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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Area colleges and universities to receive \$30,000 in grants from GRKIZ** *Grants will be presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Sustainability Conference, hosted by the Chamber and HBA*

The Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry is pleased to announce the awarding of nearly \$30,000 in grants to complete four research projects that will help develop new services and technologies, provide real world experience for area college students and apply faculty expertise to solve business issues.

The grants will be presented at 12:15 p.m. on Friday, April 29, during the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Sustainability Conference, hosted by the Chamber and the Home Builders Association of Berks County. The conference is being held at the Inn at Reading, 1040 N. Park Road in Wyomissing.

- Albright College will receive \$8,000 for a research project with CeeLink Media, LLC. Bonnie Rhode, instructor of business, and three business students will conduct a text messaging feasibility study and product design.
- Kutztown University will receive \$8,000 for a research project with the Keystone Chapter of the Association of Unmanned Vehicles Systems International (AUVSI). Dr. Therese Maskulka, associate professor of marketing, and 27 graduate marketing students will conduct a market feasibility study for potential for a center of excellence for unmanned vehicles and robotics in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.
- Penn State University Berks will receive \$7,991 for a research project with Reading Electric Renewables. Dr. Shiyong Lee, assistant professor of electrical engineering; Dr. Dale H. Litwhiler, assistant professor of electrical engineering technology; Jeff Wike, supervisor, electrical engineering labs; and three students, will design and install a fully functional solar-powered electric vehicle charging station for electric vehicles.
- Penn State University Berks will receive \$5,970 for a research project with Giorgio Fresh Company. Dr. Hassan Gourama, associate professor of food science, and one undergraduate student will determine the microbiological guideline levels to monitor the shelf life of mushrooms.

Last October, the Greater Reading Keystone Innovation Zone (GRKIZ), a program housed at the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry, was awarded \$50,000 to accelerate technology transfer efforts by connecting business and academia. Funding is provided by the PA Department of Community & Economic Development to help start-up companies succeed and equip Pennsylvania's colleges and universities with the resources to commercialize new technologies.

The GRKIZ partnered with Innovation Transfer Network (ITN) to identify faculty expertise, promote collaboration and connect with the Reading business community. Leading this initiative are: Jennifer Leinbach, GRKIZ coordinator; Jill Edwards, ITN executive director; Jennifer Hammaker, ITN Business Development; and Malcolm Furman, ITN faculty liaison. The project team met with the five local colleges and universities in Berks County, as well as local companies to serve as matchmakers in identifying potential projects and providing guidance through the proposal process.

