

NEWS RELEASE

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Board Members Commit to Open Doors for Entrepreneurs

Veteran Business People to Lend Clout to Entrepreneurs Center Tenants

Dayton, Ohio, April 29, 2002—Small businesses need experience to get work, but first they need work to get experience. To address this conundrum of her tenants, the president of The Entrepreneurs Center has called upon some seasoned business veterans.

Barbara Hayde has challenged members of The Entrepreneurs Center Board of Trustees to shuffle through their rolodexes and click through their contacts to encourage their business connections to give the entrepreneurs an opportunity to compete for upcoming contracts.

"The region's Fortune 100 companies and government contractors often award contracts to out-of-town companies. I challenged the board to use its influence to encourage local companies to give our tenants a chance," Hayde said. "Each board member could make an introduction to open a door that otherwise might be closed to an unknown small businesses."

"One of the goals of the Entrepreneurs Center is to create local jobs," said Bill Mercurio, board chairman. "Most likely that will happen when the tenants secure contracts with local companies. This keeps revenues in our community and gives the young companies a chance to prove themselves."

Mercurio believes that small businesses play an important role in the national and regional economy. "A recent statistic states that nationwide, 94% of operating businesses have 20 or fewer employees," he said, "This means that small companies are creating the majority of jobs in this country. It behooves us to support these small businesses as they are the future."

The Dayton Area Chamber's Phil Parker agrees. "An essential part of the Chamber's mission is to retain and expand small to medium sized companies. Our success will be the result of organizations working together for this common goal," said Parker, president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce.

By joining forces on bids, the tenants of The Entrepreneurs Center offer a wide variety of technical skills that could meet the requirements of a large project. Several tenants provide:

- Information technology consulting and design
- Software and database development
- Data mining
- Web design and e-Commerce solutions

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The Entrepreneurs Center

The Entrepreneurs Center in Dayton, Ohio, funded through the Ohio Department of Development's Edison Program, helps to control the conditions that cultivate new companies—and those enterprises, in turn, create jobs in the region. During their three-to-five year stay at the Center, tenants have access to business mentors; education and training; office and administrative services; debt and equity financing; free and/or reduced-rate services such as accounting and legal advice, as well as the benefit of networking with other tenants.

The Entrepreneurs Center is among ten business incubators supported by the Thomas Edison program administered by the Ohio Department of Development. For more information, call 937/281-0098, fax 937/281-0099, e-mail info@techincubator.org or visit www.techincubator.org.

The Ohio Department of Development

Working with communities and businesses, the Department of Development promotes economic opportunities to improve the profits and prosperity of Ohio's citizens. The Department acting in a support role provides financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio's future. For more information, call 800/848-1300 or visit www.odod.state.oh.us.

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