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Contacts: Jamie Abel, Assistant Director of Communications
Office: 614-644-1988, cell: 614-3711-9454, email: jabel@regents.state.oh.us
Bret Crow, Assistant Director of Communications
Office: 614-752-9480, cell: 614-783-8477, email: bcrow@regents.state.oh.us

**Ohio's research universities refocusing
to generate research, spur economic growth**

CINCINNATI, Ohio – Ohio's public and private research universities are refocusing the state's array of doctoral programs to generate world-class research and stimulate economic growth.

Members of the Ohio Board of Regents were briefed on the upcoming launch of the state's Economic Growth Challenge/Innovation Incentive funding program at their monthly meeting, being held today (June 15) at Xavier University in Cincinnati.

"With this program, we are building on Ohio's tradition of leadership in innovation," said Edmund J. Adams, chairman of the Ohio Board of Regents. "These funds will bolster Ohio's research and manufacturing strengths and will lead to new products and create good jobs."

Beginning in July, Ohio's research universities are expected to reallocate 1.5 percent – every year for ten years for a total of 15 percent – of the state funding they each receive for doctoral programs offered on their campuses. The state will then match those qualifying reallocated funds through the Economic Growth Challenge/Innovation Incentive Program.

"By shifting campus resources toward strong doctoral programs that are well-aligned with Ohio's economic priorities, universities will be better able to contribute to Ohio's educational and economic growth," said Garrison Walters, interim chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents. "Matching state funds made available to qualifying universities through the Innovation Incentive Program will encourage these campuses to make some tough choices to refocus their resources and provide significant leverage to attract additional funding sources."

The Economic Growth Challenge/Innovation Incentive Program has four primary objectives:

- Achieve enhanced program focus through effective doctoral program reallocation investments;
- Attract preeminent researchers and build world-class research capacity;
- Create new products and services to be commercialized, leading to job creation and economic growth in Ohio and in the regions of the state; and
- Complement funding provided from programs included in Ohio's Third Frontier Project.

The ten public universities involved in the Innovation Incentive Initiative are: University of Akron, Bowling Green State University, University of Cincinnati, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, Miami University, The Ohio State University, Ohio University, University of Toledo and Wright State University. The private universities involved are: Case Western Reserve University and University of Dayton.

An Innovation Incentive funding program was a specific recommendation of the Governor's Commission on Higher Education and the Economy. The April 2004 CHEE report stated, "Successful innovation – the continuous process of generating and applying new ideas to the creation and upgrading of products, processes, and services – is a significant ingredient of long-term economic growth. It relies on highly skilled workers who can invent new products and processes, staff essential production systems, maintain complex equipment, and use new technologies in their own organizations."

Ohio Gov. Bob Taft was instrumental in creating and advocating for the Innovation Incentive program as a follow-up to the state's \$1.6 billion Third Frontier high-tech research initiative. In recent years, Ohio research has focused on several areas of core economic strength and opportunity, including: advanced materials; biosciences; information technology; instruments, controls, electronics and advanced manufacturing; and power and propulsion.

The Ohio Board of Regents is the coordinating body for higher education in the state. Created in 1963 by the General Assembly, the 11-member public board has a direct, non-governing relationship with all of Ohio's colleges and universities.

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Editor's note: *This release is being distributed in coordination with releases from each of Ohio's ten research universities. Please request a release from the campus nearest you for local information.*