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Columbus Launches College Student Engagement + Retention Project

COLUMBUS, Ohio (September 18, 2009) – With the second highest number of college students, per capita in the nation with more than 110,000 students, community leaders from across all sectors (academia, government, business, civic, philanthropy) in Columbus, Ohio have launched a new initiative which serves to bolster the city’s competitive position in the global economy. “EasyColumbus” has a single mission, to engage and ultimately retain college students from the 11 college campuses in the central Ohio region.

EasyColumbus plans to fulfill its mission by creating the following:

- Stronger connections between enrolled students and local employers
- More college graduates remaining in the Columbus region
- Better overall student experiences both personally and professionally
- Enhanced perceptions of the region among students and young professionals
- Higher levels and quality of college students enrolled locally
- Improved college education attainment levels across the region
- Increased civic engagement by the area colleges and their presidents

“This project, over two years in the making, is an excellent example of the collaborative efforts and desires of the local community to make our four year visitors feel connected and at home in Columbus,” said Denny Griffith, president of the Columbus College of Art & Design and Co-Chair of EasyColumbus. “We are pretty confident that once students get to know Columbus a little better, they’ll love us and have more reasons to start their future here.”

The project has two major touch points, the first being an online portal with a list of and discounts to area events, sports, attractions, dining and shopping as well as list internship and community service opportunities and entry level job postings at www.EasyColumbus.com. The second touch point is a printed “Everything Off-Campus Guide” offering the same information and resources as the web site in a magazine style format. The printed guide will be distributed at 11 area college campuses as well as at special events and promotions around town.

“With EasyColumbus.com and the Everything Off-Campus Guide, we asked community partners to pool their resources and content to create the ultimate one-stop-shop for students to find out what is going on around town as well as provide them ways to get more connected to and participate in the community during their studies in Columbus,” said Dan Rosenthal, Co-Chair of Easy Columbus.

Partners in the project include; the City of Columbus, the Columbus Foundation, the Columbus Chamber, CompeteColumbus, Experience Columbus, the Columbus Dispatch, and Columbus Alive. Todd Hoffman has been the lead consultant throughout the project. His consulting firm, Collegia, is responsible for the design of both EasyColumbus.com and the companion print guide.

EasyColumbus is a collaborative effort of the central Ohio civic and business community to engage and retain college students to Columbus. Its mission is to engage college students in the central Ohio region and make them more aware of the vibrant arts and entertainment, culture, business and philanthropic opportunities that exist in Columbus, Ohio.