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## Best of Show

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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## Best of Show

**10.23.2013 | Campus and Community, Research, Science, Students, Engineering**

The Ohio Economic Development Association will recognize the newly constructed GE Aviation EPISCENTER on the University of Dayton's campus as this year's best economic development project in the state.

The official announcement will be made Oct. 24 in Dublin, Ohio, during OEDA's Annual Summit.

The University of Dayton led a coalition of state and local governments, as well as Dayton Public Schools, CityWide Development Corp. and a range of legal and financial professionals, in attracting GE Aviation to campus. In the EPISCENTER — a \$53 million, 138,000-square-foot facility with labs and offices — GE Aviation engineers and UD researchers and graduate students will conduct leading-edge research on aircraft electrical power systems. The facility's grand opening is slated for Dec. 13.

The University's award application was endorsed by Dayton Mayor Gary Leitzell, the city commission and three community organizations — Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association, Rubicon Park Business Association and Rubicon Mill Neighborhood Association.

"The project represents the University's long-term commitment and collaboration with the city and many other stakeholders to return this gateway area to being a thriving economic engine of the city," wrote Leitzell and the commissioners in a letter of support. They called the project a "signature development for the city, if not the entire state."

While it is common for small companies to find their start in incubation spaces on university campuses, it is not common for a top Fortune 500 corporation to locate a multi-million-dollar research facility on a college campus.

"This project serves as a cornerstone in the revitalization of this part of the city and is the foundation of the University's vision to transform a former urban brownfield into a thriving academic and research development," said Daniel J. Curran, University of Dayton president.

The GE Aviation EPISCENTER (Electrical Power Integrated System Center) sits on eight acres on River Park Drive overlooking the Great Miami River. The new development, finished in August, is part of a 50-acre largely vacant parcel that the University of Dayton purchased from NCR Corp. in 2005.

This once-vibrant site, the home of NCR's manufacturing facilities, had sat vacant for nearly 30 years before UD purchased the property. UD and city officials worked with federal, state and local leaders to attract more than \$10 million in funding for environmental cleanup and infrastructure improvements from the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund and federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In 2007, the University worked with neighboring communities to obtain an "urban setting designation" for the site from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, a critical requirement for encouraging the redevelopment of urban areas.

In 2010, the state of Ohio awarded \$7.6 million in Ohio Third Frontier Funds to the University of Dayton Research Institute in support of the development of the EPISCENTER. GE Aviation chose the campus site because of its location in the Ohio Aerospace Hub and the research prowess of the University of Dayton Research Institute.

"The GE EPISCENTER will be a catalyst for new contracts and products resulting in job growth not only at the center, but also for the greater Dayton area and businesses," said Vic Bonneau, president of Electrical Power for GE Aviation.

While GE Aviation just recently moved engineers and staff into the building, the economic impact of the EPISCENTER has already been significant. During construction, 49 contractors provided 665 construction jobs, with a total estimated construction payroll of \$15.1 million.

At the end of this year, GE Aviation expects to employ 50 people at the site and a potential workforce between 150 and 200 within five years, depending on future programs. GE Aviation, the world's largest jet engine supplier, operates six facilities and employs more than 9,000 people in Ohio, helping to rank Ohio #3 in aircraft-related jobs in the U.S. GE Aviation has increased

its employment in Ohio by 7 percent in the past two years and plans to double its jet engine production over the course of a decade.

The EPISCENTER will be the University of Dayton's first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-certified (LEED) building. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, LEED certification provides independent verification a building was designed and built using strategies aimed at achieving high performance in sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

The Ohio Economic Development Association is a not-for-profit association of professionals whose work is related to the economic development of Ohio and its communities. Last year, the city of Kent's downtown revitalization efforts earned the Best Project award.

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