

State Regents Recognize SWOSU & DFM Partnership

05.07.2010

Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford and Dougherty Forestry Manufacturing in Hinton were recently recognized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for their innovative collaboration that furthers the education of Oklahoma's workforce. Representatives from the two were honored at a recent reception. Representing DFM was Marshall Dougherty (second from right) and on hand from SWOSU were Center for Economic and Business Development employees (from left) Dr. Marvin Hankins, Doug Misak and Lisa Snider as well as SWOSU President Randy Beutler.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford was among 22 institutions throughout the state recently recognized for their innovative collaborations that further the education of Oklahoma's workforce.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's Economic Development Grant for the Partnership Recognition Program is designed to highlight successful partnerships between higher education institutions and businesses and to further cultivate the higher learning environment through State Regents' Economic Development Grants.

Dougherty Forestry Manufacturing in Hinton has partnered with SWOSU's Center for Economic and Business Development and its Oklahoma Small Business Development Center to create a company that is continuously providing innovative solutions for farmers, ranchers and government agencies.

Needing a solution to better clear trees and brush, the Dougherty brothers-Patrick and Peter-developed a tractor-mounted saw they dubbed the Turbo Saw. After local success and recognition as a Journal Record Innovator of the Year in 2004, DFM began developing and offering new products. The company now offers nine products within their successful Turbo Saw line.

The SWOSU CEDB has worked diligently with DFM to secure financing, and the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance has helped DFM source materials and utilize state incentives. Sales of Turbo Saw products have doubled each year since the company's inception. DFM will hire more workers to keep up with the rising product demand after the planned facilities expansion.

Institutions involved in these partnerships provide \$500 for tuition waivers to employees of the partnering businesses, internships for current students of the institutions to work at the partnering businesses, faculty externships with the partnering businesses, and/or enhancement of the partnership with additional equipment, materials or supplies. The State Regents provide a \$500 match to the waivers.

"To improve Oklahoma's future, we need higher education and businesses to develop successful partnerships and training programs. Through these partnerships, students receive hands-on, career-related experiences and better preparation for college," said

Chancellor Glen D. Johnson. "With these partnerships in place, Oklahoma can better train future employees and strengthen its position in the global marketplace."