January 21, 2004

**Purdue teams up with state to spur white-collar job creation**

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Indiana employers who have hard-to-fill professional positions will soon have new avenues to help them find prospective employees.

Employers are invited to a free formal reception, open to any Indiana business, which will take place from 2-5:30 p.m. Tuesday (1/27) in the North and South Ballrooms of the Purdue Memorial Union. At the reception, white-collar job initiatives, called Connecting Indiana, will be announced. The initiatives are sponsored by the Dual Career Office of Purdue University in conjunction with the Lafayette Workforce Development Office and Tecumseh Area Partnership, which each contributed $10,000.

Registrations for the reception are being taken by phone at (765) 494-3253 or online (keyword "connect"). The deadline is Thursday (1/22).

Employers will learn about training programs and how to tap into economic development grants. The program is designed to support Gov. Joe Kernan's Energize Indiana jobs initiative and carry out the university's commitment to help develop the state economy.

Employers also can register for the Connecting Indiana Job Fair for displaced professionals where they can interview prospective employees. The free fair will take place from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, May 27, in the Purdue Memorial Union.

At the reception for employers, Alan L. Degner, Indiana Workforce Development Office commissioner, Don K. Gentry, vice provost for engagement, and Alysa C. Rollock, vice president for human relations, will address the need for Purdue to collaborate with workforce development offices to generate more jobs for middle managers and other
Purdue teams up with state to spur white-collar job creation

white-collar workers.

"Indiana ranks nearly 30 percent below the national average in the retention and employment of Indiana college graduates," Gentry said. "The brain drain, coupled with today's harsh economic climate, calls for a concerted effort to spur job development. We can accomplish that through advanced training and continued development of research parks and high-tech businesses throughout the state."

Tari Alper, relocation specialist for Purdue's Dual Career Assistance Program, said the state's new initiatives are specifically designed for professionals.

"White-collar workers have suffered from a significant number of layoffs during the past few years," Alper said. "Employment assistance is in place for many workers, but a fair number of middle managers who have lost their jobs have been left on their own to find a comparable position or update their skills. These initiatives will fill that gap and bolster our work force in the process."

During the reception, Chris Waymire, a Tecumseh Area Partnership senior trainer, will make a presentation on the Indiana WorkKeys program, through which the skills of current and prospective employees are compared with skills required for successful job performance. Waymire also will be available for individual discussions after the reception in Stewart Center, Room 313.

Process Improvement Quality initiatives will be presented at the reception and addressed further in Stewart Center, Room 320. Through these initiatives, funding will made available for employers in high-tech sectors to examine and implement more efficient manufacturing and lab processes.

Degner also will present information on various job initiatives that will be facilitated through the Indiana Workforce Development Office.

Writer: Marydell Forbes, (7650 496-7704, mforbes@purdue.edu

Sources: Don Gentry, 494-9095, dkgentry@purdue.edu

Tari Alper (765) 494-6366, tlalper@purdue.edu

Deb Waymire, Lafayette Workforce Development director, (765) 474-5411, dwaymire@dwd.state.in.us

Roger Feldhaus, Tecumseh Area Partnership director, (765) 477-1710, rfeldhaus@tap.lafayette.in.us

Purdue News Service: (765) 494-2096; purduenews@purdue.edu

To the Purdue News and Photos Page