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TREND a Center of Excellence

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The State of Ohio has once again named the University of Dayton as an Ohio Center of Excellence, this time in the field of biomedicine and health care.

The University's Center for Tissue Regeneration and Engineering at Dayton (TREND) received the designation for its focus on understanding how damaged tissues and organs regenerate and how to harness this phenomenon to engineer or regrow new tissues.

"This prestigious honor will make us more visible within the University, in Dayton and in the state," said Panagiotis Tsonis, TREND Center director. "It will also provide us more opportunities to collaborate with others."

The TREND Center is the third University of Dayton center to receive the statewide designation as a Center of Excellence. In October, Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland named the von Ohain Fuels and Combustion Center and the Center for Strategic Energy and Environmental Informatics as Ohio Centers of Excellence in Advanced Energy.

Strickland, together with Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut, announced the designation of 14 universities as Ohio Centers of Excellence in Biomedicine and Health Care in February at BioEnterprise in Cleveland.

Established in 2006, the TREND Center currently has more than 20 researchers from six academic departments and the University of Dayton Research Institute. These researchers perform more than $1 million per year in sponsored research and have compiled more than 500 peer-reviewed articles.

TREND Center research includes the use of synthetic materials to aid in bone, tendon and cartilage replacement; eye lens regeneration; the development of new surgical devices; a rapid screening method to evaluate the potential toxic effects of nanomaterials on human health; and using oysters to produce pearl-like coatings on metal to protect against corrosion and contamination.

The state identifies TREND as an important economic asset because of its industry and clinical connections, which include Ethicon Endosurgery, Community Blood Center and Tissue Services, Kettering Health Network and Providence Medical Group. In addition, TREND researchers have several patents pending on tissue cell discoveries that will ultimately yield commercial value for the state.

The TREND Center's focus areas include research collaboration, advanced academic and research training with undergraduate and graduate students and facilitation of the transfer of technology developed by the Center for commercialization by the biotechnology, pharmaceutical and health care industries.

TREND also cultivates interactions with prominent scientists in the field and has formed partnerships with other universities, government and military laboratories, nonprofits, industry and clinical practices.

Ohio is already home to 775 bioscience-related companies, including the headquarters to two Fortune 500 companies — Cardinal Health and Procter and Gamble.

"Biomedicine and health care in Ohio create high wage jobs, investments in facilities, research and development, and production," said Strickland. "But much more than that, these industries bring forth medical breakthroughs that benefit citizens of Ohio and citizens of the world."

February's announcement was the second of five announcements of university Centers of Excellence that align with the state's targeted industries and focus on talent recruitment. The first four categories are specific to Ohio's growth industries: advanced energy, biomedical and health care, transportation and logistics, and agriculture and food production. The fifth group is focused on attracting and retaining talent to the state through additional programs that are essential in building communities and attracting the best and brightest workers to Ohio.

The Centers of Excellence, as outlined in Ohio's 10-year Strategic Plan for Higher Education, are intended to position the
university system of Ohio as a magnet for talent and a leader in innovation and entrepreneurial activity by developing distinct missions for each institution that are recognized by students, faculty and business leaders, while eliminating unnecessary competition for resources, students and faculty within the state.

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