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N.H. Industrial Research Center Track Record: \$200M Impact on State's Economy

*By Carmelle Druchniak
UNH News Bureau*

DURHAM, N.H. -- Since its creation in 1992, the New Hampshire Industrial Research Center has had an estimated \$200 million impact on the state's economy.

Henry Mullaney, director of the center, headquartered at the University of New Hampshire, also says New Hampshire companies have generated \$72 million in new sales as a result of IRC-supported technical assistance to businesses from UNH, Dartmouth College, and other educational institutions.

He adds that companies report nearly \$16 million in savings from the center's Design of Experiments (DOX) Training Program, conducted by UNH faculty.

"Applying an economic model to these results gives us an estimated economic impact of about \$200 million, since most of the jobs are in manufacturing and high tech, areas which have large economic multipliers," says Mullaney.

He points out these results are based upon company estimates, and do not include the results of ongoing projects.

Why are the results so good? "Research and development and technology transfer are highly leveraged investments," says Mullaney. "A Rand study showed a typical return of more than 20 times with an investment in research and development."

State and company investment in the IRC Technical Assistance Grant Programs --- which provides companies with matching state funds for R & D projects and assistance from UNH faculty -- to date exceed \$7.8 million. The DOX program gets returns on state funds of over 40-to-1.

"Our projects are creating new product lines, new companies and even new industries," says Mullaney.

Fireye, a Derry company, made a product that senses heat from a furnace, and, as a safety measure, shuts off fuel if there is a flameout. The firm had over 100,000 units installed at schools, hospitals, and similar

locations, but the United Kingdom that recently purchased the company made a similar product at lower cost.

"An IRC project added a new capability," says Mullaney. Through UNH research, an improved detector was added, with wavelength sensitivities carefully selected through theory and experiment to detect combustion products. Fireye added control circuitry and now their device also controls fuel air mixture to optimize burner efficiency and reduce air pollution.

"A whole new product line was born, a company was saved, about 50 existing jobs were saved, and 15 new jobs were added," says Mullaney, with an annual economic impact of more than \$5 million.

Another example is Prime Tanning in Rochester, the largest U.S. producer of fine leather used in briefcases, pocketbooks and NBA players' shoes. During their DOX training course, which teaches participants how to streamline product testing, the Prime Tanning team found a way to dramatically reduce shrinkage during tanning. The annual savings: more than \$2 million.

"At the IRC, the future is now," according to Mullaney. "We have projects ongoing that are estimated to double the economic impact achieved to date."

For more information on the N.H. Industrial Research Center, call 603-862-0123.

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