

# Memorandum

Date: September 28, 2001  
To: Higher Education/Health Care Economic Development Task Force  
From: Greg Williams, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
Re: Revised Final Recommendations for Chamber Board Consideration

The Higher Education/Health Care/Economic Development Task Force has as its objective to formulate a series of recommendations for the consideration of the Chamber Board of Directors on how the community can formulate and implement new economic development initiatives, better utilizing these two major economic influences in our community. These recommendations will serve as strategic economic development initiatives in achieving the overall goals of:

- Meeting current and future health care needs
- Creating opportunities to join the sectors of higher education and health care in efforts to enhance programs of each.

The following recommendations will be presented to the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors with the hope that they will be included as priorities in its annual strategic plan.

## **Recommendation 1: Pursue partnership with the Stowers Institute for Medical Research**

The Task Force should take the initiative to pursue specific partnering opportunities between Springfield area higher education and health care professionals and the Stowers Institute in Kansas City, Missouri. The Chamber's primary objective should focus on partnering opportunities in clinical trials as well as other opportunities for community and economic development. Furthermore, the Task Force recommends that Chamber and private sector representatives from Springfield meet with Jim and Virginia Stowers and Bill Neaves of the Stowers Institute to introduce and discuss specific opportunities relating to the partnering opportunities that may exist.

## **Recommendation 2: Assessment of Projected Needs: Health Care and Higher Education**

This recommendation is intended to develop a basis from which to plan and implement future initiatives. This type of study would analyze current and future health care and life sciences needs as well the current and future labor pool related to such needs (professionals, technical, administrative support, etc.). The Projected Needs Study should also identify those areas in which institutions of higher education can correct the deficiencies that may exist in meeting current health care provider workforce needs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Task Force recommends that the Chamber examine these needs on a long-term basis. This examination should work to identify programs and methods to institute in order to retain graduates from Springfield's higher education systems.

## **Recommendation 3: Economic Impact Analysis: Health Care and Higher Education**

An Economic Impact Analysis of both sectors is recommended for the purposes of measuring current impact and creating a platform from which to calculate future economic impact. This study should exist as a living document, updated annually to track progress in meeting pre-established benchmarks.

**Recommendation 4: Exploration of Ancillary Business Opportunities**

The Task Force recommends the examination of various opportunities in which new business ventures could facilitate health care/higher education needs. Exploration of the development of a Springfield Region Life Sciences Park should occur, and opportunities relating to a life sciences conference center and associated manufacturing and service center should be identified. This analysis should include an examination of “best practices” from cities such as Austin, Boston, Cleveland and Rochester, demonstrating the relationships between higher education and health care systems and the impact those partnerships have had on local economic development.

**Recommendation 5: Examination of Other Partnership Opportunities**

Beyond partnering with the Stowers Institute, other opportunities may exist in which partnerships between the higher education, health care, and the community can be beneficial. One such example is a potential partnership relationship with the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield and the higher education/health care sectors. The Task Force recommends that other alliance opportunities be sought and analyzed for partnership and economic development potential.

**Recommendation 6: Formation of Special Task Force As Necessary**

The Task Force recommends that, as needs arise, a special task force of the Chamber, comprised of Chief Executive Officers of the higher education and health care sectors, meet to address issues and potential economic development projects or activities relating to health care/life sciences. This group will examine ways in which higher education institutions and health care providers can collaborate in efforts to facilitate the overall initiative of sector growth and economic development.