You might suspect the employees at ACES QC had watched one too many Star Trek episodes if you'd overheard a conversation about onboard sensors identifying a foreign vessel by analyzing its rocket plume signature. It is, however, the nature of their work.

The scientists at ACES QC are experts in developing computer software using computational quantum chemistry. The software can be customized for drug design, for example, to help narrow a field of molecular combinations to those worthy of synthesis and experimentation. Their focus is to write software that performs such calculations in the most efficient way.

ACES QC is one of the most recent emerging businesses to take up residence in the Technology Enterprise Center of Gainesville/Alachua County (GTEC). Founder and president of ACES QC, Rodney Bartlett, sees a positive future for the company.

"I think it's inevitable that more research will be done with computer applications as computers continue to become cheaper," said Bartlett.

ACES QC is a contract research company with the U.S. Government as its main client, although the company looks to broaden its client base.

"We can help you to develop new state-of-the-art approaches, which may provide a better solution to your problem or modify existing programs and get them to interface with each other. Then we can show you how to evaluate the results that you get from computational studies," added Bartlett.

Bartlett recognized the talented pool of students graduating from the Quantum Theory Project at the University of Florida, the largest research group of its type in the world. He wanted to offer them an opportunity to put their skills to work and currently employs five graduates in his workforce of nine.

"ACES QC is a fine example of a technology start-up that generates salaries well above the average in Gainesville," said Morris Windhorst, GTEC director. The feeling is mutual.

"The support the company is receiving from GTEC has helped us maintain high-tech capabilities to pursue the advancement of theory and maintain a front-runner industry position," said Bartlett.

"GTEC's incubator environment helps us learn how to better run a business and it's such a nice facility at a reasonable price."