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### **K-State Product Development Road Show Coming to Independence on April 23**

A product development seminar will be held in Independence on the afternoon of April 23, conducted by Kansas State's Technology Development Institute (TDI.) The location of the seminar will be Fab Lab ICC, 2564 Brookside Dr (3884 CR 3730.) This information session is being presented as part of the K-State "105 Initiative" to help drive positive economic impact in conjunction with the state-wide E-Community initiative of Network Kansas. Local sponsors include the Innovative Business Resource Center, local partnering organization for Montgomery County E-Community and Fab Lab ICC.

This seminar is for manufacturers, inventors and small businesses interested in learning more about the product development process and what resources are available within the state of Kansas to help support the creation of new products and technologies. Topics include how to conduct market research to investigate interest in new ideas, the patenting process, designing and prototyping, and commercialization. Providers of business support services, such as economic development professionals, bankers, attorneys, and accountants are also invited to attend. There is no charge for the seminar, but registration is requested at [www.ibrcenter.org](http://www.ibrcenter.org) or [www.fablabicc.org](http://www.fablabicc.org).

This event is part of a series of similar events around the state. "This program provides information for local community members about the network of resources here in the state available to help them create and launch new products," said Bret Lanz, commercialization director for TDI.

A morning session will be available to area high school students. Topics will focus on the various types of engineering careers that are available to students, and provides additional detail on the work that the mechanical engineering staff perform at the Technology Development Institute (TDI.) The TDI team will discuss how new technologies, such as 3D printing and other rapid prototyping technologies, can be used in the design and development of new products and technologies. The students will take a closer look at a range of products that were produced using various manufacturing technologies.

"These presentations are a great way for us to talk with students about STEM careers and what K-State has to offer as they consider their future plans," said Lanz.

"The TDI product development seminar is an opportunity for us all to learn about this amazing resource — right here in Kansas. Attend, ask questions and learn how they can help," said Janet Miller, NetWork Kansas manager of entrepreneurship for the Southeast Kansas region. "When we began discussions about where to have the seminar, Fab Lab ICC on the campus of Independence Community College immediately came to mind."

In addition to registration, details about session times can be found at [www.ibrcenter.org](http://www.ibrcenter.org). Those with questions may also call Jim Correll, director of IBRC at 620-252-5349.

### About K-State 105

This project was completed in support of the K-State 105 initiative, Kansas State University's answer to the call for a comprehensive economic growth and advancement solution for Kansas. The initiative leverages the statewide K-State Research and Extension network to deliver the full breadth of the university's collective knowledge and solution-driven innovation to every Kansan, right where they live and work. Additionally, K-State 105 forges the connections and partnerships that create access to additional expertise within other state institutions and agencies, nonprofits and corporations — all part of an effort to build additional capacities and strengths in each of the 105 counties in the state.

### About K-State TDI

The K-State Technology Development Institute in the Carl R. Ice College of Engineering is a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration University Center that provides a broad range of engineering and business development services to both private industry and university researchers to advance the commercial readiness of new products or technologies.

### About IBRC

The Innovative Business Resource Center (IBRC), a Kansas Not-for-Profit organization was founded in 2010 to empower local businesses in our area community.

In 2012, IBRC became a local partnering organization for the Network Kansas initiative called Entrepreneurial Community, or E-Community. Locally, we are the Montgomery County E-Community. With funding assistance from Network Kansas, we provide programs to help build and foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem in our county and region.

Some of the local funding and support that have been possible through the IBRC include:

- Gap financing, in conjunction with bank and other public financing, for start-up and expansion use by local/area businesses. (More than \$1.5M since 2013)
- Support for facilitation and registration cost reduction for Entrepreneurial Mindset class featuring the Ice House Entrepreneurship program. (Approx. 150 participants since 2012)
- Sponsorship of the annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, a business competition where youth grades 7 through 12 pitch a business. Some are existing businesses operated by the youth part time. The youth compete for \$2,250 in cash prizes for the top three places as determined by local judges.

IBRC board members, all business owners or retired business owners, volunteer their time, demonstrating a genuine passion for seeing businesses flourish.

## **About NetWork Kansas**

NetWork Kansas was established as a component of the Kansas Economic Growth Act of 2004 to further entrepreneurship and small business growth as a priority for economic and community development in the state of Kansas. Backed by more than 500 partners statewide, the NetWork Kansas service promotes an entrepreneurial environment by connecting entrepreneurs and small business owners with the expertise, education and economic resources they need in order to succeed.

NetWork Kansas facilitates the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem within participating communities through the Entrepreneurship (E)-Community Partnership. Contributing factors to successful development include availability of financial capital, support by local leadership and development of educational resources. All of these factors combine to increase entrepreneurial activity in participating towns, leading to increased startup activity, business expansion, job creation and more.

The E-Community partnership, now in its sixteenth year, has grown from six communities in 2007 to 73 in 2023. To date, E-Communities have provided \$31.4 million to businesses, leveraging an additional \$145.6 million (bank loans, owner down payment, resource partner loans, etc.).

For more information about the E-Community Partnership, visit [ecommpartnership.com](http://ecommpartnership.com) or call 877-521-8600.

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