PRESS RELEASE

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College students across Ohio to share $22.7 million in first round of Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds

As part of the Ohio General Assembly-created Ohio Innovation Partnership, scholarships are designed to significantly strengthen Ohio’s competitiveness in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEM) and STEM education.

Columbus, Ohio – Ohio Governor Ted Strickland today announced the State of Ohio’s first collaborations to receive funding under the state’s Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program. More than $22.7 million for student scholarships in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medical fields (STEM), and STEM education will be directed to 21 Ohio public and private colleges and universities across the state to be used specifically to attract, retain and graduate more than 2,000 new STEM students over the next five years.

“In order for Ohio to be globally competitive for the jobs of the 21st century, we must increase the number of Ohioans with college degrees in critical areas of math, science, engineering and technology. Choose Ohio First helps us do just that,” said Strickland.

The $50 million scholarship program is one component of the Ohio Innovation Partnership created by the Ohio General Assembly to help make Ohio a global leader in the new economy.
"A STEM education is important because it builds the knowledge and skills that are the most highly valued in the economy," said Ohio House Speaker Jon Husted, who championed the effort of the Choose Ohio First scholarships in the state legislature. "Not only does a STEM education improve the earning power of individuals, the STEM-based environment makes Ohio more attractive for businesses and jobs. These scholarships are knocking down the financial barriers that stand between students, a better education and a brighter more talented Ohio."

Choose Ohio First is intended to be Ohio’s premier model for recruiting and retaining more Ohio residents as students in STEM and STEM education fields.

“This money is critical to developing the talent and creativity we need to stay competitive in our high-tech world,” House Minority Leader Beatty said. “Ohio has taken a national leadership role in focusing attention on these disciplines, and it positions our state and our citizens for long-term success and prosperity. From Shawnee State to Central State to Ohio State, this demonstrates that Ohio is committed to sharing the wealth and making opportunity available for students in all corners of our state.”

Universities and their collaborating partners will also contribute almost $38 million in cash and services to support the implementation and continuation of their programs.

"Today's announcement represents an important step forward in the state's quest to integrate what our students learn in the classroom with the demands of a 21st century economy," said Senate President Bill Harris. "By partnering with Ohio's colleges and universities, as well as those in the business community, the Choose Ohio First Scholarship will not only open up real opportunities for thousands of students, but could have an immeasurable impact on the state's ability to attract business development, spur research and innovation and keep educated, skilled minds living and working in our communities for years to come."

A second round competition to award the remaining $27.3 million available under Choose Ohio First begins today. Each of the 21 institutions submitting letters of interest last November are eligible to submit a second round proposal.

“If Ohio is to become and remain competitive for new jobs, we must invest significantly in our most valuable resource – people,” Senate Minority Leader Ray Miller said. “I’m proud to see us identify the areas that are necessary for Ohio to be successful in a global economy and provide a way for our citizens to study in these areas. By addressing the skills, knowledge, and talent needs for today’s economy, Choose Ohio First empowers our state to move into the future.”

There were 28 proposals submitted for Choose Ohio First funding consideration, which were subsequently reviewed by a 7-member panel of nationally visible STEM educational experts appointed by Board of Regents Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut.
“Round one award recipients submitted proposals that were all creative in establishing forward-looking educational initiatives that will advance STEM education in Ohio, and some may well serve as national models,” said Fingerhut. “The leadership of Governor Strickland and the General Assembly has created a tremendous opportunity for Ohio students, our colleges, universities, and their partners, as well as the overall Ohio economy. We’re looking forward to round two.”

Choose Ohio First Scholarship Awards

**STEM Undergraduate Engagement in an Engineering Environment**
The University of Akron (lead institution) will partner with Baldwin-Wallace College, Stark State College of Technology and Lorain County Community College to attract and graduate an estimated 790 students in STEM fields in five years. The group’s proposal, “STEM Undergraduate Engagement in an Engineering Environment,” demonstrated innovation in the areas of student learning communities, early academic intervention, redesigned science modules and a cooperative education program that will include more than 90% of its students. In addition, the program has a clear commitment to recruitment and retention of underrepresented student populations. The winning collaboration shares $6.5 million in Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds awarded by the state.

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**Ohio Consortium for Bioinformatics**
Ohio University (lead institution) will partner with Bowling Green State University, Case Western Reserve University, Central State University, Miami University, The Ohio State University, Shawnee State University, the University of Akron, the University of Cincinnati, the University of Toledo, Wittenberg University, Wright State University, Clark State Community College, Ohio Supercomputer Center, the Ralph Regula School of Computational Science, Athens County Prosecutor’s Office, BioOhio, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, the Cleveland Clinic, Columbus Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Diagnostic Hybrids, Inc., Franz Medical, Information Technology Alliance of Ohio, Ohio Mass Spectrometry Consortium, Ohio Plant Biotechnology Consortium and Wright Patterson Air Force Base to attract and graduate an estimated 345 STEM students over a 5-year period. The program, “Ohio Consortium for Bioinformatics,” is a true statewide collaboration, which will recruit Ohio students to the highly innovative field of bioinformatics and help make Ohio a leader in the bioinformatics industry. Bioinformatics is the field of science in which biology, computer science, and information technology merge to form a single discipline. The collaboration shares more than $4.475 million in Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds awarded by the state.

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**Student Success in Mathematics**
Cleveland State University (lead institution) will partner with Case Western Reserve University, Kent State University, University of Akron, Youngstown State University, Cuyahoga Community College and a number of high schools and school districts* to attract and graduate more than 1,000 new STEM students over a 4-year period. The proposal, “Student Success in Mathematics,” will improve the coordination between colleges and universities to generate a more mathematically interested and prepared group of prospective college students. The program will strengthen the mathematics preparation of entering college students, which is essential to success in STEM courses of study. This strong focus on mathematics preparedness will translate to a higher recruitment and retention in STEM fields of study. The collaboration will share $4.5 million in Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds awarded by the state.

* The high schools and public school districts participating in this program include: Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Aurora City Schools, Hudson City Schools, Crestwood Local Schools, New Philadelphia Schools, Waterloo Local Schools, Akron Public Schools, Summit County Educational Service Center, Chaney High School in Youngstown, East High School in Youngstown, Girard High School, Warren G. Harding High School in Warren, and Youngstown Early College.

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Coming out of the Pipeline: The UC Interdisciplinary Pathway to STEM Professionals
The University of Cincinnati, in partnership with more than 760 Ohio businesses,* plans to attract and graduate 215 new STEM students over a 4-year period. This program “Coming out of the Pipeline: The UC Interdisciplinary Pathway to STEM Professionals,” builds on the state’s strongest cooperative education program by providing a true interdisciplinary course of study and coupling it with simulations of professional experience in locally-based high tech industry. This “virtual company” of global product design and manufacturing and the capstone in medical project design, engineering, innovation and entrepreneurship will have a strong and direct impact on the Ohio economy. This collaboration is awarded $3.082 million in Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds awarded by the state.


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Building the Nursing Workforce in Northeastern Ohio
Case Western Reserve University (lead institution) will partner with Cleveland State University, The Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals Case Medical Center, to attract and graduate 56 new students in the area of professional nursing over a 5-year period. The program, “Building the Nursing Workforce in Northeastern Ohio,” addresses a clearly identified need for both nurses
and nursing faculty in the Northeastern region of Ohio and the country in general. The program identifies qualified nursing students (“Ohio First Nursing Fellows”) who will complete the necessary advanced doctoral degrees that are required for faculty nursing positions. The collaboration shares $676,800 in Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds awarded by the state.

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**Pharmacy Scholarships**

Ursuline College (lead institution) will partner with the University of Toledo, the Cleveland Clinic Foundation and Cleveland Veteran Affairs Medical Center to attract and graduate more than 45 new students to the much needed STEM area of Pharmacy. Ohio ranks 4.13 on a 5.0 scale of need for pharmacists. The proposal, “Pharmacy Scholarships,” addresses this shortage issue by expanding the BSPS and PharmD programs offered at Ursuline and the University of Toledo College of Pharmacy to increase the number of graduating pharmacists. The innovative pre-college and mentoring programs will attract and retain potential pharmacy students to a PharmD degree, which is quickly becoming a national standard in this field. This collaboration shares $364,000 in Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds awarded by the state.

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**Diversifying Ohio in STEM (DO-STEM)**

Central State University (lead institution) will partner with Kent State University, Miami University, the University of Cincinnati, Wright State University, Youngstown State University, Clark State Community College, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Sinclair Community College, Avetec, Edison Welding Institute, Honda of America, National Composites Center and the National Environmental Technology Incubator to attract and graduate an estimated 220 STEM students over a 5-year period. The proposal, “Diversifying Ohio in STEM (DO-STEM),” recruits and retains underrepresented student populations to the STEM field beginning with hands-on exposure at a high school level to graduate placement at other Ohio institutions. The program, building on an NSF model, will include undergraduate research opportunities in STEM fields, student learning communities and mentoring aimed at retaining new students in the STEM courses of study. The collaboration shares nearly $3.1 million in Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program funds awarded by the state.

For more information, please go to [http://universitysystem.ohio.gov/chooseohio1st](http://universitysystem.ohio.gov/chooseohio1st).