



# News Release

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## **Eagle Creek Software and Public Higher Education Partner to Bring High-Tech Jobs to South Dakota**

ABERDEEN, S.D. – An innovative higher education partnership with the state and the country’s largest onshore software services company is moving forward. A committee of the South Dakota Board of Regents today endorsed plans for a specialized training academy that produces information technology consultants, and could result in 1,000 new high-tech jobs for South Dakota over the next three to five years. Plans also call for customized graduate courses leading to further employment opportunities in the IT field.

The joint initiative was first announced March 13 by the University of South Dakota, Eagle Creek Software Services, and the Governor’s Office of Economic Development. At that time, Eagle Creek said it would build a new \$10 million technology center in Vermillion to house 200 of the new jobs.

“Higher education’s role in this effort is to provide the very specialized training and education that Eagle Creek and its partners look for in a potential employee,” said Paul Turman, the regents’ vice president of research and economic development. “Those details are now being finalized, and it is an exciting opportunity for our universities and the state.”

USD, in consultation with Dakota State University, will create the Information Technology Consultant Academy and offer customized business and computer science courses leading to a 12-hour undergraduate certificate. Students enrolled in the consultant academy receive a scholarship through the Governor’s Office of Economic Development covering full tuition and fees and serve a three-month paid internship with Eagle Creek, after which they are eligible for a job interview with the company.

Certificate courses will be taught on the Vermillion campus but will also be offered simultaneously by distance delivery, making the program available to students throughout South Dakota.

USD and DSU, along with Eagle Creek and InfiniteIQ Consulting, have also teamed to develop a unique graduate learning experience that prepares individuals for IT-related jobs in what is called “big data.” Big data is usually defined as a collection of data sets so large and complex that it becomes difficult to handle using traditional data processing applications. The graduate-level work will be offered this summer in Vermillion, sequencing four courses over an eight-week period.