

Partnering to Create a National Training and Education Center for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

A well-trained workforce is key to attract industry and drive economic development. Currently, the Dayton region is working to create a substantial and sustainable positive economic impact through the growth of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) market.

UAVs have proven to be valuable assets for our nation's military and, more recently, has expanded into many non-military roles, such as disaster response, search and rescue operations, and geographic information services. As the use of UAVs increases, so does the need for UAV industry-specific education, training and certification.

In January of this year, Sinclair Community College's Workforce Development and Corporate Services division convened a regional meeting of collaborators to determine the interest level in creating a National Training and Education Center for UAVs in the Dayton region. Attendees at this session included representatives from the FAA, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton Development Coalition, IDCAST, and federal, state and local government, as well as leaders from local businesses associated with the UAV market.

From this meeting, it was determined that the Dayton region is uniquely positioned to support the creation and ongoing operations of a National Training and Education Center for UAVs. The center would create new training opportunities for area individuals to attain critical skills in this emerging industry to fill the expected growth in workforce demand.

The National Training and Education Center for UAVs would develop educational programs and serve as a national education clearinghouse. Sinclair would collaborate with other education and industry partners to evaluate and leverage existing training and to develop new curriculum.

"Through the partnership created between academia, business and government, we look forward to creating this center that will benefit economic development for the region," said Deb Norris, Sinclair's Vice President of Workforce Development and Corporate Services.

The partnership team is in the process of identifying potential funding from federal, state or other sources and will initially focus on UAV operator, sensor operator and UAV maintenance technician training.

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