

St. Louis Business Journal

Wednesday, May 12, 2010, 2:35pm CDT | Modified: Thursday, May 13, 2010, 8:16am

Phycal to open algae lab at Danforth's BRDG Park

St. Louis Business Journal - by [Kelsey Volkmann](#)

Phycal LLC has leased 2,800 square feet for an algae biotechnology laboratory at the **BioResearch and Development Growth Park** (BRDG) at the **Danforth Plant Science Center**.

Phycal, led by President and CEO Kevin Berner, researches the development of a production system for growing algae and extracting energy product, primarily algal oil. This oil can be converted into biodiesel, green replacements for diesel and jet fuel.

"Although algal biofuels are still in the early stages of development, they hold great potential as an economic, secure and sustainable alternative to petroleum based liquid fuels," Berner said in a statement Wednesday.

Phycal, which is based in Cleveland and is building a pilot farm in Hawaii, said it chose BRDG Park because of its proximity to the Danforth Plant Science Center, the world's largest independent plant science research institute.

Phycal's BRDG Park location is just a few steps away from Dr. Richard Sayre, **director** of the **Enterprise Rent-A-Car Institute for Renewable Fuels** at the Danforth Plant Science Center. The Taylor family **gave \$25 million** to establish the institute in 2007. It previously leased space from the Danforth.

Phycal, which has 33 employees, started with funding from parent company **Logos Energy Inc.** To date, it raised \$5 million in risk capital from Logos Energy and other private equity, as well as an additional \$7 million in government contracts. This includes \$3 million from the Department of Energy's National Energy and Technology Lab for the design and permitting of its pilot farm in Hawaii.

Thanks to Sayre, the Enterprise Center, the Danforth Center and Phycal, St. Louis is emerging as a **hotbed for algae fuel research**.

The Enterprise Rent-A-Car Institute for Renewable Fuels will host a program, "Algae to Biofuel: A Practical Solution to Energy," on May 24, from 9:30 until 11:00 a.m., at the Danforth Plant Science Center. In addition to Sayre, the speakers will be Jose Olivares, executive director of the **National Alliance for Advanced Biofuels and Bio-Products**, and Himadri Pakrasi, director of the **International Center for Advanced Renewable Energy** and Sustainability at **Washington University**.

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