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University of Dayton

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CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS WITH UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON CELEBRATED, FOSTERED WITH NEW WEB PRESENCE

DAYTON, Ohio — When NCR looks to recruit MBA students, the University of Dayton is one of a dozen universities they prefer to visit. When Delphi wants to send employees to engineering management courses, they are steered to online courses led by UD professors. When the Air Force needs to know in detail how aircraft ages, Wright-Patterson officials call the UD Research Institute.

And when YSI Inc. needed someone to help with a business plan, they also turned to the University of Dayton.

Over the years, UD has become a partner to large and small companies in the Miami Valley.

"The scope of the possibilities for partnering with institutions like the University of Dayton are wonderful," said Rosalie Catalano, vice president for stewardship and human development at YSI Inc., which is using a UD business professor as a consultant to develop a three-year business strategy, employs co-op students and turns to UDRI for research.

A comprehensive list of the University's 67 centers and departments, together with the services they can provide to the corporate community, is available on UD's Corporate Resource Connections Web site at www.corporaterelations.udayton.edu. A newsletter, distributed bimonthly via e-mail, will include news on projects with partners, new developments on campus, announcements and events. Those interested can sign up through the Web site.

"The interdisciplinary team approach that we emphasize in education carries over to serving the corporate community," said Shelley Outlaw, director of corporate relations at UD. "It's good business from a corporate perspective to work with us because it saves the companies money and they get exactly what they want.

"Many of these companies are international, and they can go anywhere for educational programs, for research, for services. They do exhaustive research to find the partners they need. And they've made the strategic decision to continue to work with us," Outlaw said.

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Many of the partnerships involve UD students. Corporate clients with tricky engineering challenges to solve can sign up with the Manufacturing Design Clinic, and teams of students will spend a semester analyzing, researching and developing solutions. Companies in need of long-term management strategy reviews can acquire the focused assistance of teams of high-level MBA students in a capstone course.

Undergraduate students in the management and information systems department designed a user-friendly Web site for Dayton Public Schools.

Other partnerships involve academics in another sense. The Center for Competitive Change works with manufacturers to develop best practices in lean manufacturing reliability, product development, administrative Kaizen and creating visual workplaces, either on-site or in seminar sessions. International business executives looking to strengthen their English skills take part in certification and immersion programs run by UD's English Language and Multicultural Institute.

The Center for Leadership and Executive Development is essentially a “shared corporate university.” Top Miami Valley executives from partners such as Mead and Fifth Third Bank determine their executive development needs and band together to bring nationally known educators to the Miami Valley for seminar sessions, all coordinated through the center.

Some projects are tightly focused. The Center For Business and Economic Research’s Miami Valley economic forecast is sponsored by National City Bank. Businesses needing to develop or document that their Web sites are accessible by people with disabilities can work with UDRI’s human factors group.

NCR and UD researcher Ken Graetz are collaborating on a virtual team project, designed to investigate how employees in different locations can work together to achieve common goals and how managers of such far-flung teams can help them excel. The global nature of NCR’s operations demands such a capacity, and the set-up is perfect for research by Graetz, director of UD's Collaboratory and associate professor of psychology who specializes in how groups function using technology.

That mutually beneficial scenario is typical of UD and corporate partnerships, said Outlaw. “Students actually take the theory they learn in the classroom and put it into practice. Companies get the advanced knowledge and research we can provide,” she said.

“When we serve students and parents, we’re full-service,” she said. “We meet their every need and make it easy for them. We clearly have a host of cost-effective services essential for mid-sized and small companies as well as the national and international powerhouses. Now, with the Corporate Resource Connection Web site and e-newsletter, we’re offering one-stop shopping for corporate America.”

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