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CoEE INVESTOR SPOTLIGHT: MICHELIN



In 2003, Michelin chose to invest \$5 million in South Carolina's Centers of Economic Excellence (CoEE) Program, partnering with the Center of Economic Excellence in Electronic Systems Integration, part of the Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR).

Michelin's investment allowed Clemson to recruit a leading expert in the field of electrical engineering, Dr. Todd Hubing. At CU-ICAR, Dr. Hubing is helping Michelin integrate and improve the electronic systems that control most aspects of today's vehicles, with a

mission to achieve higher vehicle safety, performance, and reliability. While Michelin is most strongly associated with tire manufacturing, the company is dedicated to the broader goal of contributing to progress in personal and goods mobility.

Why would one of the world's top automotive suppliers invest millions in South Carolina research? Below, Michelin Director of External Research Ralph Hulseman explains why the company made a strategic decision to invest in the CoEE Program.

Why did Michelin invest in the CoEE Program?

Hulseman: Michelin has been in South Carolina for almost 35 years, and we've always been a strong supporter of education. We saw this as an opportunity to invest in a unique concept that has the ability to secure South Carolina's place as a center of automotive expertise. We were particularly attracted by the opportunity for joint research and development with Clemson and a variety of vehicle manufacturers and other technology developers in the transportation industry. CU-ICAR is a shared, neutral platform that gives us the ability to accelerate progress on many fronts simultaneously.

Michelin initially provided an endowment for one professorship and an associated laboratory at CU-ICAR. This professorship is expected to attract two junior faculty members. It will also grow into a program of 15 to 20 graduate students.

How is Michelin benefiting from its investment in CoEE?

Hulseman: Through the program, Michelin has enhanced its long-standing relationships with several vehicle manufacturers and with Clemson. We have also created new relationships with several technology suppliers and other vendors. Key technologies have emerged that are of benefit to Michelin. Also, the development of an advanced degree

program, specific to our industry, will provide an excellent source of recruiting for future talent. [The program will offer the first automotive engineering Ph.D. in the country.]

What does Michelin see as the potential long-term advantages of being involved with the CoEE Program?

Hulseman: We wish to see the CoEE Program continue and flourish. Michelin is continuously evaluating new opportunities to participate in the program.

CU-ICAR, with the help of the CoEE Program, continues to mature as a neutral platform where original equipment manufacturers and suppliers can jointly conduct research. We believe that CU-ICAR will emerge as a leader in helping to establish industry standards and regulations and in helping to establish a vision for the future of transportation for passenger cars and trucks.

The CoEE Program will help attract other technology-focused companies to South Carolina, which in turn drives economic progress and job growth. We also expect the CoEE Program to be a strong catalyst for improved higher education opportunities and economic development that will benefit South Carolina as a whole, and therefore will benefit our efforts here and our ability to remain competitive.



About the CoEE Program

Established by the S.C. General Assembly in 2002, the South Carolina Centers of Economic Excellence Program receives an appropriation from S.C. Education Lottery funds to help Clemson University, the Medical University of South Carolina, and the University of South Carolina create Centers of Economic Excellence (CoEE) in research areas that will advance South Carolina's economy and lead to high-paying jobs. The program also provides funding for CoEE endowed chairs, world-renowned scientists recruited to South Carolina to lead the Centers. Every dollar the state invests must be matched dollar-for-dollar with non-state funds from companies, philanthropies, or federal agencies.

For details on how your company can benefit by investing in the CoEE Program, please use the following contact information:

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