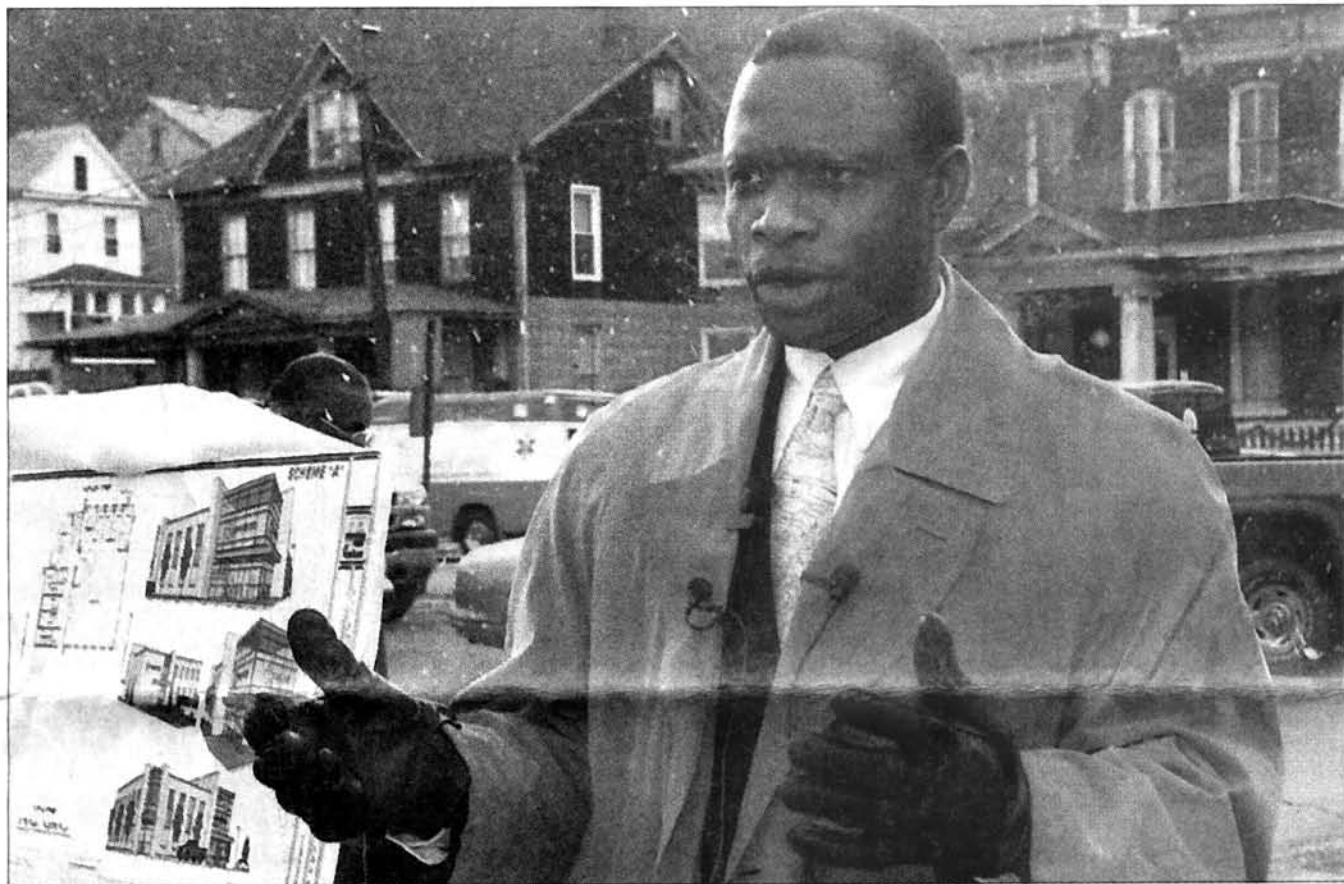


A 'major step'



CLYDE WILLIAMS/FOR THE TRIBUNE DEMOCRAT

Richard Somiari, president and CEO, speaks Tuesday during the groundbreaking for the ITSI-Biosciences Science and Technology Innovation Center at 633 Napoleon St. in Johnstown's Kernville neighborhood.

Ground broken for research facility

BY SHAWN PIATEK
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A ceremonial step forward in the redevelopment of Johnstown's Kernville neighborhood was taken Tuesday with the groundbreaking for a bioscience research facility.

Construction is expected to begin in March on the ITSI-Biosciences Science and Technology Innovation Center, 633 Napoleon St.

Richard Somiari, president and CEO, hopes to relocate the business no later than July from its current home in Richland Township.

"It's very exciting," Somiari said. "It's been about two years in the making.

"Each time I traveled and explored the opportunities for this business, I kept coming back here."

And, in a release from Harrisburg, Gov. Ed Rendell said the expansion will

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**RICHARD SOMIARI,
ITSI-BIOSCIENCES**

receive a \$500,000 state investment.

Rendell said the investment is positive news not only for Johnstown, but for Pennsylvania's growing biomedical industry and patients around the globe.

"Johnstown is taking another major step towards rebuilding its economy and strengthening its presence in the

life-sciences sector," Rendell said. "This field is one of the most rapidly advancing areas in the world today, and we're committed to ensuring that Pennsylvania is playing a leading role in that development."

ITSI-Biosciences' 12,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art building will house a dedicated clean room and a proteomics lab that will allow the company to conduct large-scale protein studies.

The nearly \$1.8 million ITSI building also will accelerate research-and-development activities and increase bioanalytical kit manufacturing capacity to streamline specimen testing.

Somiari and ITSI-Biosciences were wooed by a number of factions to relocate out of the region.

Please see **FACILITY, C3**