



# KEITH PAULEY

## MATRIC • South Charleston

# Pauley, MATRIC Work to Improve W.Va.

By **BETH GORCZYCA RYAN**

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**SOUTH CHARLESTON** – It doesn't require rocket science to figure out West Virginia's economy could be much better than it is.

But it is taking a rocket scientist to help shift the economy and create jobs.

In April 2004, **Keith Pauley** took over the helm of a fledgling non-profit research and development corporation that was trying to capitalize on the Kanawha Valley's history as a chemical and technology research center to develop new projects and jobs. The corporation was called **MATRIC**, an acronym for the **Mid-Atlantic Technology and Research Innovation Center**.

Pauley thought the center may just work. It was designed using the same blueprint as North Carolina's Research Triangle. The valley also had a wealth of retired and downsized scientists whose knowledge, experiences and reputation for inventing things from anti-freeze to aspirin had changed people's lives.

Now just two and a half years later, Pauley and the center he came home to lead appear to be making a difference — one job at a time.

"I was MATRIC's first employee. I had a little office in (Charleston's old **Business and Industrial Development Corporation's**) building on Smith Street," Pauley recalled. "It was just me. Now we have more than 50 employees — 20 of whom have PhDs — and \$7 million in contracts for research."

MATRIC also no longer just focuses on the Kanawha Valley. It has offices in Morgantown, Fairmont and Huntington and is under contract to do private research and development for a number of different companies from around the world.

The growth and success of MATRIC is why Pauley is being recognized as one of the Who's Who in West Virginia Business for 2006.

"In a short period of time they have built a statewide organization with a physical presence throughout the state's geographic area. It has retained many graduate level scientists and engineers who without MATRIC may

have left the state for other opportunities," said **Bill Goode**, president and CEO of the Charleston Area Alliance, which replaced BIDCO. Goode was one of two people who nominated Pauley for the Who's Who recognition.

Goode said a lot of MATRIC's success relates to the people Pauley has been able to attract and hire on at the center.

Those people include **Parvez Wadia**, MATRIC's vice president and chief technology officer, who has a PhD from the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, and had a 30-year-career at **Union Carbide** and **Dow Chemical**; and **Jane Copley**, MATRIC's chief financial officer.

Goode said prior to joining MATRIC, Copley worked for 30 years with the non-profit educational research entity, **AEL Inc**, which is now **Edvantia**. Goode said MATRIC's vice president for engineering, **Mark Delhin**, worked for **DSD Laboratories** as a software reuse engineer and the **West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation**. The center's vice president for chemical technologies, **Duane Dombek**, worked for Union Carbide for more than 25 years and has 10 patents.

"I feel very blessed," said Pauley. "I get to work with some of the most amazing people — people who are considered top-notch in their fields in the world."

Pauley is right there with them. A native of St. Albans, Pauley moved to Oregon ten days after graduating from **St. Albans High School** in 1983. He attended **Oregon State University**, where he received his bachelor's and master's degrees in nuclear engineering. Earlier this year, the university's Department of Engineering awarded him the "Oregon Stater Award for Outstanding Early Career."

Following graduation, he worked for a time at **Battelle Memorial Institute's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory**. Battelle is the nation's largest non-profit research organization. Much of the group's research focuses on energy, defense and environmental science.

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BETH GORCZYCA RYAN / The State Journal

Since taking over the helm of the Mid-Atlantic Technology and Research Innovation Center in 2004, Keith Pauley has seen the non-profit research and development corporation grow from one employee to more than 50. The center also has received more than \$7 million in research contracts. The research is done in labs like this one at the South Charleston Research Park.

The Board of Directors of the  
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# Congratulations

## Keith Pauley

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**Charleston Area Alliance**  
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Much of Pauley's work while there focused on the United States' space-based missile defense plan, also known as the STAR WARS program.

"It was a very real program," he said. "I think it would have worked had we done it. But it was a huge question of expense."

Pauley left Battelle in 1997 to take a job with a prime contractor for the Johnson Space Center in Houston. There, he was responsible for a half a billion-dollar program that redesigned the cockpit of the space shuttle.

"The shuttles still had 1975 computer systems in them. Well there is a big difference between a 1975 computer and a computer now," Pauley said.

While working in Houston, Pauley got to work closely with astronauts who would depend on those computer systems to take them into space and bring them home again.

"I knew all of the astronauts by name," he said. "We would have them over to the house for dinner."

Pauley, his wife Amy and their four children moved back to West Virginia in 2002 after he landed a job with Titan Corp., a company that does work with NASA's Independent Verification and Validation Center in Fairmont. The IV&V Center researches, tests and validates software NASA uses in its shuttles, rockets and space vehicles.

Two years after moving back to West Virginia, Pauley landed the job with MATRIC.

MATRIC does research in three areas — chemical and environmental technology, health and lifesciences and advanced engineering. Instead of just barely filling one small office in the BIDCO building, MATRIC now fills much of the second



Photo courtesy of Keith Pauley

**Keith Pauley sits in the cockpit of the space shuttle. Several years before taking over the helm of MATRIC, Pauley worked for a NASA contractor at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. While in that position, he was responsible for redesigning the shuttle's cockpit.**

floor of building 701 in the South Charleston Technology Park.

"We have 12 labs now," Pauley said as he sat in his office overlooking Interstate 64 and South Charleston with the Capitol City in the background. "And it's all grown in 30 months."

A lot of the center's growth is related to research contracts they've won.

Researchers at the center went to Australia in May to help a pharmaceutical company redesign one of its manufacturing plants. An explosion occurred at the plant, and the company wanted to update its design, install safer technol-

ogies and make things more efficient. By August, the plant was up and running safer than ever, Pauley said.

Researchers also went to Pittsburgh to help a chemical company upgrade and redesign a chemical process that hadn't been updated since the 1960s. They also worked locally with Charleston Area Medical Center to develop a "SmartCard" — which is like a credit card that contains a patient's medical information and partial history.

"That's something that can help first-responders in an emergency," Pauley said. "They can swipe the card and

know what the person's blood type is, who their insurance carrier is."

MATRIC researchers and scientists also work with NASA and the IV&V Center. They've worked with the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy to develop unmanned air vehicles, too.

He said one of the reasons why MATRIC has been able to land so many unique and exciting contracts is because the reputation the region has globally for scientific research and development. At one point in time, the Kanawha valley had more PhDs per capita than anywhere else in the country. The hard work of those scientists established the reputation MATRIC is now using and building on.

Not long ago, MATRIC wanted to hire a man who recently received his PhD. The man is originally from India and had job offers from companies back home in India, as well as companies in England, France, Australia and the United States.

"We were the only U.S. job offer he considered," Pauley said. "And in the end, he selected us. That proves it truly is a global market for talent. And he picked us because of the kind of work we do and the level of research we are involved in. And that's the point we have to remember — MATRIC is only going to be able to grow based on our ability to attract the best."

And so far, they are doing it. From wooing old scientists and engineers back from retirement to attracting the brightest young stars in the industry, MATRIC and Pauley change the state and create jobs.

And for Pauley, that is a dream come true.

"I am the seventh generation in West Virginia," he said. My ancestors have been here since the 1700s," he said. "This is where we belong."

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**Special congratulations to BUCK HARLESS for his lifetime of outstanding business leadership and community involvement!**

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