

## Australian company sets down roots in Edenton

By Miles Layton

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Ross Naddei, founder and CEO of MegaPulse Australia joined representatives of Edenton and Chowan County, the NC East Alliance and Sound Bank to announce on Friday his decision to locate the company's North American operations in a business incubator on the 2nd floor of the bank in downtown Edenton.

"This is a fantastic partnership – ideal for us – we're really thrilled to be here," said Naddei.

MegaPulse, a company based in Australia that manufactures a device that enables lead batteries to last longer rather than going to the landfill, wants to expand into the North American market.

"With the assistance of the NC East team and their county allies, MegaPulse saved 12 to 18 months on its start up in the United States," Naddei said. "Initially, we contemplated going to Chicago, Atlanta, or Charlotte, but that would have been a mistake."

John Chaffee, president and CEO of NC East, said it was important to connect the dots so as to attract this company to the region.

"It took multiple organizations to offer the company what they needed," Chaffee said. "But Eastern Carolina Vocational Center agreed to warehouse and ship their product when orders came in. It allows the company to operate virtually until their sales reach the point they can build their own facility in eastern North Carolina. MegaPulse benefited from the networks Vann Rogerson (NC East) and I have established over the years."

Colony Tire became their initial marketer/distributor to get their product out to outlets in five states.

"We have enjoyed working with Ross and Natasha (Naddei's daughter) with MegaPulse. They have a wonderful and valuable product and we look forward to continuing our relationship as a user and as a distributor of their product," said Colony Tire CEO and owner Charlie Creighton.

Edenton Mayor and NC East Board member Roland Vaughan welcomed Naddei and his company during Friday's announcement ceremony.

"Having an innovative product development company choose to locate in our region is very exciting. Thanks to all the hard work done by our NC East team to land MegaPulse and we pledge to Ross Naddei and his team our ongoing support as he grows his customer base in the U.S.," he said.

Naddei said NC East's connections to Vidant, Bayliss Boats, Barnhill Construction and other companies in the region as well as individual cities/counties has allowed MegaPulse to have their product tested and validated by third party users. Now they can use these testimonials as they market their product across the U.S. and beyond, he said.

"Bottom line – if they had gone to a big city, they would have been just another small company asking for favors – we recognized their high-growth potential and made the decision to recruit them to eastern NC. It worked," Chaffee said.

MegaPulse is a good fit for eastern North Carolina.

"Yes, their size means they could go almost anywhere – a matter of where they wanted to be that had the right characteristics to get started," Chaffee said. "Their patents on an innovative product means they have a protected market with a clean-tech product that will appeal to many different users, and their cultural mentality is a good fit as well. They like the response they've received from all the people they've met in our region – I think they feel comfortable."

North Carolina and Australia have a lot in common.

"Our geography is a good fit as well," Chaffee said. "They live on the east coast of Australia near the water. Part of that continent that is even warmer than our region. I think they enjoy being near the water."

NC East Board Chairman, Mark Hamblin added, "MegaPulse is an excellent example of a good fit for many small towns across eastern North Carolina – small, privately-held, technology-driven 'gazelles' that start small but have huge growth potential. We wish them great success."

Mallory Denham, executive director of the Edenton Chowan Partnership, said MegaPulse has a lot to offer.

"One of the Edenton Chowan Partnership's purposes is to bring quality, economic opportunities to this area. MegaPulse is an environmentally friendly company, which produces a product that will help prolong the productive life of a lead based battery. It is a well-managed company which will enhance our manufacturing base, giving this area global recognition, while providing excellent employment opportunities to our citizens," he said.



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Edenton Mayor Roland Vaughan (left) and Mallory Denham, Edenton-Chowan Partnership Director, welcomes Ross Naddei and his daughter Natasha to eastern North Carolina.

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