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New Innovation Center Director

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The Ohio Third Frontier program and the U.S. Department of Commerce have trusted Ken Bloemer to spur innovation with millions of dollars of grants and contracts.

Now, the University of Dayton will do the same with its Innovation Center.

The University's School of Engineering appointed Bloemer as the new director of the Innovation Center, taking over for Phil Doepker who retired from the University after 26 years, spending the last four as Innovation Center director. Bloemer begins his appointment at the start of 2011.

"Ken brings a wealth of innovation experience spanning government, academia and industry. He also is a successful inventor and entrepreneur," said Tony Saliba, dean of the University of Dayton School of Engineering. "Above all, he is passionate about engineering education and strengthening the creative capacity of our students."

Bloemer comes to the University from Eureka! Ranch International in Newtown, Ohio, where he was executive director of the U.S. Department of Commerce's U.S.A. National Innovation Marketplace and the Planet Eureka! International Innovation Network. The U.S.A. Marketplace helps U.S. manufacturers enhance their competitiveness by connecting them with inventions and technologies.

Before Eureka! Ranch International, Bloemer, who serves on the board of the United Inventors Association, launched a company and helped design automated materials handling systems at air bases worldwide.

Bloemer also served as executive vice president of business development for TechSolve where he won a \$1.9 million Ohio Third Frontier innovation grant to bring together numerous Ohio industries with the University of Cincinnati's College of Design, Art, Architecture and Planning.

At Johnson & Johnson Ethicon Endo-Surgery, he led a worldwide education program on the company's history and the medical device industry.

Bloemer comes to an Innovation Center that Doepker helped achieve from a national foundation "best in class in project-based learning in engineering innovation education."

Doepker helped grow the Design and Manufacturing Clinic from 64 students and 11 projects to an Innovation Center with 330 students and 80 projects. 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.

"A dean of one of the nation's largest engineering schools mentioned at a meeting with other deans that he is trying to mimic what we are doing with our Innovation Center. That is a tribute to Phil and his work," Saliba said. "Phil is an extraordinary man whose dedication and contributions to the University set a sterling example for all of us. He has had a remarkable career with unparalleled contributions to the School of Engineering, the University of Dayton and the field of engineering innovation beyond our walls."

Doepker, a fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers has been recognized as an outstanding educator at the school, university and national levels. He has won the University of Dayton Alumni Award of Excellence in Teaching, the Affiliate Societies Council of Dayton Outstanding Engineer and Scientist Award, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Robert Abbott Award of Service to Design Engineering Education and the Ben C. Sparks Medal for Eminent Service to the ASME International for his contributions to engineering and engineering technology education.

"No words can ever suffice to thank Phil for his contributions. Many generations of students have benefitted from his teaching, guidance and mentoring. Many generations of students will benefit from what he has built in the Innovation Center," Saliba said. "The solid foundation on which this center is built will allow the next director, departments and the School of Engineering to make this very special place even more special."

Saliba and the School of Engineering honored Doepker with the establishment of the Phil Doepker Scholarship in Engineering Innovation to be given to a first-year student.

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