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## News and Information Services - News Release

### WVU, WVHTC Foundation to Advance Technology Transfer

#### CONTACT:

**Gregg Warren, Outreach Manager, IP Management Group, 304-230-1430.**

West Virginia University (WVU), recognized for its world-class research, has partnered with the West Virginia High Technology Consortium (WVHTC) Foundation to assist in advancing the university's intellectual properties toward commercialization.

U.S. Rep. Alan Mollohan, D-W.Va., said the partnership is a positive move in diversifying the state's economy.

The partnership between the WVU Research Corp. (WVURC), on behalf of WVU, and the WVHTC Foundation's Intellectual Property (IP) Management Group, based in Wheeling, will help commercialize technology created at the university's research facilities. The non-profit WVURC was established under West Virginia law for the purpose of advancing research and economic development, and to manage the intellectual portfolio for the university.

The IP Management Group will help determine the market potential of the university's research. If the research is commercially viable, the IP Management Group's specialists will assist WVU in developing alliances that will advance the technology.

WVU President David C. Hardesty Jr. said, "This is a mutually beneficial academic/private sector partnership that will help the state and region reach its economic development goals."

As the largest research organization in the state recognized as a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University--Extensive, WVU has grown its research enterprise by 146 percent over the past six years, reaching \$150.5 million during the past fiscal year.

"The university is making a major effort to grow and link its research enterprise to economic development through technology transfer," according to Dr. John D. Weete, WVU vice president for research and economic development and president of the WVURC. "We established an office of technology transfer six years ago, a business incubator one and a half years ago and are currently developing a research park.

"The IP Management Group is unique to West Virginia and has a proven track record in intellectual property commercialization. The group will help us be even more effective in reaching a broader audience with our commercialization efforts."

The IP Management Group employs nearly 50 scientists and other technological specialists who help advance early-stage research from laboratories to markets and provide a comprehensive range of intellectual property management services.

"West Virginia University's researchers spend countless hours developing vital new technologies. Their

research in environmental, engineering, biotech/biometrics, medical and other technologies is world-class. There is a strong sense of excitement as we begin working together to help bring these wonderful new technologies to life," noted James Estep, WVHTC Foundation president and chief executive officer.

The new partnership, Estep explained, is an example of how other higher education institutions can also develop and commercialize their technologies. He added that Joe Allen, IP Management Group vice president and general manager, stands ready to work with other colleges and universities to forge similar partnerships.

"WVU has set an example for others to follow. Under Dr. Weete's leadership, the number of WVU's license agreements, patents, invention disclosures and start-up companies has greatly increased. We are honored that he approached us to assist an already outstanding program," Allen said.

Mollohan, who spearheaded the creation of the WVHTC Foundation and its expansion to Wheeling, said that the partnership has great potential.

"We determined years ago that if West Virginia were to thrive in the future, we needed to diversify its economy with technology-based activities. Jump-starting that diversification process was the reason we created the WVHTC Foundation,"

Mollohan said. "Thanks to its success, the technology sector is now an engine of our state's economy.

"The best way to fuel that engine, and make it accelerate even faster, is by supplying a steady flow of promising new technologies. WVU is an obvious source of such innovation, and the WVHTC Foundation's skill in advancing new technologies makes this a partnership rich in possibilities."

Funding for the IP Management Group primarily is derived from contracts it holds to analyze emerging technologies developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Department of Commerce. It also works with private businesses and other major universities to advance their technologies.

The WVHTC Foundation, located in Fairmont, W.Va., is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization functioning as an engine of economic change for growing a statewide, regional and national high tech business sector. The foundation has established a multi-faceted approach to maximize economic development, commercialization and workforce development.

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Post Office Box 6688, 200 Clark Hall - Morgantown, WV 26506-6688  
Phone: (304) 293-6997 - Fax: (304) 293-7159  
Director: Becky.Lofstead@mail.wvu.edu