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Third Annual Young Creatives Summit Produces Projects for Community Improvement

Students and young professionals tackled issues on Nightlife, Jobs, Neighborhoods and Diversity

Dayton, Ohio: The 2011 Young Creatives Summit hosted by updayton has come and gone with three packed hours of networking, professional development and (most importantly) providing young creatives the opportunity to shape the future of the region. Participants had their say in important topics including nightlife, jobs, neighborhoods and diversity and determined the direction that would make the region more exciting for them.

This year, updayton partnered with established organizations in the region for project plans. Through this partnership, participants learned more about how the issue affects the region and there is greater potential for long-term project sustainability.

NIGHTLIFE: The Downtown Dayton Partnership had the goal to create a new element for First Friday that entices new audiences and encourages visitors to travel among numerous establishments. Updayton participants are launching a project where performers drive the visitors on rickshaws to the various establishments while offering them a song, sonnet or story.

DIVERSITY: The Immigrant Friendly Task Force of the City of Dayton Human Relations Council had the goal of better connecting local residents to Dayton's immigrant community for a sharing of culture. Summit attendees will launch a project where local families (both native and immigrant) are paired with one another. Native families will act as a tour guide for their immigrant friends – introducing them both to the region and our culture. In return, immigrant families will share stories, food and traditions that define their culture. It's a "big brother" type program for culture-sharing. This group hopes to partner with Dayton Metro Library which already has an extensive collection of foreign language music, movies, books, and other resources.

JOBS: The Southwestern Ohio Council for Higher Education (SOCHE) challenged attendees to determine what can be done to identify, engage and motivate local employers to offer/create internships for local college students. Summit participants proposed "Linked Internships" – a LinkedIn page to provide an open forum for students to post their interests, experience and references. Local businesses will be able to quickly sift through the page to find the right candidate, review the resume and check references. It will be local to the Dayton region and act as an open forum that provides a "one-stop shop" for businesses to find interns.

NEIGHBORHOODS: CityWide Development participated in the Summit to solicit information on what would make neighborhoods more attractive to young professionals. In addition to a lot of great conversation and input, the updayton attendees launched a project to beautify local neighborhoods. They intend to host various community clean-up days to include the physical work of cleaning, gardening, and maintaining green space as well as incorporating a community aspect. They hope to solicit volunteers from the neighborhoods to get people plugged into the project and vested in the upkeep of their neighborhood.

These four topics were selected due to research by updayton as top topics of importance for young professionals as they determine where they want to live. These ideas are just the foundation of the projects. Volunteers will re-convene on May 3 to determine potential partners, discuss details, and determine next steps.

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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.