



## **GrassRoots Biotechnology is on the move** Venable Center readies to welcome its newest tenant

*June 8, 2009, Durham, NC-* GrassRoots Biotechnology is expanding its business with a move to the Scientific Properties owned Venable Center in downtown Durham. GrassRoots Biotechnology will be occupying the entire second floor in the Dibrell A Warehouse, which is easily accessed from the Durham Freeway and within walking distance to the Durham Performing Arts Center, the Durham Bulls Stadium, and restaurants in downtown Durham.

"We are excited to have GrassRoots at Venable," says Tucker Bartlett, Chief Operating Officer at Scientific Properties. "Their commitment to the environment through crop solutions fits with Scientific Properties' sustainable operating practices. This, coupled with our company's lab background, made working with GrassRoots a natural fit."

GrassRoots Biotechnology will be moving out of their current sublease space in Research Triangle Park to downtown Durham's Venable Center in late fall 2009. Its new lab and office space at Venable will allow Grassroots to grow to an anticipated 25 employees.

"We feel that the Venable Center will be a very good fit for us," comments Douglas Eisner, co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of GrassRoots Biotechnology, Inc. "We like the open floor plan of the space and its location right off 147, which is easily accessible from anywhere in the Triangle. It will be exciting to be part of the development of downtown Durham."

The addition of GrassRoots Biotechnology helps complement the diverse mix of tenants housed at the new Venable Center campus, a historic rehabilitation of the former Venable Tobacco Company buildings. Scientific Properties completed renovation to this historic landmark in 2008. Current tenants include the City of Durham's Office of Economic Development, Hutson Law, Chicago Title Insurance, the Corporation for Enterprise Development, Niemann Capital, The Independent Weekly, and Somerhill Gallery.

### **About GrassRoots**

GrassRoots Biotechnology, Inc. was co-founded by Dr. Philip Benfey, the Director of Duke's Center for Systems Biology, and Doug Eisner, JD, MBA to advance and commercialize technologies developed by Dr. Benfey in his laboratory at Duke University. Dr. Tedd Elich, Director of Research, is leading GrassRoots' two research programs: 1) GrassRoots' Energy Program aimed at creating next generation biofuel feedstocks with greater yield, more accessible cellulose, and increased carbon sequestration, and 2) GrassRoots' Agricultural Program focused on the discovery of genes and gene promoters that produce higher yielding crops better able to withstand environmental stresses, like drought and nitrogen deficiency.

GrassRoots has two core technologies: The RootArray makes it possible to monitor gene expression within developing plant roots, thus providing new insight into the mechanism of the genetic control of plant development. The Root Architecture Analysis platform utilizes advanced analysis tools to image and characterize the structure and branching patterns of roots grown in a clear gellan gum substrates. This analysis will enable GrassRoots to breed plants with enhanced root systems.

### **About Scientific Properties**

Scientific Properties, based in Durham, North Carolina, is a real estate development firm that specializes in significant urban mixed-use, new construction and historic adaptive re-use projects and undertakes development projects that recognize and address community needs and aspirations. The firm's current development portfolio encompasses over two million square feet of mixed-use, office, residential, retail, restaurant, entertainment, and laboratory/R&D space.

For more information about Venable Center, visit [www.venablecenter.com](http://www.venablecenter.com) or contact Marketing Director Allison Polish by e-mail at [allison.polish@scientificproperties.com](mailto:allison.polish@scientificproperties.com) or by phone at 919-967-7700 x155.