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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BOARD OF REGENTS AWARDS INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY GRANTS

(TOPEKA) – The Board of Regents recently awarded five grants totaling \$130,500 to Colby Community College, Cowley Community College, Johnson County Community College, North Central Kansas Technical College, and Northwest Kansas Technical College to support innovative technology initiatives.

“The Board of Regents is pleased to recognize the innovative programs these five institutions are working to implement,” said Reginald L. Robinson, President and CEO of the Kansas Board of Regents. “The state’s 36 public higher education institutions play such a key role in meeting our state’s workforce development needs and these institutions should be commended for partnering with private businesses in order to address the ever-changing workforce needs of Kansas.”

Cowley Community College (Arkansas City) was awarded \$40,000 to support equipment purchases and other costs associated with its approved Mechatronics Technology Program. Partners participating in this grant project include: Newell-Rubbermaid, KSQ Blowmolding, Galaxy Tool, Calmar, Creekstone Farms, LLC, ADM Milling, Kan-Pak, Winfield Consumer Products, S&Y Industries, Chevron Phillips, Pittsburg State University, and Winfield Economic Development. The Mechatronics Technology Program will be located in the Winfield Industrial Park and will provide education and training for an estimated 130 technicians per year for the next five years. Students completing the program will have obtained a certificate or an associate degree and will be prepared to enter the workforce as maintenance, food processing, plastics, or manufacturing technicians. Mechatronics Technology Program students will be provided with integrated, innovative/comprehensive training opportunities in a state-of-the-art training center.

Colby Community College (Colby) was awarded \$36,550 to purchase equipment and software that will enable the college to provide a new Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Certificate Course. Partners participating in this grant project include: Fort Hays State University, Kansas State University, the University of Kansas, Colby Implement, Northwestern Kansas Groundwater Management District #4, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, Colby, and the Cities of Aspen and Littleton, Colorado. Students will obtain training for GIS software as digitizers, technicians, and analysts in economic planning and development, agricultural development, and geospatial-technology.

Johnson County Community College (Overland Park) was awarded \$5,300 to assist in the hiring of a part-time faculty coordinator for the spring and summer academic semesters of 2008 to acquire initial materials and supplies necessary to prepare a Polysomnography/Sleep Technology Program to begin in the fall 2008 academic semester. This is the only Polysomnography/Sleep Technology A.A.S. degree of its kind in Kansas. The program will prepare skilled entry-level polysomnographic technologists in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains. Partners participating in this grant project include: Pro-Tech Services, Inc., Mukilteo, Washington, and Sleepmate, Midlothian, Virginia. Graduates from the program will enter the field as Polysomnographic Technicians and will be prepared to sit for the national exam given by the Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists in order to gain the Registered Polysomnographic Technologist (RPSGT) credential.

Northwest Kansas Technical College (Goodland) was awarded \$5,000 for the Computer Graphic Technology associate degree program to purchase a Motion Capture Studio. The participating business and industry partner is Fineline and Graphic Studio, Denver, Colorado. Students enrolled in this unique program will have the opportunity to learn firsthand about an optical motion capture system that captures natural human motion. Motion Capture is a technique of digitally recording movements for entertainment, sports, or medical applications. The ARENA motion capture software allows a single user to create an advanced motion sequence, work with the data, and export the data into Motion Builder in popular formats like BVH, C3D and real-time.

North Central Kansas Technical College (Beloit) was awarded \$43,650 to purchase a TranSim IV Driving Simulator with software. The participating grant project partners include: Coomes, Inc. Phillipsburg, and the Kansas Contractors Association, Topeka. Students enrolled in the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program will be able to expand their skills through increased hands-on practice through the use of high-end simulation. The innovative scenario simulations have been shown to produce safer and more-skilled drivers. Driving simulators are a key element of a CDL training program.

These grants were made possible by the Kansas Technology Innovation and Internship Program which was created by the Kansas Legislature in 1991, and which is administered by the Board of Regents. The program provides grants to institutions delivering technical education for start-up support for innovative technical courses or programs in emerging technologies, manufacturing, or areas of skill shortages. Partnering private businesses are required to provide financial or in-kind support to the educational institutions equaling 100% of the grant award.

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state's six universities and a coordinating board for nineteen community colleges, ten technical institutions, and a municipal university.

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