

# INNOVATION ALLIANCE



*A Partnership Between The University of Akron  
and Lorain County Community College*

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## **UNIVERSITY OF AKRON AND LORAIN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE SIGN SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT**

Akron, Ohio, June 12, 2008 — The University of Akron (UA) and Lorain County Community College (LCCC) continue to strengthen the Innovation Alliance — a unique partnership enhancing innovation and economic growth in the region — through the signing of a new agreement to share “back office” technologies that will benefit both institutions and be a model for the new University System of Ohio and nationwide.

Dr. Luis M. Proenza, president of The University of Akron, and Dr. Roy Church, president of Lorain County Community College, signed the agreement on May 30. In the agreement, UA will act as a service provider for LCCC enterprise business applications utilizing PeopleSoft Campus Solutions software. Student-services applications include admissions, records, accounting and financial aid. Applications for financial services include budgeting, accounts payable, purchasing and non-student accounts receivable. Human-resources applications include employee records, payroll and benefits.

Creating this relationship will allow both institutions to co-develop a collaborative back office operation that could eventually grow into a shared service model. Shared service is the convergence and streamlining of non-competing business processes for the purpose of reducing costs while measurably improving the level and quality of service. It is composed of non-competing technical and functional aspects for operating an organization in a service center structure.

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"The steps taken by Lorain County Community College and The University of Akron are a great example of the collaborations that will help make the University System of Ohio a low-cost, high-quality system," says Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric Fingerhut. " I hope this will be an example we can duplicate around Ohio."

The effective and efficient collaboration of back office technologies in the agreement is setting the stage for a model that other institutions can emulate, Drs. Proenza and Church agree.

"Regional partnership and collaboration are the keys to the future of higher education in Ohio," Dr. Proenza says. "We look forward to working with Chancellor Eric Fingerhut and the Ohio Board of Regents in developing successful models of operation that will benefit not only our partners in the University System of Ohio, but our colleagues nationally and globally as well."

"Higher education, in the same ways as private businesses, has to redesign its administrative processes to consistently improve the quality of services while lowering the unit costs," Dr. Church says.

"We're excited to be working with a forward-thinking partner such as Lorain County Community College to create this innovative back office technology and shared services model," adds James Sage, UA's vice president for information technologies and chief information officer. "Once proven at Lorain, this shared services model has the potential to provide higher quality back office services at a lower cost in other higher education institutions across the state."

"This project is precedent-setting for Ohio," says David Cummins, LCCC vice president, administrative services/treasurer. "It's an opportunity to create a model for higher education that will help us control costs and enhance services at the same time."

The Innovation Alliance was established by the two institutions in March 2007. This collaboration is designed to align strengths and resources, and accelerate educational efficiency, knowledge creation and economic development within an area between the campuses dubbed the Innovation Corridor.

Major initiatives of the alliance include pursuing shared mechanisms to drive down costs; assisting existing industries to grow stronger and new industries to take root; and working with K-12 education and industry partners to create the next generation of highly trained scientists, mathematicians, engineers and technicians. This includes creating and delivering joint applied baccalaureate degrees at 40 percent of the cost and in 25 percent less time in the high-growth areas of advanced manufacturing, health care and entrepreneurship, and developing STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) initiatives with P-12 districts throughout the Innovation Corridor. For more information about the Innovation Alliance, visit [www.innovation-alliance.org](http://www.innovation-alliance.org).

Lorain County Community College, located 25 miles west of Cleveland in Elyria, Ohio, LCCC is one of the top 15 fastest-growing community colleges in the nation serving approximately 11,000 students each semester at the associate-degree level and another 3,000 at the bachelor's and master's degree levels. LCCC features 37 associate's degrees and through its unique University Partnership program 29 bachelor's and 11 master's degrees. LCCC is also home to the Great Lakes Innovation and Development Enterprise, an Edison Technology Incubator, which provides incubation and development services for businesses at the start-up or expansion stage. For more information, visit [www.lorainccc.edu](http://www.lorainccc.edu).

The University of Akron is the public research university for Northern Ohio. It is the only public university in Ohio with a science and engineering program ranked in the top five nationally by U.S. News & World Report. Serving 24,700 students, the university offers approximately 300 associate, bachelor's, master's, doctoral and law degree programs and 100 certificate programs at sites in Summit, Wayne, Medina and Holmes counties. For more information, visit [www.uakron.edu](http://www.uakron.edu).