A first stone with a great potential …

The strategic importance of this event is obvious simply by looking at the number of personalities from the political, economic and scientific worlds who attended laying the first stone on Georges Charpak site in Gardanne on January 30, 2006.

This training and research centre is officially named the "Georges Charpak Provence Microelectronics Centre (CMP GC) of the Saint-Etienne Higher National Ecole des Mines (ENSM.SE)" and has very ambitious objectives perfectly symbolized by the first stone composed of a chip and a piece of coal.

> Be ready for the revolution…

The contribution of microelectronics to the world GNP is increasingly important. Doping innovation in this sector has become a major objective, particularly for Provence that accounts for 35% of French production of semiconductors through leading enterprises such as Gemplus, ST-Microélectronics, Atmel, small and medium sized companies and enterprises without forgetting public education and research institutions, etc.

The location of this site dedicated to electronics in Gardanne satisfies the ambitions of the school and local players; to set up foundations to develop further education adapted to the needs of companies specialised in microelectronics.

> … Pioneers of microelectronics …

The school is quite naturally consistent with the aims of the SCS (Secure Communication Solutions) competitiveness cluster. It also forms the liaison with systems existing in other regions like the Minatech innovation cluster in Grenoble dedicated to the development of basic techniques in microelectronics and set up at the initiative of the CEA-LETI (Electronics, Technology and Instrumentation Laboratory).

It is set up to develop three complementary themes:
- To train future executives in microelectronics, to satisfy industrial requirements
- To set up a research system, in cooperation with the university and industrial world; the centre will accommodate the Micro-PackS platform of the PACA CIM research centre, for this purpose.
- To be the incubator of the young companies of tomorrow.

> … With troops in battle order!

The Georges Charpak CMP will eventually employ 130 permanent staff (teachers, research workers, administration staff) and the same number of temporary staff. Its objective is to train 660 students (330 graduates per year).

At the moment, the temporary premises accommodate 47 persons (30 research workers), 284 students (142 graduates) and 23 PhD students. ST-Microelectronics has created an industrial chair and a branch has been opened at Jiao Tang University in Shanghai (two-way exchanges between students and teachers). A large number of partnerships have been set up with economic players in the region (private manufacturers and institutions), local institutions (General Council, Regional Council) and also extra-regional institutions such as the CEA-LETI, in order to consolidate development of the school and participate in it.

A very VIP event…

Some of the personalities present that afternoon included:
- François Loos, Minister of Industry
- Jean-Noël Guérini, Senator, President of the Bouches-du-Rhône General Council
- Michel Vauzelle, President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region
- Maryse Joissains Masini, President of the Aix district community, Mayor of Aix-en-Provence, Member of Parliament for the Bouches du Rhône
- Roger Meï, Mayor of Gardanne
- Georges Charpak, Nobel Prize, member of the Science Academy
- François Gérin, President of the ENSM SE Board of Directors
- Robert Germinet, ENSM SE Director
- Claude Orphelin, President of the Old Students Association
- Pierre Laffitte, President of the SCS cluster
- Bernard Barbier, CEA-LETI Director