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New SBA center sets focus on economic development

Rapid changes in the business world – driven by globalization, technological advances and shifting economics – require business professionals, researchers and students to be prepared for anything. The new Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE) at Oakland University's School of Business Administration is harnessing the power of integration to do just that.

CIBRE not only offers a mechanism to build the region's economic future, but is educating a workforce that will be fully prepared to find success in it.

"CIBRE thoughtfully and strategically tackles the challenge of building a sustainable economic foundation and ensures that tomorrow's employees will be prepared to flourish in any new reality," said Oakland University President Gary Russi.

SBA Dean Mohan Tanniru added, "This is a place where business leaders, researchers, professionals and students come together to share resources and ideas, identify actions to address organizational issues, educate current and future professionals, and support economic development in the community and the world."

Supporting the SBA's overall mission to advance knowledge and link theory to practice, CIBRE is dedicated to engaging business and industrial partners in ongoing research, educational innovations and outreach efforts.

Connecting SBA with other units on campus and institutions across the nation and the world, CIBRE is pursuing joint research on contemporary topics such as product life cycle management; lean management; the integration of global strategy with internal IT competencies; health care management; law; entrepreneurship; global business research that covers IT; international marketing and branding; strategy, governance and reporting system integration; virtual teamwork and communication; knowledge sharing; and more.

Attention is also focused on forecasting and solving future challenges, and special programs now in development are focusing on the need to re-educate and retrain displaced workers.

Two active CIBRE programs connect high-achieving students with businesses to solve business issues, while also linking the students' educational experience to social and economic realities.

Applied Technology in Business, an innovative and award-winning undergraduate program, has provided more than 75 companies with student teams to create business solutions using information technology. A \$4 million investment in student scholarships from regional businesses is a testament to this program's success.

Following that successful model, the new Experiential Learning and Innovation program offers businesses the opportunity to tap into the advanced skills of SBA's top graduate students on company-sponsored projects. From business start ups and market expansions to product launches, the program offers students a chance to integrate their coursework with real-time learning, all while advancing education and supporting economic growth.

Through CIBRE, the SBA will continue providing outstanding education in financial planning, paralegal and CPA certification, as well as exceptional preparation of professionals in accounting, engineering, teaching, product management, advanced placement and other fields.

CIBRE's new Business Futures Councils offer another way the SBA is gaining valuable insight from business leaders. The councils engage senior executives from various industries in a dialog on future business trends and challenges. Bridging the gap between academic theory and real-world practice, council participants work together to better educate and prepare future employees while shaping future research projects.

Other outreach programs include conferences, lectures, workshops, community-based programs for youth and the development of special programs that focus on retraining and re-education. Retraining Michigan's talented workforce will prevent further brain drain and support education in health care delivery.

For more information about CIBRE, visit the center's Web site at <http://www.sba.oakland.edu/cibre>.

SUMMARY

CIBRE not only helps businesses shape the region's economic future, but is educating a workforce that will be fully prepared to find success in it.

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