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# Companies unite in Syracuse to develop brighter LED lights

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By Dave Tobin / The Post-Standard

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Syracuse, NY -- Syracuse's newest high-tech venture will manufacture improved lighting.

Thursday, a partnership of two small engineering companies and a Canadian LED (light emitting diode) light manufacturer announced a collaboration to design, manufacture and sell brighter, more energy-efficient LED lamps.

Executives with Ephesus Technologies LLC, Group4 Labs Inc. and ProTerra LED say the venture will bring dozens of jobs and millions of dollars of investment to Central New York.

In the past year, each company, less than 10 years old, independently established a Syracuse presence. Later, they found they could each contribute something to this lighting venture.

Low-output LED lights are widely used in such things as Christmas lights to solar-powered garden lights. The partnership's lights will be much different, said John Johnston, the CEO of ProTerra, which is based in Toronto. They are high output – the equivalent of 1,000-watt incandescent bulbs in brightness — and use very little energy.

In these new lamps, high-output LED bulbs will be made by Group4 Labs, using nanotechnology.

Nanotechnology is the science of manipulating matter at the atomic level to create materials that are often stronger and lighter, among other qualities.

Group4 Labs is based in Fremont, Calif., and is establishing offices in Albany and in Salina. Joseph Smart, a native of Auburn, is heading Group4 Labs' New York division.

Group4 Labs is using facilities at the University of Albany's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and will be using the nanotechnology center at the former General Electric Co. electronics laboratory, in Salina..

Using nanotechnology, Ephesus has developed a small, high-efficient cooling mechanism that will be part of this LED lighting system and allow for more light output from smaller lighting units.

Joe Casper, CEO and president of Ephesus, said the first market for the new LED lighting will be

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big commercial and institutional facilities: stores, schools and public utilities.

"The LED lighting market is huge," said Casper. "It's probably bigger than what we're thinking."

In the winter, ProTerra established an office at the Syracuse Technology Garden. At the time, its primary goal was to have a U.S. marketing location.

Johnston met Casper at the Tech Garden, where Ephesus is located. Casper pitched Ephesus' "thermo-electric cooler" as a component in ProTerra's light, and helped bring in Group4, which made high-output LED bulbs.

"We have to find existing markets where we can insert nanotechnology," said Casper.

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