



News Release

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State Focuses on Building University Research Capacity

PIERRE, S.D. – Targeted research at South Dakota’s public universities got a financial boost this year from the state. Building on that momentum, the South Dakota Board of Regents will host a May 10 research conference to plan what’s next.

The Research 2010! Conference, co-hosted by the Department of Tourism and State Development, will identify necessary steps South Dakota must take to strengthen research capacity at its public universities and translate that into economic development. Gov. Mike Rounds will kick off the conference at 10 a.m. at the Ramkota RiverCentre in Pierre.

“When Governor Rounds and the Legislature gave us \$3.7 million to build our research capabilities, that was the critical first step,” said Robert T. Tad Perry, the regents’ executive director. “Now we need to translate vision into reality. We hope this conference is the catalyst to launch research efforts in specialized areas that have the most likelihood for commercialization.”

The conference will introduce the 11 faculty teams from South Dakota public universities that are competing to be designated as a 2010 Initiative research center. The Legislature targeted nearly \$3 million to hire additional faculty members, pay for graduate assistants, and acquire needed laboratory equipment and space for these specialized centers.

Conference participants will hear from regional and national experts with a track record of spurring university research that results in commercially viable products and services:

- Dan Berglund is executive director of the State Science and Technology Institute in Columbus, Ohio. The institute helps states build linkages between university research and economic development.
- Robert Sienkiewicz, senior advisor for the Advanced Technology Program of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce.
- Philip Boudjouk, vice president for research, creative activities, and technology transfer at North Dakota State University.
- William Gern, vice president for research at the University of Wyoming.

“We are excited to hear from these nationally-recognized experts,” Perry said. “Our neighbors in North Dakota and Wyoming, in particular, have had considerable success in developing research parks and connections between higher education and start-up businesses.”