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Ohio ranked 4th nationally in biotech strength

By Chelsey Levingston

Staff Writer

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Business Facilities Magazine ranked Ohio fourth in the nation in its 2008 Biotechnology Strength Report, featured in the magazine's current issue.

Ohio followed Pennsylvania, California and Massachusetts and tied for fourth with Texas.

Criteria was rated on a point scale and was based on state research and development funding and venture capital investments, concentrated biotech occupational employment, bioscience targeted tax exemptions, number of biotech facilities, biotech patents generated, university grant funding and bioscience higher education degrees.

Additional points were given to states that actually made investments or had the highest employment concentration in more than one subsector.

The state department responsible for advancing Ohio's bioscience impact is BioOhio, part of and funded by the state development department.

Matt Schutte, BioOhio director of corporate communications, described the organization as a chamber of commerce with 230 members and with economic development and industry associated tasks. He said the report validates the growing bioscience industry in Ohio and the need for talent.

"All those business opportunities in growing a company or creating a company all boils down to creating jobs. And what we're trying to do is expand the opportunities in bioscience where it's growing," Schutte said. "We want it to grow quicker and add more fuel. The fuel is talent," Schutte added.

BioOhio focuses on company and capital formation, company attraction, work force development and networking, community building and awareness. For example, BioOhio was part of recruiting Amylin, a company that produces the diabetes drug Byetta, in West Chester.

Other BioOhio members include Eurand, a pharmaceutical company and Leis Medical, a medical device company, located in Vandalia.

Schutte said BioOhio defines biosciences as a diverse and often converging group of industries and activities that apply knowledge to develop solutions that sustain, restore and improve the quality with which humans, plants, and animals function and utilize biological products to address unmet needs in our world.

BioOhio launched its new Web site, www.bioohio.com, July 21 and features its growth report.

Contact this reporter at clevingston@DaytonDailyNews.com.

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