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Contact: Shawn Robinson

srobinson@udayton.edu

937-229-3391

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON JOINS STATE PARTNERSHIP TO HELP MANUFACTURERS BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO JOB GROWTH

DAYTON, Ohio — The University of Dayton Research Institute has received a \$412,000 Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership award for FastLane, a program aimed at creating regional jobs. The funding, which comes from the state of Ohio's Edison program, will be used to help regional manufacturers identify and solve problems that hinder growth.

"We want to put the region's manufacturers in the fast lane for growth solutions," said Larrell Walters, head of the sensor systems division that will lead the program.

To receive business or technical assistance through the program, companies can visit <http://www.fastlane-mep.org> and answer a series of questions. A representative will respond within 48 hours to set up an appointment to identify and discuss issues and challenges and establish the right processes to solve them. The Research Institute's Phil Ratermann, a former executive with Hobart, and Jessika Webb, sensor systems business manager, are working with the companies.

"The reception of client companies has been great, as we've just begun getting the word out regarding this program to area manufacturers," Ratermann said. "Their eagerness to collaborate with outside help and overcome their business challenges is only exceeded by the wide array of differing opportunities that these firms bring to us."

Walters, who is also director of the University of Dayton-led Institute for Development and Commercialization of Advanced Sensor Technology, said the state looked to the highly successful IDCAST as a model for assisting the region's manufacturing companies. IDCAST's business model brings together technology and innovations with industry, academia and federal labs to develop and integrate advanced sensor technologies in areas such as defense, homeland security and civil applications.

"We first funded IDCAST just six months ago. It has already helped 16 manufacturers with challenges like assembly issues and finding alternative materials," said Norm Chagnon of the Ohio Development Services Agency. "We expect big things for manufacturing in the region, with their help."

In its six years, IDCAST was instrumental in creating more than 300 new jobs and five startup companies in Ohio and in attracting seven additional sensors companies to the state. It garnered more than \$92 million in awards for research and awarded \$6.4 million for commercialization. In total, IDCAST has had a \$300 million impact on the state of Ohio.

"The extensive list of our collaborators in academia, industry and government continues to grow, allowing us to work without boundaries to solve our clients' needs," Webb said. "All of our partners

share the same vision of the importance of growth and are willing to work together to create new jobs in Ohio."

Since 2004, the Ohio MEP has worked to provide low-cost business and technical assistance to small- and medium-sized manufacturers.

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For more information or interviews, contact Shawn Robinson, University of Dayton associate director of media relations at 937-229-3391 or Katie Sabatino, Ohio Development Services Agency senior media strategist, at 614-466-6212.

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