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Entrepreneurial Spirit

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Entrepreneurial Spirit

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The University of Dayton will be part of a three-year, \$2.4 million grant from the Kern Family Foundation to develop ways to educate engineers to contribute to the entrepreneurial cultures of their companies.

"We all know the term 'entrepreneur,' but we want to develop 'intra-preneurs' as well," University of Dayton Innovation Center Director Ken Bloemer said. "While entrepreneurs create their own companies, an intra-preneur works within the framework of an existing company as a change

agent driving business growth."

Dayton will team with lead-partner Baylor University, University of Detroit Mercy and Villanova University, and their industry partners, to build a curriculum that will help students better understand intrapreneurship and provide hands-on opportunities to put the practice in place. Possible courses include an in-depth study of intra-preneurship, innovation in a corporate context, a seminar series, an intra-preneurship-focused opportunity evaluation and a venture-planning course and workshop.

The end goal is to form a Helping Hands Dense Network, which will change the culture in the way engineers are educated and create practicing engineering graduates who are technically competent, and innovative and business savvy.

"The Kern Family Foundation is eager to support this joint initiative of four prestigious universities that desire to work together to change engineering education for the benefit of their engineering students," said Dr. Timothy J. Kriewall, program director for the Kern Entrepreneurship Education Network (KEEN) "Their graduates will be effective team players who will be entrepreneurially minded and who will be able to deploy technology to benefit people around the world."

This is the second boost for entrepreneurial education and engineering for the School of Engineering in the last year. Almost exactly a year ago, University of Dayton graduates O. Jack Anderson and his wife, Opal, gave more than \$600,000 to create a new faculty position to enhance the entrepreneurial spirit among engineering students and faculty. The new fellow will lead the growing partnership between the School of Engineering and the School of Business Administration to prepare students to better design products for society. The position also will work to provide additional entrepreneurial and product design learning experiences university-wide.

University of Dayton School of Engineering Dean Tony Saliba said it's important for the University to produce engineers who embrace entrepreneurship and interact effectively with business professionals in order to develop innovations that can succeed in the marketplace.

"It's important we produce job creators rather than job seekers," Saliba said.

The Kern Family Foundation has said the University of Dayton is "best-in-class in project-based learning in engineering innovation education."

Since 1996, University of Dayton engineering students have worked on more than 600 projects for 120 clients. Seven teams of engineering students have finished in the top five of the School of Business Administration's Business Plan Competition in the four-year history of the competition. One team has taken home the top prize.

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