

Wednesday, July 8, 2015

## OU INC earns international designation for helping companies enter U.S. market

The Oakland University Incubator (OU INC) has been recognized for helping foreign companies do business in the United States. The National Business Incubation Association recently added OU INC to its list of approved Soft Landings programs, a designation held by just 17 business incubators in the United States and 12 business incubators internationally. The NBIA is the world's largest association of business incubation professionals, with more than 900 member organizations.

OU INC received its designation from the NBIA in April of 2015. As an NBIA member, OU INC met the required qualifications based on its ability to successfully serve foreign business clients. Some of the services OU INC offers to foreign clients include: experienced staff to assist foreign companies both on a technical and business growth basis; a large network of partners that specialize in the types of assistance that are unique to foreign companies establishing a U.S. presence; access to faculty and student resources to assist the companies; access to funding tools as they apply to the companies; and affordable space and logistical support for business and technology development. OU INC Executive Director Amy Butler participates regularly in foreign trade missions with key partners to meet with companies interested in locating in Michigan and those that may want to partner with local companies looking to export. She recently joined Michigan's Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley and Automation Alley in a trade mission to Chile and Columbia.



*From left: Irene Spanos, Oakland County director of economic development and community services; Louay Chamra, dean of OU's School of Engineering and Computer Science; Amy Butler, executive director of OU INC; and Monika Jansohn; founder of Na4B, an international business client of OU INC.*

"This designation is a significant achievement for OU INC, the University and its strategic partners, including the State of Michigan, Oakland County and the City of Rochester Hills," Butler said. "It recognizes the success OU INC has achieved in assisting international companies to successfully establish business in the U.S. and Michigan. Bringing in international companies brings new innovation and supply chain solutions to Michigan business and creates opportunity for our students to learn about the global economy."

"As an international organization, we feel passionate about facilitating the connection between companies seeking to do business in another country with organizations that have the right entrepreneurial support programs to help them succeed," said Kirstie Chadwick, President and CEO of NBIA. "OU INC has demonstrated its ability to service foreign entrepreneurs domestically through a strong offering of international business support programs. We are pleased to award them the Soft Landings designation."

NBIA's Soft Landings International Incubator designations are effective for two years.

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**The National Business Incubation Association (NBIA)** is an international non-profit organization and global advocate for incubators, accelerators, educational institutions and regional economic development stakeholders. With more than 2,200 members in over 60 nations, the NBIA provides its members with essential information, education, advocacy and networking resources to bring excellence to the process of assisting early-stage companies succeed. Visit [www.nbia.org](http://www.nbia.org) to learn more.

**OU INC** is a SmartZone Business Accelerator, in collaboration with the City of Rochester Hills, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and various industry partners. With a focus on the energy, medical device, and information technology sectors, OU INC provides entrepreneurial resources and strategic business solutions for developing business ventures and accelerating ideas to market.