UVU RETURNS STATE INVESTMENT EIGHT-FOLD, CONTRIBUTES MORE THAN A HALF-BILLION TO UTAH’S ECONOMY

Utah Valley University provides a return of $7.97 for every state dollar invested for an annual economic impact of $534 million, according to a recently concluded study by Jack Faucett Associates, Inc. UVU’s return on investment to the state’s economy has increased by 21 percent over the past five years.

“This report illustrates in concrete terms what we’ve known about UVU for some time — namely, this institution is an indispensable economic engine for the state and the region,” said UVU President Matthew S. Holland. “Rare if ever will a stock or treasury portfolio return an investment eight-fold annually, but that is precisely what UVU does for the state of Utah.”

Of the more than half-billion dollars UVU contributes to Utah each year, $458.7 million is concentrated in the institution’s service region, which is comprised of Utah, Summit and Wasatch counties. UVU’s value-added impact — which subtracts inputs from total economic output — is about $374 million annually, based on a return of $5.58 per state dollar invested, with $333 concentrated in the University’s service region.

UVU’s total economic impact measures the institution’s direct effect on the local economy, but the University’s indirect influence is even greater. The study quantifies UVU’s impact to the additional lifetime earnings of UVU graduates. For the 3,700 UVU graduates in the class of 2010, that additional lifetime income is nearly $2 billion.

“When you consider that 87 percent of UVU alumni remain in Utah after graduation, you get a sense for what that extra earning power means to the state,” Holland said. “Every year, UVU sends thousands of graduates into the local economy better prepared to earn higher incomes and contribute to the state’s economy. Not only is UVU the state’s largest public institution, but it is also the largest provider of undergraduate education for Utahns. Thus, this institution really is a critical and sustaining source of economic energy.”

In terms of jobs, UVU is the fifth-largest employer in Utah County with 1,529 full-time employees and 2,982 part-time employees. According to the study, UVU supports an additional 6,399 full-time equivalent jobs in its service region.

The study did not quantify numerous other economic contributions of the university, such as the impacts of UVU’s economic development centers and programs. UVU is the host site for the state’s cluster acceleration project in digital media and administers the state’s manufacturing extension partnership. UVU’s Small Business Development Center is routinely ranked No. 1 in the state in key categories such as business starts, capital formation and jobs created.

[MORE]
In addition, UVU recently hired an associate vice president to spearhead economic development initiatives, created an entrepreneurship institute and launched a technology commercialization office to spin local academic and entrepreneurial ideas into viable businesses. The storefront for UVU’s economic development efforts will be the Business Resource Center, which will open with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Jan. 6. More information about the event will be made available to the news media in coming weeks.

UVU’s economic impact study reinforces the position of the Prosperity 2020 initiative that education and the economy are inextricably linked. Prosperity 2020 calls for “bold innovation and investment in public and higher education to support our workforce and propel our economy.” Specifically, Prosperity 2020 aims for 66 percent of Utahns to obtain higher education by 2020, up from the current mark of 39 percent, to increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of Utah’s workforce.

###

**About UVU**

Utah Valley University is located in Orem, Utah, and is home to more than 33,000 students. UVU began as a vocational school during World War II, and in the seven decades since has evolved into a technical school, community college, state college and, finally, a comprehensive regional teaching university. UVU is one of Utah’s largest institutions of higher learning and offers programs ranging from career training to high-demand master degrees, with emphasis on undergraduate education.