

4-30-2014

Engineering Success

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Recommended Citation

"Engineering Success" (2014). *News Releases*. 2911.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/2911

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Engineering Success

04.30.2014 | Engineering, Students

A University of Dayton program for minority students through Universal Technology Corporation, Clarkson Aerospace and the U.S. Air Force that boasts research opportunities and virtually 100 percent job placement will continue for another five years.

The \$2 million award from the U.S. Air Force will provide University of Dayton undergraduate and graduate students tuition grants and work stipends to perform research in the areas of direct digital manufacturing, nanomaterials, bioengineering and semiconductors, among others.

Charles E. Browning, chair of the University of Dayton chemical and materials engineering department and a program manager for the Air Force Research Laboratory's Research Collaboration Program, said the goal is to produce a diverse workforce of highly educated and highly trained young minority men and women for technology fields.

"These students can benefit from the UD engineering experience — one-on-one support, financial support, the opportunity to work on cutting-edge research their first year and interaction with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base researchers," Browning said. "They will leave here with four years experience working in nanomaterials and biosensors."

"When they graduate from the University of Dayton, they're going to be extremely attractive to employers. And I've been fairly successful in finding them all internships and jobs."

The program follows the Minority Leaders Program that had been centered at the University of Dayton for seven years. It is among many initiatives to support minorities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields at the University. For almost 20 years, the School of Engineering's Minority Engineering Program has created opportunities and increased the number of diverse candidates for the region's engineering companies, according to Tony Saliba, University of Dayton School of Engineering dean.

"We cannot thank the Air Force, Universal Technology Corporation and Clarkson Aerospace enough for helping support these initiatives," Saliba said. "These opportunities improve graduation rates for minority students and offer pathways to good jobs."

The graduation rate for the program is about 70 percent, which is on par with the entire University of Dayton School of Engineering student body, according to Browning. The national graduation rate for minorities in engineering is about 42 percent, according to the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*.

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