



PRESS RELEASE

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**WSI, OTBC, and OEN Announce Entrepreneurship Program
for Dislocated Engineers**

Program helps engineers move from concept to company launch and job creation.

(Beaverton, Oregon, February 16, 2010). The Oregon Technology Business Center (OTBC), Worksystems, Inc. (WSI) and the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (OEN) announced today an entrepreneurship program for dislocated engineers who live in either Multnomah or Washington counties. The 10 week program will be based on FastTrac® TechVenture™, a program developed by the Kansas City-based Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the largest organization in the nation solely focused on entrepreneurial success at all levels.

Leveraging funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the program will help dislocated engineers who have a business idea validate the market, assess business feasibility, and develop a solid business strategy and plan.

"We're excited about this program which relates directly to WSI's mission of supporting individual prosperity and business competitiveness" said WSI Andrew McGough, WSI's Executive Director. "Historically, small businesses have driven the majority of new-job creation in the state. We're helping dislocated engineers build on that track record, starting competitive companies that will create new, family-wage jobs for Oregon.

Steve Morris, OTBC Executive Director and Oregon's only certified FastTrac TechVenture facilitator, states, "Many engineers have tremendous knowledge and IP, an idea for a start-up, and the passion to pursue their vision. But most have not started a company before and are not sure where to begin. The training and mentoring that FastTrac offers fills that void. Thanks to the ARRA and WSI, now dislocated engineers will have an opportunity to benefit from the program."

We're excited that this program supports both entrepreneurship and Oregon's economic growth, while also helping displaced engineers transition to a new opportunity" said Linda Weston, Executive Director of OEN. We'll be tapping our network of experienced entrepreneurs and executives to provide coaching and mentoring to the entrepreneurship program participants, providing them with invaluable benefit of real world advice from people who have successfully started and grown companies.

The FastTrac[®] TechVenture program for dislocated engineers begins on Monday, March 15, 2010. Dislocated engineers who live in either Multnomah or Washington counties can read more about the program and apply at www.otbc.org, or they can call OTBC at 971.223.4660 for more information.

About Worksystems, Inc.

Worksystems, Inc. (WSI) is a nonprofit organization serving the City of Portland, Multnomah and Washington counties. The mission of the organization is to coordinate a regional workforce system that supports individual prosperity and business competitiveness. The organizational values essential to the growth and vitality of the system include: A skilled workforce that improves business and individual competitiveness, earning capacity, income and assets; Partnerships that support alignment, effectiveness and continuous improvement; and High standards of accountability to the community.

About the Oregon Technology Business Center

OTBC is a non-profit corporation that helps technology entrepreneurs move from idea to successful start-up. It does that by providing coaching from experienced entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship programs, networking events, and educational programs. OTBC helps entrepreneurs avoid common startup mistakes, make smarter decisions, and increase their odds of success. OTBC is certified to provide the Kauffman Foundation's FastTrac[®] series of entrepreneurship programs. For more information, visit www.otbc.org.

About the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network

Founded in 1991, the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to providing opportunities for Oregon entrepreneurs and to improving the business climate for emerging companies statewide. The organization has members throughout Oregon and southwest Washington. For more information about OEN, visit www.oen.org.

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