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Tech Transfer: KSURF and KSU-IC: Turning discovery into commercial success

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KSURF and KSU-IC: Turning discovery into commercial success

By Pat Melgares

Chris Brandt knows that in the business world, the knowledge that is created in the laboratories and classrooms of Kansas State University has value.

Brandt, the president and chief executive officer of the Kansas State University Research Foundation, or KSURF, heads a team that makes sure researchers and faculty get credit for their discoveries.

“KSURF provides oversight to ensure faculty and university rights are protected,” Brandt said. “This includes inventions, software, copyrights, seed and plant varieties, and proprietary materials.”

Brandt noted that the research foundation helps faculty members connect with resources and expertise to protect their intellectual property.

“We do this by assisting faculty with evaluating a discovery’s potential to be protected and generate commercial interest,” he said. “The research foundation also protects discoveries through confidential disclosure, material transfer and other agreements.”


Once intellectual property is protected, the Kansas State University Institute for Commercialization, known as KSU-IC, works with the research foundation to connect faculty with potential industry partners that have an interest in licensing the protected intellectual property.

Kent Glasscock, president and chief executive officer of the KSU-IC, said interactions with industry partners can lead to other benefits for university faculty.

“New corporate relationships can often result in sponsored research opportunities, either to further the development of the marketed technology, or in completely new areas of interest to our industry partners,” he said.

KSURF and KSU-IC help spur marketing and economic development that can get the faculty member’s discovery more quickly into the channels where it benefits people.

“The research foundation believes K-State’s world-class research and discoveries should be shared with the widest possible audience through commercialization of new products and global solutions to benefit society,” Brandt said. “It is important to develop strategies to protect discoveries and give them the best chance to reach the marketplace.”

More information on how the Kansas State University Research Foundation and Kansas State University Institute for Commercialization help university faculty is available at k-state.edu/tech.transfer. 

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— Chris Brandt