

UI increases national reach with new Center for Hydrologic Development

The university will be partnering with the University of Alabama on the center.



Jerod Ringwald

Professor Ibrahim Damir performs a demonstration of a flood prediction during a press conference for the University of Iowa's new Center for Hydrologic development at the Iowa Flood Center in Iowa City on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023. The center aims to better the ability to predict floods and droughts.

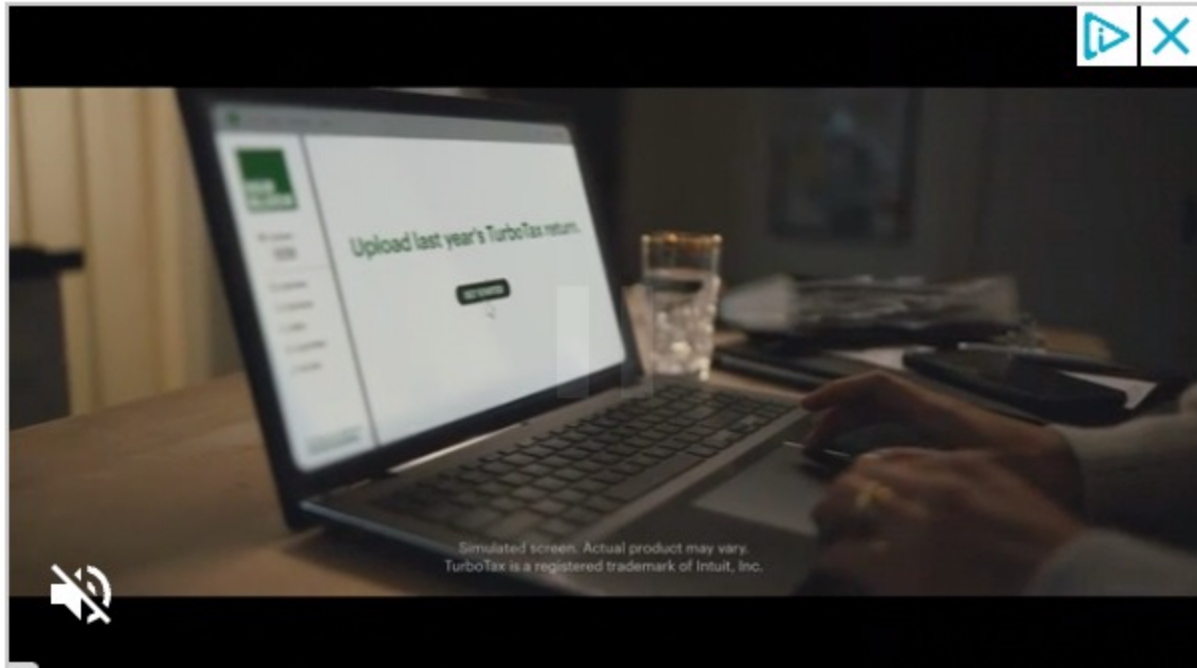
Jack Moore, News Reporter

February 1, 2023

The University of Iowa will work on a new Center for Hydrologic Development facility in partnership with the University of Alabama, the UI announced in a press conference on Wednesday.

The center will be housed at the Alabama Water Institute at the University of Alabama and will be designed to increase the country's ability to predict water hazards. It will also help graduate and postdoctoral students gain experience in hydrology and informatics research

The \$360 million Cooperative Institute for Research to Operations in Hydrology will fund the center. The institute is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and located at the University of Alabama.



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The UI is expected to receive up to \$21 million in the first five years.

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Some of the CIROH partners include Brigham Young University, the University of Arizona, the University of California San Diego, and the University of Minnesota.

The new center will supplement the Iowa Flood Center, which was founded in 2009 and focuses on flood-related research and education.

Witold Krajewski, professor of civil and environmental engineering and director of the Iowa Flood Center, commended the actions of the state legislature during the 2008 flood.

"It is thanks to the wisdom of the state leaders, legislators who established the Iowa Flood Center in 2009, following the 2008 flood. They established us, and then have been supporting us ever since, and during this period and with their support, we have done many things to benefit the people of Iowa" Krajewski said.

Krajewski said the Iowa Flood center has advanced flood detecting systems, which will aid the Center for Hydrologic Development going forward.

"We have developed major infrastructure here. This infrastructure includes a network of what we call bridge sensors that monitor water levels in streams and rivers," he said. "There is another network of what we call hydro-stations that monitor anything from rainfall to soil moisture, to even shallow groundwater resources. The data is useful not only for floods, but also for droughts."

Executive Director of CIROH and the Alabama Water Institute's Director of Science Steven Burian said he admired the Iowa Flood Center's leadership.

"Iowa Flood Center is strong in what they do, but also a leader in what's happening across the country so that could be leverage...that investment and that continued investment can be leveraged to support what we do," Burian said.

The Flood Center's work can be accessed by anyone with a computer and internet through the online Iowa Flood Information System.

Burian said it's crucial for the Iowa Flood Center to translate weather events happening around the country.

"The vision for it and the need for it has been there for a long time, and so we have a lot of strength to build. That's one of the things that we looked to the University of Iowa for a core area of strength related to information systems to hydrologic modeling to actually connecting to stakeholders and delivering useful forecasting products," Burian said.

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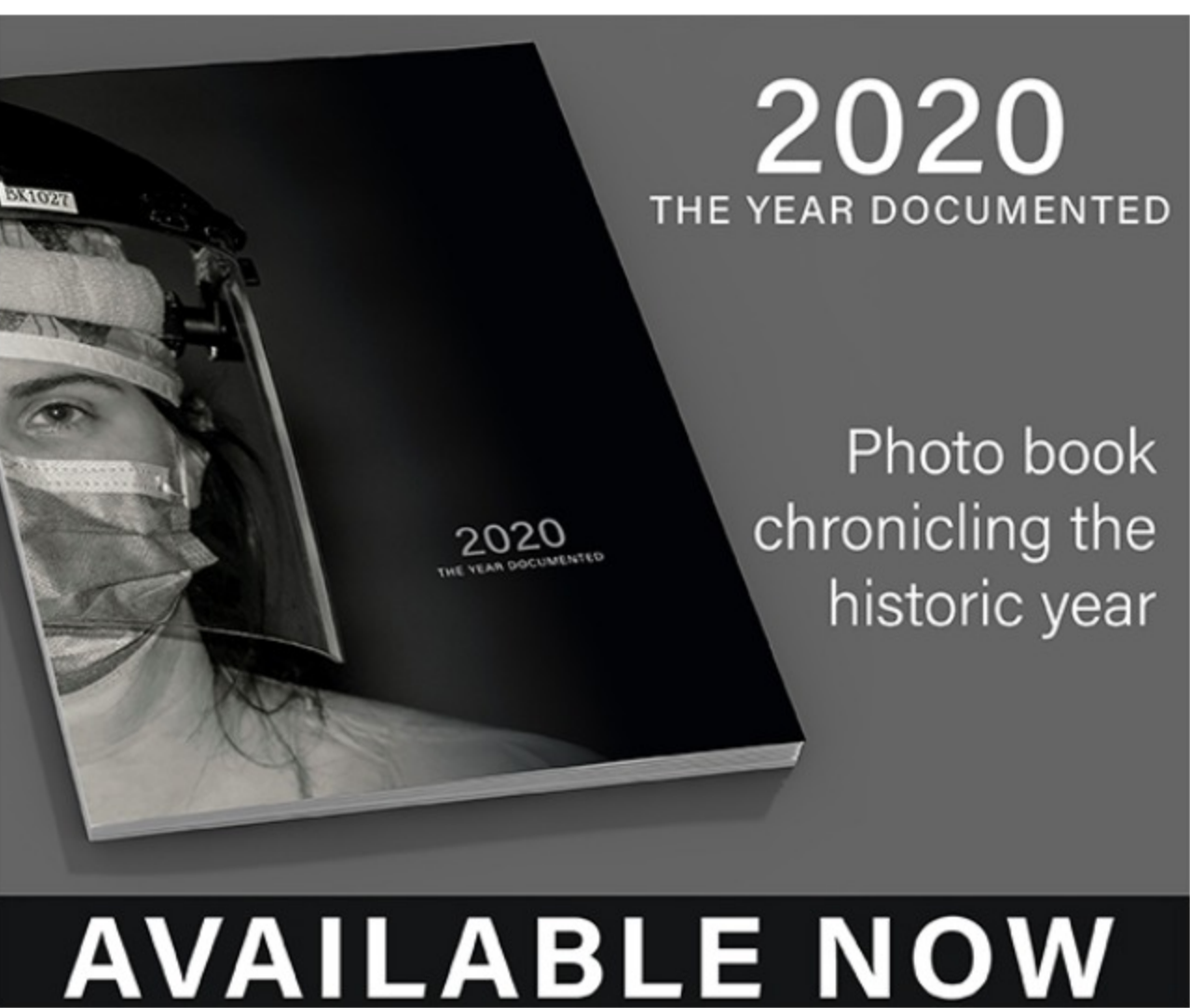
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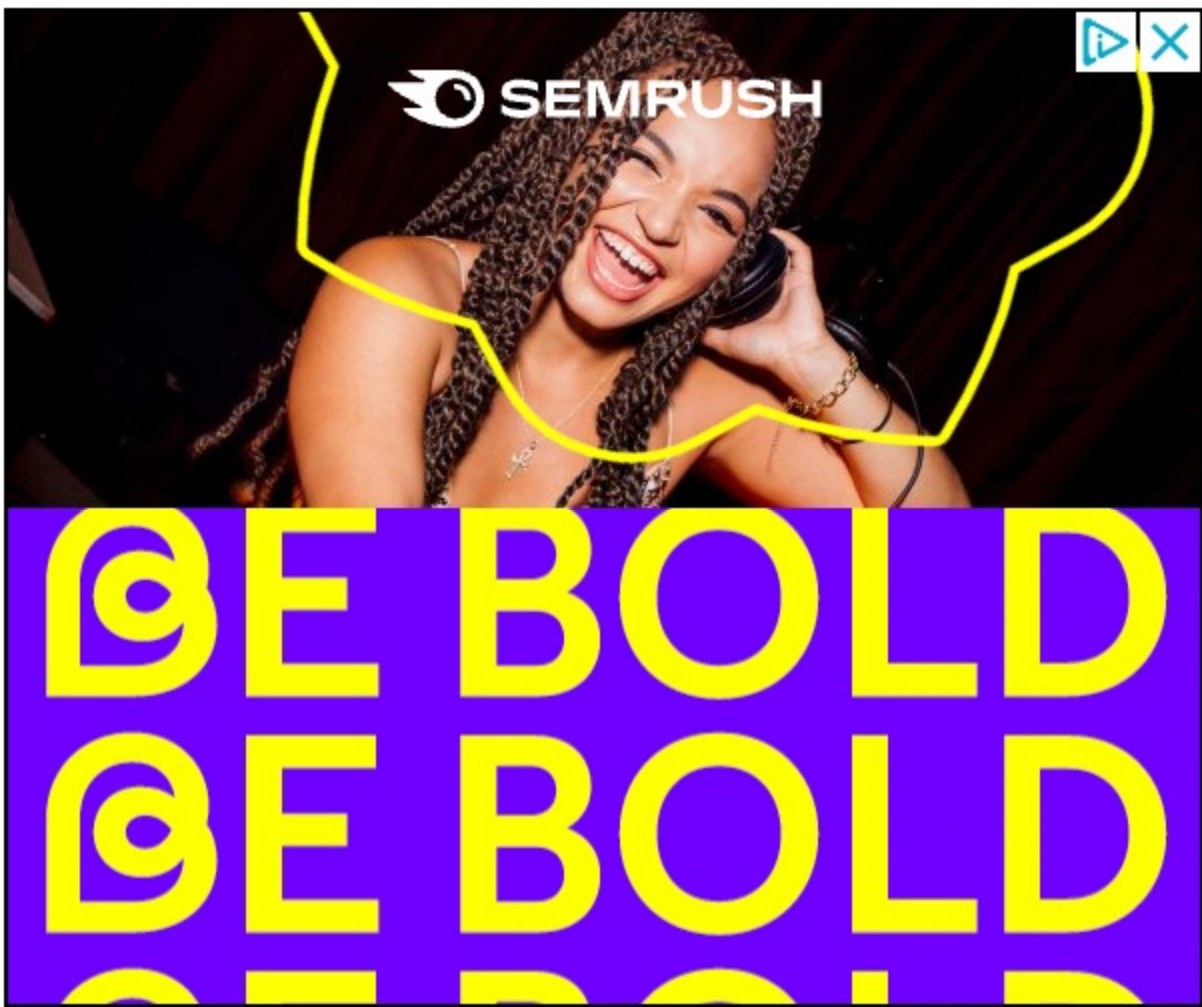
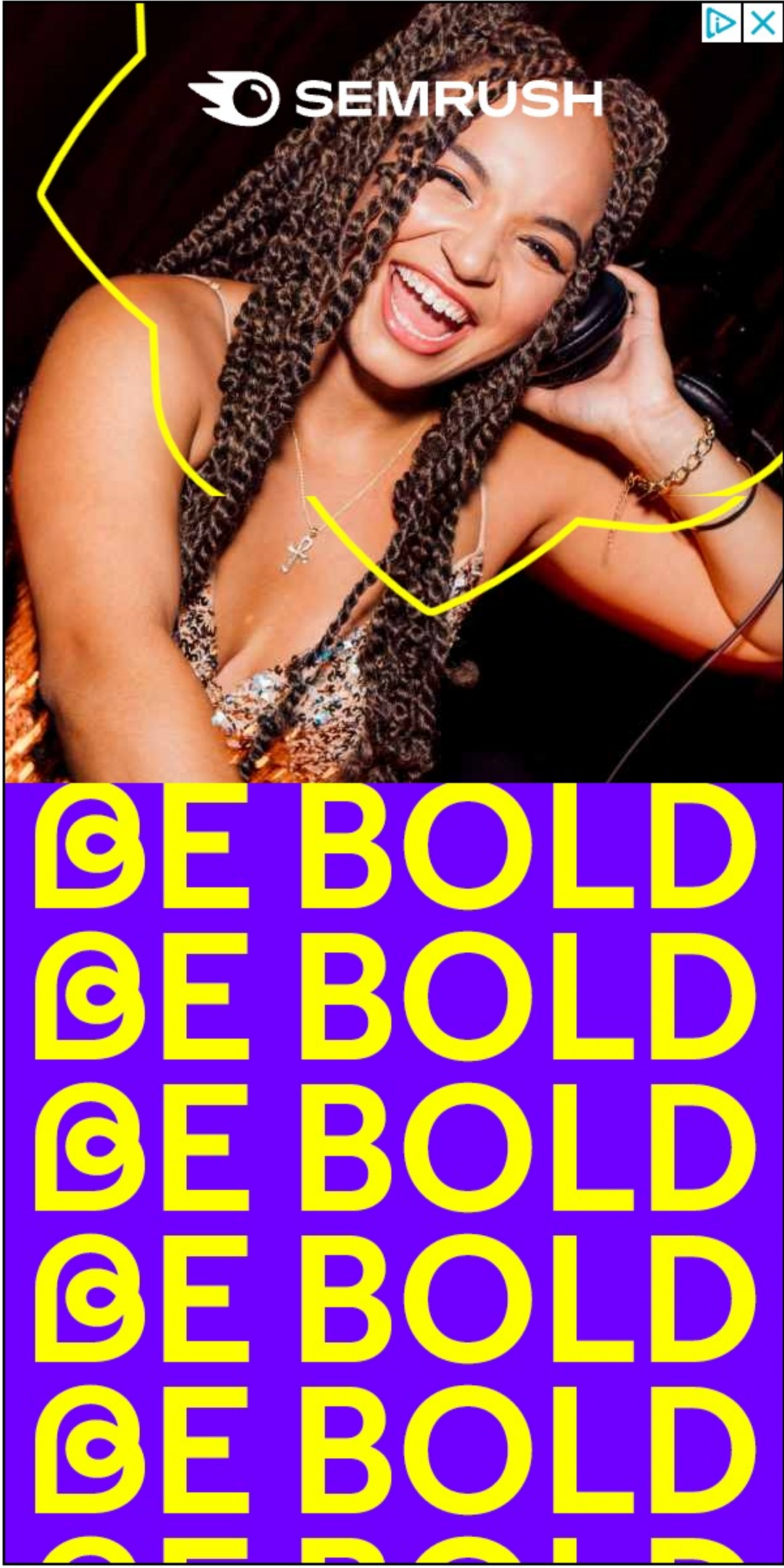
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