TreisD comes into play with its 3D imaging technology, merging artificial intelligence capabilities with its image capturing to use large language and large vision models to capture 3D images of sinkholes underground. In other words, the goal is to create real 3D images to assess and visualize sinkholes, rather than taking multiple 2D images to craft a visual.

The study will help experts see the depth, magnitude and position of sink-

holes, allowing for a better understanding and prediction of when sinkholes will occur. And with sinkhole damages in the country averaging \$300 million a year, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, the study could be a game-changer.

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TreisD is coming to Tennessee with local backing and a big new building

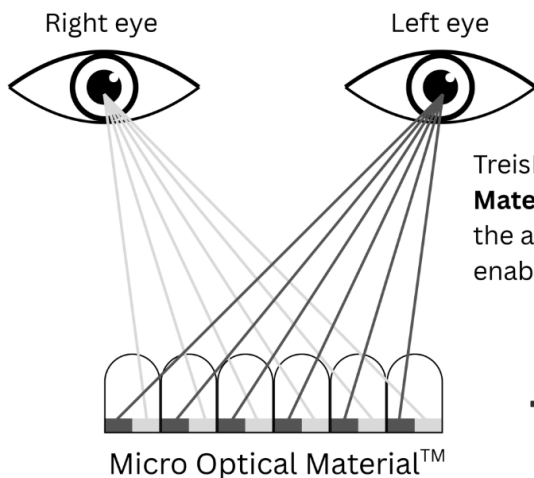
TreisD focuses on turning two-dimensional images into 3D images people can view with the naked eye. TreisD can then print the images on a film that can't be replicated.

News of prominent economic development and start-up growth travels fast in East Tennessee. It was a few months ago when talks of **TreisD** making big moves started to circulate. Today, those talks turned into public fact. TreisD is coming to Tennessee to open its manufacturing hub for 3D imaging.

TreisD is a new sort of 3D company. Yes, they can 3D print, but their innovative technology extends beyond the basics. TreisD can take 2D visual elements and digitally replicate them in a 3D visual model suited for the human eye. Then, they print it on a film that *cannot be replicated*.

In the age of artificial intelligence, this could become a key innovation to curb counterfeit items.

TreisD can accomplish this by using proprietary software, imaging algorithms, micro-optics, and a growing 3D image library.



TreisD's **Micro Optical Material™** directs light to the appropriate eye enabling 3D vision.



This technology has the potential to revolutionize the way industries operate. One example the company uses is 3D printing commemorative entertainment and event tickets to include irreproducible image features for authentic branding and anti-counterfeiting products.

“Developing our expansive library of 3D images has dramatically increased our research-and-development delivery of 3D visuals in several fields, including our new micro-optical material,” said **Sam Pol**, Executive Vice President of Technology for TreisD. “Launching our manufacturing facility is the next step in bringing the value of this highly researched and multi-patented innovation to market.”



Sam Pol

The *optical polymer material* used for this technology will be produced at TreisD’s manufacturing facility, which is planned to be located at Eastbridge Business Park in Mascot.

The 20,000-square-foot building, owned and leased by **Mollenhour Gross Real Estate**, was formerly an automotive machining and assembly plant. Read more about the location in [this *teknovation.biz* article with Mollenhour Gross Real Estate](#).

“The Eastbridge facility provided all the infrastructure desired to attract an outstanding new business such as TreisD to East Tennessee,” said **Jonathan Edwards**, the Vice President of Real Estate Operations for Mollenhour Gross.

Though TreisD has roots in France, Silicon Valley, and Peachtree Corners, Georgia, the start-up decided to make Northeast Knox County its home for manufacturing. This happened after local collaboration with the **Knoxville Chamber**, **Three Roots Capital**, Mollenhour Gross Real Estate, **University of Tennessee (UT)**, **Launch Tennessee**, and **Pinnacle Financial Partners**.



John Brandon

“We looked at other locations, but Knoxville was great on paper – and then turned out to be even better than we’d hoped,” said **John Brandon**, the Chief Executive Officer of TreisD, and former Vice President of International for Apple, Inc. “Everyone in Knoxville has been straightforward, honest, and eager to help. East Tennesseans are every bit as bright and talented as people in any other market we considered, but they also are energetically proactive and refreshingly unentitled. The region had everything we needed, and it was clear that TreisD was wanted here. The Knoxville experience simply was better than elsewhere.”

TreisD plans to make additional announcements about the rollout of its Tennessee-based technology and its applications in the coming weeks and months.

TreisD’s state-of-the-art modular manufacturing equipment is being supplied by COLLIN Lab & Pilot Solutions out of Germany and is slated to arrive this fall. The polymer resin is supplied by Eastman Chemical Company in Kingsport, Tennessee. The facility is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2025.

Beyond security printing and consumer products, TreisD will continue to advance as a large vision model (LVM) AI 3D company, rolling out subsequent LVM artificial intelligence (AI) 3D applications and innovative 3D imaging solutions in healthcare and medical diagnostics, drone and satellite imaging, and other major industries, as well as smartphone applications. Large vision models (LVMs) are AI systems designed to process and understand vast amounts of visual data. Similar to how large language models (LLMs) process text, LVMs provide image recognition and classification, object detection and segmentation, and image understanding and analysis.

“TreisD has been hard at work for several years, and we’re eager to share this incredible tech with the public,” Brandon said. “It’s going to do a lot of good for the world, and it’s going to start in Knoxville.”

[Learn more about TreisD.](#)

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SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 | KATELYN BIEFELDT

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3D high-tech start-up, TreisD announces relocation of headquarters to UT Research Park

The high-tech company also announced an innovative study of sinkholes, using 3D artificial intelligence technologies to predict their occurrences.

In an exciting announcement from one of Knoxville's newest start-ups, **TreisD** shared that it will officially be moving operations to the area. This comes on the heels of the company's announcement in July that it signed agreements to lease a 20,000-square-foot industrial building in the Eastbridge Business Park in Mascot, to build out manufacturing operations.



TreisD building. Courtesy of Mollenhour Gross Real Estate

After many long discussions, the company's founders decided to relocate its headquarters to the **University of Tennessee (UT) Research Park at Cherokee Farm** in the innovation South building. It's a 30-minute drive from their Mascot facility.

“Working with **Brett Malone** and his team at UT and its research park has been wonderful,” said **Leslie “Jerry” Nims**, TreisD’s Chairman and Founder. “We are a high-tech, visionary company, and UT Research Park is a great fit for us. We’re eager to further advance additional, real-world applications of TreisD’s innovative technologies, utilizing the world-class resources of UT and supporting the community through the benefit of tech startup-supported research. Looking to the future, *we believe this area will become a national innovation center.*”

Teknovation interviewed Nims on Friday morning. He said the company originally had its sights set on Southern France. The co-founders of TreisD, Nims and **John Brandon**, had an offer from the French government to assist in relocation; however, Tennessee came on the scene at the “right time.”

On Tuesday afternoon, we also sat down with Malone, the Chief Executive Officer of the Research Park. He attributes TreisD’s draw to more than just strategic alignment. He said it’s the park’s “curious community” that is the real lure.

“As a research park, we should be taking an active role in bringing big companies to town. It supports our strategic mission of place-based innovation, and in order to do that, we need to make a research park that is desirable to be in. Whether it’s through the beauty of the park itself, or through the curious, creative people who work here,” Malone said.

TreisD, as the name suggests, is a 3D imaging company that specializes in turning 2D visual elements into digitally replicated 3D visual models suited for the human eye. Then, they print it on a film that *cannot be replicated.*

One of the applications of this technology is intended to help with identifying, combating, and preventing counterfeit items. One example the company uses is 3D printing commemorative entertainment and event tickets to include irreproducible image features for authentic branding and anti-counterfeiting products.

Another technological application

Upon conversations with the research park, TreisD discovered another potential market fit: assessing sinkholes.

You may think, What does a 3D printing company have to do with sinkhole prevention? But, it turns out there’s actually a lot of need for 3D companies to enter the geological assessment space.

TreisD announced a partnership with the **Cherokee Farm Development Corporation (CFDC)** to launch a feasibility study focused on visualizing and mitigating sinkholes. The study aims to equip experts with tools to accurately assess the depth, magnitude, and positioning of sinkholes underground using TreisD’s proprietary 3D AI technology.



UT Research Park at Cherokee Farm.

“This project is exactly what the University of Tennessee and UT Research Park are here to do,” said **Brett Malone**, CFDC President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). “ This is the kind of mutually beneficial private-public alliance that highlights the best of our region.”

Malone was the catalyst for the idea, and Nims and Brandon thought about it and decided that it was a good application fit. The company’s technology has been developed and researched for many, many years. However, from a business side, TreisD is still in a pre-revenue start-up phase.

“We have done satellite imagery, we’ve developed a whole medical system for 3d imagery. But we’ve never gone down into the ground, subterranean, and we thought it was a great, challenging idea. So that’s how that deal came together,” Nims said.

He mentioned that the TreisD technology is both applicable and desirable to many industries, but they’re still looking for the most cohesive fit.

In this case, the company plans to apply large language models (LLMs) and large vision models (LVMS) to create true-to-scale 3D images of sinkholes, replicating the human visual system’s depth perception.

Unlike traditional LiDAR and ground-penetrating radar, which produce 2D representations, TreisD’s goal is to generate immersive, accurate 3D visualizations that can be viewed the same as with the human eye.

Sinkholes are a persistent issue in East Tennessee due to the region's limestone-rich geology. As groundwater dissolves the rock beneath the surface, voids form that can eventually collapse, causing damage that the U.S. Geological Survey estimates costs at least \$300 million annually nationwide.

Investing in the future workforce

In addition to the feasibility study with UT Research Park, TreisD has also partnered with the **College of Emerging and Collaborative Studies (CECS)** at UTK, offering a capstone course for students titled "*Capturing Legacy 3D Image Data for AI Model Training Project*."

"We also hope to continue collaborating with other UT colleges and departments," said **John Brandon**, TreisD CEO. "UT's top-rated polymer science program at the Institute for Advanced Materials & Manufacturing was a major factor in TreisD's decision to locate in Knoxville."

Nims said one of the most exciting parts for him is getting to see the students use the Nimslo 3D camera, which he invented back in the 1980s in Japan.

The camera takes 3D pictures without requiring glasses or a headset. It captures multiple images that, when processed, create a moving 3D "gif" effect. The camera allows users to create 3D images that match the human visual system.

The Nimslo camera was the first step in the technology that TreisD operates with today.

Malone said the Research Park played a big role in helping TreisD relocate, but it didn't happen in a vacuum. Several other partner organizations played key roles in providing connections, making introductions, and selling the state of Tennessee.

"I've noticed in my past year as CEO of the Research Park that Knoxville is really good at collaborating to engage with these big companies like TreisD. This is a win for the whole community," he said.

So next time you see the TreisD team around the UT Research Park, be sure to give them a sweet Southern welcome.



GIF from Pinterest. Click image for sourcing.

[Read more about TreisD.](#)

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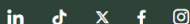
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Business Roundup: July 2025

Every month we run down notable news items from the area's businesses.

BY GERALD WITT • JULY 30, 2025



TREISD IS OPENING A MANUFACTURING FACILITY IN EASTBRIDGE BUSINESS PARK. COMPANY EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF TECHNOLOGY SAM POL (LEFT) AND CEO JOHN BRANDON.

July's business news includes a high-tech manufacturer moving into Eastbridge Business Park, a new brewery and restaurant on Sutherland Avenue, a University of Tennessee vice president leaving for a new opportunity, a reactor vessel installation in Oak Ridge, and more.

TreisD to open manufacturing facility: TreisD, a 3D image capture, display and printing company, announced plans to begin manufacturing at Eastbridge Business Park in Mascot.

A former Apple executive is CEO of 3D technology company TreisD.

The company uses its core technology to make a digital replication of the human visual system with software and imaging algorithms, micro-optics and an ever-expanding 3D image library. The optical polymer material for that technology will be produced at TreisD's Eastbridge facility.

"Developing our expansive library of 3D images has dramatically increased our research-and-development delivery of 3D visuals in several fields, including our new micro-optical material," said Sam Pol, executive vice president of technology for TreisD. "Launching our manufacturing

facility is the next step in bringing the value of this highly researched and multi-patented innovation to market."

Initial offerings of the technology will deliver superior-quality printing of 3D consumer and collectible materials on TreisD's unique micro-optical lens material, providing enhanced 3D security features and brand protection.

For example, commemorative entertainment and event tickets can be printed with 3D imaging to include irreplicable image features for authentic branding and anti-counterfeiting products. TreisD customers will enjoy products that look much better aesthetically than what's available now, with more secure packaging.

With company leadership in Silicon Valley and Peachtree Corners, Ga., TreisD worked with Knoxville Chamber, Three Roots Capital, Mollenhour Gross Real Estate, University of Tennessee, Launch Tennessee, and Pinnacle Financial Partners to decide and find the infrastructure needed to locate the company in Knox County.

"We looked at other locations, but Knoxville was great on paper — and then turned out to be even better than we'd hoped," said John Brandon, CEO of TreisD and former vice president of international for Apple. "Everyone in Knoxville has been straightforward, honest and eager to help.

He continued: "East Tennesseans are every bit as bright and talented as people in any other market we considered, but they also are energetically proactive and refreshingly unentitled. The region had everything we needed, and it was clear that TreisD was wanted here. The Knoxville experience simply was better than elsewhere."

A New Nest on Sutherland: A new neighborhood brewery, bar and gathering place called Flock is opening in the former Albright Grove Bring Co at 2924 Sutherland Ave.

The founding team includes Celia Winchester, Charlie DeBevoise, Brandon Smith and Charlotte Smith, and they want to create a social gathering spot on Sutherland that they believe is needed.

"We created Flock because we wanted a space where community, quality and creativity come together," Smith said. "It's the kind of place where you can meet a friend for lunch, bring your family for dinner, or just stop in for a spontaneous weeknight beer."

Master brewer Brandon Smith has brewing experience including time in Colorado's craft scene and Knoxville's Orange Hat Brewing. At Flock, he wants to brew all the beer in-house and create craft wines served on tap with twists like seasonal fruits, herbs or spices.

European lagers, West coast IPAs, kombucha and fruited sparkling wines are going to be on tap, with a barrel-aging program planned.

"We're excited to bring something that's both rooted in tradition and a little bit playful," Smith said.

Flock is hiring for bartenders and servers who, according to a release, "are ready to bring the charm, the cheer and a touch of quirk to their flock."

Flock owners want to host live music, seasonal fests, neighborhood discount nights, wine-and-beer pairing dinners, and gatherings for runners and cyclists along the nearby greenway.

Treefrog Takes a Leap: Food City Pharmacies across East Tennessee now feature an all-natural pain relief gel produced by a Knoxville company.

Treefrog has been available for some time, but has been sold primarily online. Food City's decision to carry it is the first widespread in-store availability.

"This is a huge step for us," said Lisa Kelechava, president and CEO of Treefrog. "We are selling Treefrog all over the country, however, it is so exciting to us that our first multi-in-store rollout is with a local partner like Food City Pharmacy, which will be handling it exclusively. The positive feedback on our product has been outstanding and we feel we are appealing to an ever-growing market looking for more all natural products to address ailments such as pain."

Treefrog was born in the rainforests of Costa Rica, where all of the natural ingredients are sourced. Treefrog users have found relief from minor aches and pains, arthritis and even neuropathy. It was named one of the best arthritis creams by AOL/YAHOO News. PGA Magazine named it one of their recommended products.

"At Food City we are always looking for new and innovative products that will appeal to our customers," said Mickey Blazer, executive vice president of pharmacy and fuel operations for Food City. "We believe Treefrog fits that bill and it is really exciting that the company is right here in East Tennessee."

Announcements and Openings

Grayson Subaru Donates to Ijams: Grayson Subaru in July presented a check for \$46,732 to Ijams Nature Center to continue to expand the Ijams Nature Playscape at Grayson Subaru Preserve and improve the Mead's Quarry swimming area.

The local auto dealer chose the nonprofit nature center as its hometown charity for Subaru of

Today in Compass

From correspondent Gerald Witt: [TreisD](#), a 3D imaging technology company, announced this week that its headquarters will be located at the University of Tennessee Research Park at Cherokee Farm in Knoxville, less than 30 minutes from its manufacturing facility in Mascot.

TreisD and Cherokee Farm Development Corporation, which oversees UT Research Park, will study how sinkholes are created. The study will help to show the size and location of sinkholes with 3D AI and to predict their potential for damage.

"This project is exactly what the University of Tennessee and UT Research Park are here to do," CFDC President and CEO Brett Malone said. "Not only did we play our part to bring a new technology company to Knoxville, but we also now are working with TreisD to utilize the full collaborative resources of the research park and tackle a prevalent and costly issue. This is the kind of mutually beneficial private-public alliance that highlights the best of our region. And, ultimately, we're succeeding in generating partnership-powered tech-based economic development."

Sinkholes, common in East Tennessee, form near soluble rocks like limestone underground. Such rocks dissolve as groundwater flows through, forming cavities that can lead to sinkholes.

"Working with Brett and his team at the University of Tennessee and its research park has been wonderful," said Leslie "Jerry" Nims, TreisD chairman and founder. "We are a high-tech, visionary company, and UT Research Park is a great fit for us. We're eager to further advance additional, real-world applications of TreisD's innovative technologies, utilizing the world-class resources of the University of Tennessee and supporting the community through the benefit of tech startup-supported research. Looking to the future, we believe this area will become a national innovation center."

TreisD's 3D image capture and display technology, with proprietary software and imaging algorithms, micro-optics, 3D AI capabilities and a growing 3D image library, will be used to create images of sinkholes underground.

The company and the university also share a focus on polymer science. TreisD will manufacture optical polymer material in its Eastbridge Business Park facility, and UT was ranked the top global university for [polymer science in U.S. News & World Report's Best Global Universities](#) in 2022 and the No. 2 program in 2025.

"We also hope to continue collaborating with other UT colleges and departments," said John Brandon, CEO of TreisD. "UT's top-rated polymer science program at the Institute for Advanced Materials & Manufacturing was a major factor in TreisD's decision to locate in Knoxville. We see future opportunities to work with the Tickle College of Engineering; College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences; and the Haslam College of Business, for example."

[← BACK TO NEWS](#)

JULY 21, 2025

TreisD to open 3D image printing and manufacturing operations in Knox County



Poised to bring innovation to multiple industries, privately held technology company TreisD Corporation has announced plans to open its manufacturing operations in Knox County, Tennessee.

As a privately held 3D image capture, display and printing company, TreisD's core technology creates digital replication of the human visual system using proprietary software and imaging algorithms, micro-optics and a growing 3D image library.

"Developing our expansive library of 3D images has dramatically increased our research-and-development delivery of 3D visuals in several fields, including our new micro-optical material," said Sam Pol, executive vice president of technology for TreisD. "Launching our manufacturing facility is the next step in bringing the value of this highly researched and multi-patented innovation to market."

Initial offerings of this technology will deliver superior-quality printing of 3D consumer and collectible materials on TreisD's unique micro-optical lens material, providing enhanced 3D security features and brand protection. For example, commemorative entertainment and event tickets can be printed with 3D imaging to include irreplicable image features for authentic branding and anti-counterfeiting products. TreisD customers will enjoy products that look much better aesthetically than what's available now with more secure packaging.

The optical polymer material used for this technology will be produced at TreisD's manufacturing facility, which will be located at Eastbridge Business Park in Mascot, in the northeast sector of Knox County.

With company leadership domiciled in Silicon Valley and Peachtree Corners, Georgia, TreisD worked with Knoxville Chamber, Three Roots Capital, Mollenhour Gross Real Estate, University of Tennessee, Launch Tennessee, Pinnacle Financial Partners and other key local and regional partners to solidify both the decision and infrastructure needed to locate company's manufacturing operations in Tennessee and in Knox County, specifically.

"We looked at other locations, but Knoxville was great on paper – and then turned out to be even better than we'd hoped," said John Brandon, CEO of TreisD and former vice president of international for Apple, Inc. "Everyone in Knoxville has been straightforward, honest and eager to help. East Tennesseans are every bit as bright and talented as people in any other market we considered, but they also are energetically proactive and refreshingly unentitled. The region had everything we needed, and it was clear that TreisD was wanted here. The Knoxville experience simply was better than elsewhere."

"Welcoming TreisD to Knoxville has been long-awaited and hard-sought goal of the Chamber," said John Turner, director of business attraction for Knoxville Chamber. "Throughout a year-long process, we were able to leverage everything that we know makes Knoxville ideal for entrepreneurs, business, innovation and growth and make the case for TreisD. As always, it was a collaborative approach with many individuals and groups involved, and that cooperative and enthusiastic spirit showed John and Sam and the TreisD team what makes East Tennessee a great place to do business."

TreisD plans to make additional announcements about the rollout of its Tennessee-based technology and the applications thereof in the coming weeks and months. With an imaging platform that disrupts the traditional economics of delivering 3D by eliminating glasses and headset costs and a proprietary system that reduces infrastructure and transport costs, TreisD aims to provide higher quality and lower cost at scale – with production located at the Mascot facility.

The 20,000-square-foot building, owned and leased by Mollenhour Gross Real Estate, is a former automotive machining and assembly plant.

"The Eastbridge facility provided all the infrastructure desired to attract an outstanding new business such as TreisD to East Tennessee," said Jonathan Edwards, vice president of real estate operations for Mollenhour Gross. "With power from TVA, utilities from KUB, existing features and buildout for manufacturing that also can be modified for future use, it was an ideal facility. More so, it's encouraging to see the continued trajectory of growth, addition of jobs and economic value of East Knox County. This location has everything TreisD needs within a 15-minute drive to downtown Knoxville, and there's more

location has everything TreisD needs within a 15-minute drive to downtown Knoxville, and there's more room for business growth in this area with existing facilities that are ready for a second life and land to build."

TreisD's state-of-the-art modular manufacturing equipment is being supplied by COLLIN Lab & Pilot Solutions out of Germany and is slated to arrive this fall. The polymer resin is supplied by Eastman Chemical Company in Kingsport, Tennessee. The facility is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2025.

Beyond security printing and consumer products, TreisD will continue to advance as large vision model (LVM) AI 3D company, rolling out subsequent LVM AI 3D applications and innovative 3D imaging solutions in healthcare and medical diagnostics, drone and satellite imaging and other major industries, as well as smartphone applications. Large vision models (LVMs) are AI systems designed to process and understand vast amounts of visual data. Similar to how large language models (LLMs) process text, LVMs provide image recognition and classification, object detection and segmentation and image understanding and analysis.

"TreisD has been hard at work for several years, and we're eager to share this incredible tech with the public," Brandon said. "It's going to do a lot of good for the world, and it's going to start in Knoxville. We're going to bring career opportunities for tech experts, polymer science PhDs and other professionals to the market, as well as reliable and accessible manufacturing and extrusion-line jobs.

"We are grateful to Knoxville for welcoming us, and we want to be a good corporate citizen in this community. When you see what we do - the beauty of the images and the incredibly innovative applications and solutions - you'll understand our great intersection of art and science, and we hope you'll be as excited as we are."

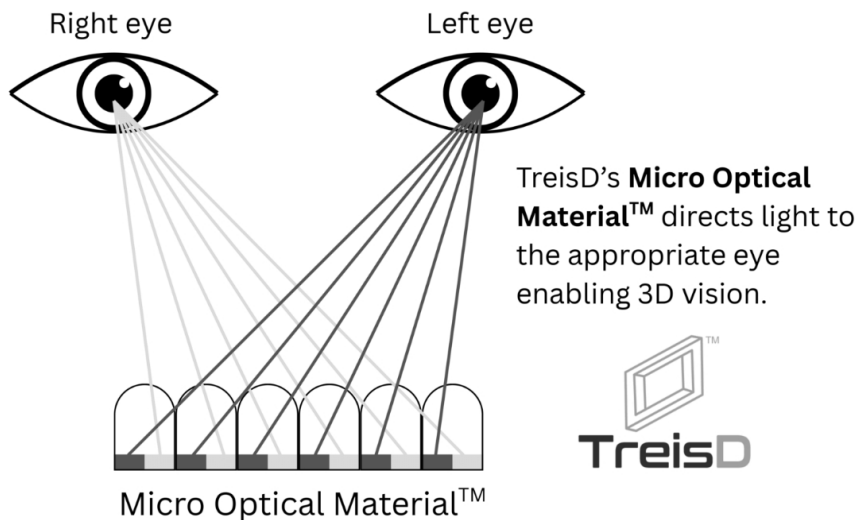
To learn more, visit treisdcorp.com.



John Brandon, CEO



Sam Pol, Executive Vice President Technology



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Home > Article VOL. 49 | NO. 31 | Friday, July 25, 2025

New partnership expands Vols' local TV presence

Updated 12:56PM Print | Front Page | Email this story

University of Tennessee Athletics, the Vol Network and Gray Media announced an agreement with WVLT in Knoxville, WSMV in Nashville, and WMC in Memphis naming them as the Official Television Stations of the Tennessee Volunteers.

This game-changing partnership will deliver more television coverage of Tennessee Athletics than ever before to local audiences.

This partnership will cover the three largest markets in Tennessee through Gray's newly launched Tennessee Valley Sports Network (TVSN), with plans to expand to Chattanooga and Jackson. TVSN programming can be found in Middle Tennessee on WMSV's digital channel 4.2.

TVSN will feature locally produced sports and entertainment content powered by Gray's Nashville, Memphis and Knoxville affiliates. Viewers can expect to find over seven hours of exclusive Tennessee Athletics-related shows, including a new football pregame show this fall.

Volunteer Gameday will air live two hours before kickoff from Neyland Stadium or any road game on TVSN. The show will feature the "Voice of the Vols" Mike Keith, WVLT anchor Brittany Tarwater, along with former Tennessee quarterback Heath Shuler.

Sales tax holiday returns this weekend

The state of Tennessee's annual sales tax holiday weekend will take place this weekend.

During this holiday, Tennesseans can save nearly 10% on qualifying clothing, school supplies and computers. Clothing and school supplies priced at \$100 or less will be tax-free, and computers priced at \$1500 or less also will be tax-free. Qualifying items may be purchased online and in stores.

Information, including a list of qualifying items

Unemployment steady at 3.5% for third month

Tennessee's unemployment rate held steady for the third month in a row at 3.5%, more than half a percentage point below the national rate, according to data released by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD).

The state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in June was the same as its April and May rates. In June 2024, the rate was 3.3%.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 4.1% in June, down 0.1% from the previous month. A year ago, the U.S. rate also was 4.1%.

Over the past year, Tennessee employers added 22,900 nonfarm jobs, with the biggest increases in the government, leisure and hospitality, and education and health services sectors.

Over the month, total nonfarm employment increased by 6,100 jobs. The largest gains were in the professional and business services sector, followed by the education and health services sector and the trade, transportation and utilities sector.

Zillow: Inventory hits 5-year high; prices cut

Slower demand from buyers has more homes for sale now than at any time since 2019, according to the latest market report from Zillow. With homes lingering on the market and less competition for them, a long-anticipated balance of power between buyers and sellers looks to have finally arrived.

Sellers held the upper hand through most of the past five years as demand for homes far outweighed the options available. Sellers now returning to the market in greater numbers, along with a surge in new construction, has helped balance the scales - competition among buyers is lower than any June in Zillow records dating back through 2018. But affordability is still a major challenge.

"The shift to a 'neutral' market is significant, but it shouldn't be mistaken for a universally cool or easy market for buyers," says Kara Ng, Zillow senior economist. "While negotiating power is more balanced, the affordability crisis remains a high barrier to entry, especially for first-time buyers. Until we see a more meaningful improvement in purchasing power, this newfound balance will primarily benefit more well-off buyers."

Inventory is still roughly 21% below pre-pandemic averages for June, but that deficit is expected to continue shrinking. Zillow forecasts inventory to approach pre-pandemic levels by the end of the year.

Home value growth is at a standstill and mortgage costs have ticked down ever so slightly from a year ago. But high prices and borrowing costs are still putting up high affordability hurdles for buyers, especially first-timers.

Information

SouthEast Bank donates \$365K to higher ed

SouthEast Bank has donated \$365,000 to 11 higher education institutions in Middle and East Tennessee in 2025, part of the bank's \$25 million overall investment in education at all levels.

Through the SouthEast Bank (SEB) Scholars program, funds are given directly to colleges and universities to then be distributed to students who qualify for

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scholarships.

These schools include Bryan College, Cleveland State Community College, Fisk University, Johnson University, Lee University, Mississippi State Community College, Southern Adventist University, Tennessee Wesleyan University, University of Tennessee (UT) at Knoxville, UT at Chattanooga and Vanderbilt.

Historically, the bank's donations have exceeded \$25 million to support primary, secondary and post-secondary education, including the SEB Scholars program, and have evolved in direct response to changing needs in the region. Recently, a scholarship program was added for students applying for graduate-level nursing and education to address the demand for nurses and teachers in Tennessee.

Any student seeking more information about the SouthEast Bank Scholars program or other financial assistance, should check with the school's financial aid office.

TreisD ups manufacturing operations in Knox Co.

3D image capture, display and printing company TreisD Corporation has announced plans to open its manufacturing operations in Knox County.

TreisD's core technology creates digital replication of the human visual system using proprietary software and imaging algorithms, micro-optics and a growing 3D image library.

"Developing our expansive library of 3D images has dramatically increased our research-and-development delivery of 3D visuals in several fields, including our new micro-optical material," says Sam Pol, executive vice president of technology for TreisD. "Launching our manufacturing facility is the next step in bringing the value of this highly researched and multi-patented innovation to market."

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For example, commemorative entertainment and event tickets can be printed with 3D imaging to include irreplicable image features for authentic branding and anti-counterfeiting products.

The optical polymer material used for this technology will be produced at TreisD's manufacturing facility, which will be located at Eastbridge Business Park in Mascot, in the northeast sector of Knox County.

TWRA, ABR reach partnership agreement

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) and the Appalachian Bear Rescue (ABR) have reached a new partnership agreement for black bear rehabilitation in Tennessee.

During the course of 2023 and 2024, the presence of pneumonia raised initial concerns about the health of bears being housed at ABR. After a difficult decision in December 2024 to euthanize 13 bears, the agency temporarily paused the placement of bears at the facility.

In the months that followed, TWRA staff sought input from bear managers, wildlife veterinarians and disease pathologists in other states on best management practices and pen sanitation measures such as discing, burns, and leaving pens empty on an annual rotational schedule. ABR staff immediately started working to implement extensive modifications and upgrades to the facility to align with the recommendations of these professionals.

TWRA leadership also began working with ABR to draft an official operating agreement to strengthen the relationship between the two entities, set clear expectations for best management practices for bear rehabilitation, and provide transparency to members of the public invested in wildlife conservation.

The final agreement was approved by the ABR board of directors July 7 and publicly signed by both parties July 21.

3D-printed capsules endure nuclear testing

The Oak Ridge National Laboratory set a new milestone in nuclear component innovation, successfully testing two 3D-printed stainless steel experimental capsules at the lab's High Flux Isotope Reactor, or HFIR.

This achievement marks an important step in demonstrating that additively manufactured components can meet the rigorous safety standards required in nuclear applications.

These capsules are used to hold sample materials during irradiation experiments, allowing researchers to test how those materials might respond in a nuclear reactor. The capsule provides a pressure and containment barrier for the experiment, which is a critical safety feature.

An ORNL team used a laser powder-bed system at the lab's Manufacturing Demonstration Facility, or MDF, to 3D print the 316H stainless steel capsules. This type of steel is being evaluated because it offers high-temperature strength, corrosion and radiation resistance, proven nuclear-grade performance and weldability needed for safe, durable use in reactor environments.

The team then assembled and qualified the capsules to be inserted into HFIR by ORNL's Irradiation Engineering group. The capsules underwent a monthlong irradiation in the reactor and were removed fully intact. This demonstration sets the stage for future nuclear component designs to be produced using additive manufacturing.

HFIR provides one of the world's highest neutron flux environments, allowing researchers to test and qualify fuels and materials under conditions such as a nuclear reactor. Fabricating and qualifying experimental capsules to irradiate fuel and material samples is a costly and time-consuming process, demanding custom materials and designs.

Additive manufacturing, or 3D printing, could streamline the development of experimental capsules, significantly reducing the cost and time associated with producing these components, ultimately driving greater innovation in nuclear science and technology.

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Tech firm TreisD sets HQ at UT Research Park

TreisD, a high-tech company preparing to open a manufacturing facility in East Knox County, will base its headquarters at the University of Tennessee Research Park at Cherokee Farm. The new office is in the Innovation South building, less than 30 minutes from the Mascot facility slated to open later this year.

The company and Cherokee Farm Development Corp. have launched a feasibility study using TreisD's 3D AI imaging technology to better visualize and predict sinkholes, a costly problem in East Tennessee and across the U.S. The study aims to create true-to-scale, human-vision 3D images of underground anomalies, advancing beyond LIDAR and ground-penetrating radar.

TreisD also is partnering with UT's College of Emerging and Collaborative Studies, leading a student capstone course on 3D imaging. The summer class introduced students to analog and digital technology, including the 1980s Nimslo 3D camera designed by company founder Leslie "Jerry" Nims. Students produced 3D images with help from Knoxville's f/32 Photo lab.

John Brandon, TreisD CEO and

former Apple executive, says UT's highly ranked polymer science program also influenced the company's decision to locate in Knoxville. TreisD will manufacture optical polymer materials at its Eastbridge Business Park site.

"Bringing new AI-based analysis to prevent the costly problem of sinkholes could help address a major issue for our community," Malone says.



Biz

Georgia-based 3D imaging company [TreisD](#) is *picturing a future* in Knoxville. The startup will **open its headquarters** at UT's Research Park at Cherokee Farm, a site that will be near its upcoming manufacturing plant in Mascot. The location will allow the company to teach a capstone course with UT. (*Knox News*)