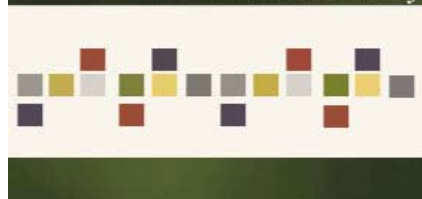




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[Research Compliance »](#)
[Grant Development »](#)
[Technology Transfer »](#)
[Innovation Center](#)
[Research Communications »](#)
[Laboratory Animal Resources](#)
[Edison Biotechnology Institute](#)
[Graduate College](#)

Office of Research Communications

[Ohio University](#) > [Research](#) > [Research Communications](#) > Governor names Ohio University a “center of excellence” for energy, environment

Governor names Ohio University a “center of excellence” for energy, environment

ATHENS, Ohio (Oct. 28, 2009) – Gov. Ted Strickland announced today that Ohio University has been named a Center of Excellence in Energy and the Environment. The designation recognizes the institution’s state and national reputation for energy and pollution research, as well as its potential to create jobs in the field.

The area of energy and the environment encompasses the research of more than 30 faculty and staff members at Ohio University. Current research focuses on the production and delivery of energy and fuels, as well as the monitoring and control of the air and water pollution that results from fuel production.

“I want to congratulate the faculty and staff members of the Russ College of Engineering and Technology, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Health and Human Services and the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs,” said President Roderick J. McDavis. “The inclusion of Ohio University as one of nine of the state’s Centers of Excellence in Energy and the Environment speaks to the research and scholarship achieved by our outstanding faculty and staff. Gov. Strickland and Chancellor Fingerhut recognize the talent, creativity and scholarship of Ohio University faculty on important issues focused on energy and the environment.”

The researchers have received more than \$28 million in total external funding. To date, Ohio University has submitted 38 invention disclosures, 96 patent applications and nine patents related to energy and the environment, generating \$745,000 in royalty fees from energy-related technologies since 2005. In 2006, energy and the environment was found to be among Ohio University’s significant research strengths, according to a study of institution-based research core competencies commissioned by the Ohio Board of Regents and the Ohio Department of Development.

Ohio University was one of nine centers of excellence at eight universities announced by the governor’s office today. The centers will help the state meet the requirements of Senate Bill 221, a landmark energy reform bill that will ensure predictability of affordable energy prices. It serves as a catalyst to enhance energy industries in Ohio, bringing new jobs while protecting existing jobs, the office stated.

Executive Vice President and Provost Benoit noted that the Center of Excellence designation will expand academic opportunities and aid recruitment at Ohio University.

“Having a University System of Ohio Center of Excellence will enhance the ability of faculty members to compete for external funding. That funding will support expanded research projects which in turn will create more chances for graduate and undergraduate students to be part of the multidisciplinary research environment that is the hallmark of our center,” Benoit said. “In addition, I’m confident that having a high-profile center that unites energy and the environment will further our ability to recruit strong students and faculty in a number of fields.”

Ohio University was one of the first institutions in the state to integrate the multidisciplinary work of energy and its related environmental impacts through the establishment of the Consortium for Energy, Economics and the Environment (CE3) in 2005. The university is located in the heart of Ohio’s coal and oil fields, and the Ohio River Valley is home to almost 40 percent of the nation’s coal-generated electricity. Its faculty and researchers know first hand that the challenges presented by fuel extraction and power production require coalitions made up of experts in a variety of fields.

With the advent of a clean energy economy in the state, which Ohio University’s Center of Excellence in Energy and the Environment will help to develop, close to 1,000 new jobs could be created in Appalachian Ohio alone, according to the governor’s office. The establishment of a carbon management industry in the region has the potential to grow to \$1 billion by 2020.

“Ohio University already has a strong track record of technology commercialization and high-tech business development, and the new Center of Excellence designation will allow us to enhance our efforts to help Ohio create and promote a sustainable and economically viable energy roadmap,” said Rathindra Bose, vice president for research and dean of the Graduate College at Ohio University.

All public universities were required to participate in the centers of excellence review process as part of the state of Ohio’s strategic plan for the University System of Ohio, which aims to raise the national profile of its higher education institutions, prioritize resources and better meet student needs. The Ohio Board of Regents cites economic impact, benchmarking, the presence of a viable development plan and sufficiency of resources as key criteria to be a center of excellence.

Ohio University’s final proposal to the state identified three centers of excellence. The other two proposals are Health and Wellness and the Scripps College of Communication.

The governor’s office will release details about other centers of excellence designations in the near future.

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