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## Greater Reading Chamber gives money to local colleges

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The Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry awarded almost \$30,000 in grants to complete four research projects that will help develop services and technologies, provide real-world experience for students and apply faculty expertise to solve business issues.

The grants were presented Friday during the sustainability conference, hosted by the Chamber and the Home Builders Association of Berks County. The conference was held at the Inn at Reading, Wyomissing.

Albright College received \$8,000 for a research project with CeeLink Media, Reading. Bonnie Rohde, instructor of business, and three business students will conduct a text messaging feasibility study and product design.

Kutztown University received \$8,000 for a research project with the Keystone Chapter of the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International. Dr. Therese Maskulka, associate professor of marketing, and 27 graduate marketing students will conduct a market feasibility study to determine the potential for establishing a center of excellence for unmanned vehicles and robotics in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Penn State Berks received \$7,991 for a research project with Reading Electric Renewables, Muhlenberg Township. 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.

And Penn State Berks received \$5,970 for a research project with Giorgio Fresh Co., Muhlenberg Township. 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.

In October, the Greater Reading Keystone Innovation Zone, a program housed at the Chamber, was awarded \$50,000 to accelerate technology transfer efforts by connecting business and academia.

Funding is provided by the state 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.