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**Updayton Summit Helps Young Creatives Determine Direction for Region**

**Dayton** – On Saturday, April 18, updayton hosted approximately 200 of the region’s talented and innovative young creatives at the Dayton Convention Center for the first annual *Young Creatives Summit*. Young creatives are talented, innovative, under 40 years of age, and critical to the economic and cultural success of our region.

The objective of the first annual *Young Creatives Summit* was to demonstrate the passion and power of young creatives in our region, let them determine priorities, and invite the young leaders to volunteer to make a difference in the region. The Summit was a forum for students and young professionals to air their concerns and state their needs to local leaders while working toward creating solutions, networking with other young professionals and learning about regional opportunities.

After participants discussed their concerns and brainstormed regional solutions in small group sessions, a total of 31 projects were presented to the larger Summit. After a long process of ranking project ideas, the four most popular concepts from the Summit are:

- Engage downtown youth in after-school programs specifically coordinated for them
- Work to create an online central communication hub that can highlight the opportunities and options in the region
- A project to promote and grow Downtown Dayton. The goal of this group is to help better promote and attract popular venues/entertainment options to the center of the city.
- Help make the Wayne Avenue corridor between Third and Fifth Streets more pedestrian-friendly and vibrant

These four project ideas will be tackled beginning in early May when the volunteers are challenged to consider regional assets which can help them implement their goals and specific tasks which may move them toward meeting the greater goals.

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Updayton is pleased with the results of the Summit. Scott Murphy, project lead, says “the participants determined their own priorities – this will lead to greater engagement in working toward the success of the region. Although the ideas are ambitious, we believe they are attainable. At our May launch event, updayton volunteers will form teams for each top project idea, define project goals and determine next steps.”

Many regional organizations are currently working toward similar goals, and the updayton volunteers will be further researching those efforts. When asked why updayton is tackling these same projects, Murphy said, “the very fact that these are the ideas that came up at the Summit demonstrates that the young people in the region care strongly about these topics and want to get more involved. We’re not trying to re-invent the wheel, but these young creatives are asking for a voice in shaping the future of the region. We are giving them the opportunity to do that.”

Dayton's numerous universities & highly skilled students give it more talent potential than most anywhere in the state, but too many graduates are slipping away. Each young, creative professional that leaves the region is a missed economic opportunity. At the Summit, Dayton’s diverse and innovative young creatives proposed their ideas to help the region better serve young talent and plug the brain drain. Beginning at the Summit and continuing to the project launch in early May, they have the opportunity to put their own creative spin on the best way to accomplish their goals.

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*An initiative of the DaytonCREATE project, updayton strives to spur economic growth within the region by attracting and retaining young talent. updayton is connecting young creative professionals to the Miami Valley and engaging them in the region’s decision making.*

***We are updayton. Our members are of all ages, and we are passionate about building a better Dayton. When someone asks us where we live, we are proud to call Dayton our home.***