UD center reports research on economic impact of biopharmaceutical industry

11:48 a.m., April 1, 2009—Simon Condliffe of the University of Delaware's Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research gave a presentation titled "Economic Impact on Delaware's Economy: The Biopharmaceutical and Related Sectors" at the launch of the We Work For Health (WWFH) initiative at Christiana Care's Wilmington Hospital Conference Center on Tuesday, March 30.

A similar event took place on the east steps of Legislative Hall in Dover, where Ed Ratledge, center director and co-author, made the presentation.

WWFH is a coalition of Delaware's business, labor, academic and health care groups whose focus is to inform the public of the important contributions of the biopharmaceutical industry and its employees to communities and the state.

Among the findings Condliffe presented were:

* There are approximately 12,000 persons employed in the pharmaceutical industry in Delaware, with the majority in research and development;
* Wages in this sector approach $1.6 billion, and the annual income per person exceeds $130,000;
* The industry generates an additional 16,000 jobs beyond the 12,000 directly employed;
* The estimated state income taxes paid by the industry is $74 million;
* The footprint of the pharmaceutical industry supports jobs in other sectors, such as construction;
* Although small, Delaware ranks 20th in the past five years in the number of biopharmaceutical patents, and if size is taken into account, it is third behind Connecticut and Massachusetts; and
* Indications show the industry will continue to be an economic engine in the future.

Bob Dayton, president of the Delaware BioScience Association and co-chairperson of WWFH, welcomed the group and introduced other speakers including Dennis Rochford, Delaware Health Care Commission and WWFH co-chairperson; Robert Laskowski, president and CEO of the Christiana Care Health System and WWFH co-chairperson; and Edward Belkin, vice president of communications and public affairs for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, which financed the study.

Other co-chairpersons include Sam Lathem, president of Delaware AFL/CIO, and Miguel McInnis, chief executive officer of Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers.

For the full study, visit this Web site.

Story by Sue Moncure
Photo by Kathy Atkinson