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Creating High-Tech Jobs

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The University of Dayton Ladar and Optical Communications Institute is sustaining the goals of the Ohio Third Frontier program and the Ohio Aerospace Hub.

LOCI has announced agreements with three companies that will create high-tech jobs in Ohio. Optonicus and Defense Engineering Corp. (DEC), both Dayton-based, and UtopiaCompression of California will move operations into the institute located in the College Park Center. Up to 13 jobs are expected to be created, according to institute director Joe Haus.

"Having our faculty and researchers working with industry from across the country and the world for the economic development of our city and region is part of a comprehensive strategy University President Daniel Curran has developed for the University," said Tony Saliba, dean of the School of Engineering. "This is what drew GE Aviation to our campus and what brought these companies here. It starts with innovating products in the lab and getting them to the marketplace."

DEC and UtopiaCompression are working in LOCI on sense-and-avoid technology for unmanned aerial systems in collaboration with the Air Force Research Laboratory. Sensors on unmanned aerial systems will detect manned aircraft flying in the same area. Deploying such systems could help prevent accidents such as a collision over Afghanistan earlier this year between a drone and military cargo plane. DEC and UtopiaCompression also are working with LOCI on other advanced sensor concepts.

Optonicus is building intelligent optical systems used, among other applications, to improve image resolution and data transfer by unmanned aerial systems.

"This project could be particularly beneficial to the Ohio Aerospace Hub," Haus said. "We could also develop sense-and-avoid systems for commercial applications of unmanned vehicles."

UtopiaCompression also is collaborating with LOCI to develop a novel high-resolution panoramic camera that captures an entire hemispherical field of view. Such a camera is very useful for surveillance of large areas. It will provide better image quality while reducing the number of cameras required and associated installation costs. In addition to electro-optics and laser-related technologies, UtopiaCompression also provides technological solutions in the fields of wireless tactical communications and biomedical engineering.

The University has long engaged in research and technology for economic development. In its five years, the University of Dayton-led Institute for the Development and Commercialization of Advanced Sensor Technology (IDCAST) has created 289 new jobs, created five startup companies in Ohio and attracted five additional sensors companies to the state. The estimated impact for the state of Ohio is $140 million. LOCI also created another nine jobs at its opening.

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