



Paul Phipps (left), president of Comfort Motion Technologies, explains his company's vehicle seat multi-position software technology to Keith Trent of Community Hospital during an open house at the Flagship Enterprise Center on Thursday.

THB photo / Don Knight

# Flagship open house attracts large crowd, local celebrities

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**W**hen Paul Phipps started working with The Flagship, there was no building for the economic development hub.

Currently, The Flagship works with 51 clients and is one of the exemplary models of what a technology park should be, said Rep. Terri Austin, D-36, at the Flagship Open House on Thursday afternoon.

Austin presented Chuck Staley, president and CEO of the Flagship, with a

recertification during a multi-faceted ceremony. More than 100 people, including Mayor Kevin Smith, U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, R-Indiana, and state Rep. Tim Lanane, R-25, attended the event.

"We've had no better ally in Washington than Congressman Pence," Staley said at the ceremony.

Pence also officially recognized The Flagship as a qualifier for the Excellence in Community and Faith-Based Social Entrepreneurship award from the United States Department of Com-

merce.

"I'm very proud of The Flagship and all you who are involved here," Pence said. "I'm overwhelmed by what's happening here."

The open house was in conjunction with a ribbon-cutting for Great Deals Magazine, one of the largest couponing publishers in the Midwest.

"This is probably my last ribbon-cutting here," Smith said to the crowd.

Smith reflected on how well The Flagship has done during his tenure in office.

"It was a great collabora-

tive effort," he said.

For businesses such as Comfort Motion Technologies, The Flagship has been a major player in creating new businesses in Madison County.

Comfort Motion Technologies develops software to redistribute a driver's weight in a car to help with back problems created from time in the car, Phipps said.

"(Starting the business) could have been done without The Flagship," Phipps said. "But The Flagship has made it so much easier."

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