



COLLEGE 360°
Cleveland **Northeast Ohio** Akron

395 Ghent Road
Suite 115
Fairlawn, OH 44333
330.666.9258
www.noche.org

For more information, contact:

Monica Turoczy, Associate Director
330-666-9258, ext. 228
216-577-4494 (cell)
mturoczy@noche.org

Northeast Ohio Answers College 360° Call Initiative to Enroll, Engage, Employ More College Graduates Commences

CLEVELAND (September 28, 2005) – Business and civic leaders on Wednesday answered the call to transform Northeast Ohio into a premier destination for college bound students and college graduates by making an unprecedented commitment to enrolling, engaging and employing more college students in the region.

The College 360° brain gain initiative targeted at 18 to 24 year olds was unveiled at a Community Kickoff at the Federal Reserve Bank in downtown Cleveland. Students representing 15 participating Northeast Ohio colleges called on the region's leaders to build the case for why more college students should make Northeast Ohio their choice to learn, play and work.

“The 170,000 college students who are already enrolled in Northeast Ohio colleges and the hundreds of thousands more who are considering going to college here represent part of the solution to the region's brain gain challenge,” said Matthew Kaplan, an Oberlin College junior who is a member of Team 360, a student advisory group for College 360. “Team 360 and those we represent want to know what the region is going to do to meet that challenge.”

The region's leaders answered that call by vowing to:

- **Create 3,600 more internships** in Northeast Ohio over the next three years. FirstEnergy Corp. of Akron, Hyland Software of Westlake and Nestlé of Solon are among the region's largest employers committed to making the College 360° initiative a success in this regard.
- Make “**Do Downtown Akron**” **discount cards available to all area college students** via the College 360° web site, www.College360.org.
- Offer college students **access to many Playhouse Square events** for discounted rates via www.College360.org.
- Provide **affordable hotel lodging opportunities and restaurant values** through a partnership between College 360° and the Greater Cleveland Convention and Visitors Bureau.

“These are just the initial round of commitments by the region to make Northeast Ohio a premier destination for learning, living and working,” said Paul Dolan, president of the Cleveland Indians and co-chair of College 360°. “I am encouraged by this first wave of commitments, and believe Northeast Ohio leaders recognize that the region's economic success is directly linked to the education levels of our residents.”

“College 360° is a broad-based regionwide initiative to build a brand for Northeast Ohio in support of the efforts of our colleges and universities in recruiting students,” said Tom Chema, president of Hiram College and the other co-chair. “We want to help close the deal for prospective students by showing them the full 360-degree experience that is available to them here in the region. We’re going to do a better job of engaging students in the community once they’re here, and we intend to increase their awareness of the career opportunities that are here after they graduate.”

College 360° has published the region’s first “*Campus Visit*,” a magazine that promotes and informs potential college students and their parents of the cultural and other assets of Northeast Ohio. A new web site, www.College360.org, introduces students to the same assets and serves as a catalyst for engaging them off the campuses in the communities and activities of Northeast Ohio. Future initiatives include www.Career360.org, which will connect college students to internship and co-op opportunities throughout the region.

Institutions supporting College 360° include Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland State University, Cuyahoga Community College, Hiram College, John Carroll University, Kent State University, Lakeland Community College, Lake Erie College, Lorain County Community College, Myers University, Notre Dame College, Oberlin College, the University of Akron and Ursuline College.

The Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education (NOCHE) sponsored and organized the College 360° initiative.

“NOCHE is committed to building the region’s workforce capacity and enhancing regional economic development through higher education,” said Charles Hickman, NOCHE executive director. “College 360° is an outgrowth of our mission. We look forward to working with a variety of community partners to make this initiative a success.”

“College 360°. . . Cleveland/Northeast Ohio/Akron” is a four-year, \$5 million cross-sector initiative to increase the region’s supply of college-educated workers. College 360° defines a series of messages and implements activities that identify Northeast Ohio as a premier destination for learning, living and working. For more information visit www.college360.org

###