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Ohio University PORTSfuture Program Wins National Award for Site Reindustrialization Efforts

“Great things happen when talented folks come together for the greater good” - Ohio University’s Stephanie Howe, who has been a leader on the project for more than a decade

Ohio – Today, Ohio University announced its [PORTSfuture Program](#) received a National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) [2023 Aliceann Wohlbruch Impact Award](#) for its transformational work leading reindustrialization efforts for the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) former Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PORTS) near Piketon, Ohio. The reindustrialization project aims to reinvigorate manufacturing and the economy with far-reaching impacts to the Ohio Valley and Central Appalachia.

The award recognizes more than 13 years of work by Ohio University’s Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service PORTSfuture Program to turn the former facility into an ‘all of the above’ energy generation and multi-use manufacturing complex that stimulates economic growth and generates well-paying jobs for the region. OU’s work, conducted in partnership with the Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative (SODI), the DOE-designated local community reuse organization, has brought together community leaders, private industry, organized labor, and other organizations in support of the reindustrialization effort.

Led by Stephanie Howe, Director of Energy Programs and Director of Human Capital at Ohio University’s Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service, the PORTSfuture Program was created through investments by DOE to fund work to support the SODI site reindustrialization efforts. Howe made the following statement.

“It is a great honor to have NADO recognize the many years of work the PORTSfuture Program has executed to support the goals of SODI to reindustrialize the DOE site. Our work has been made possible by the DOE Office of Environmental Management Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office’s generous investment and commitment to leveraging the Ohio DOE site for future regional economic prosperity. Through cleanup activities, asset transfer, and real property transfer, DOE continues to support SODI’s mission.”

In addition to DOE and SODI, Howe acknowledged other site reindustrialization partners including the internal team at the Voinovich School, private industry developers; organized labor; PORTS Site Specific Advisory Board; community-oriented groups; site contractors; State of Ohio regulatory agencies; local, state, and federal governmental entities and elected officials; economic development entities; project consultants; and other relevant local, regional, state and national agencies and organizations; and many others who are involved in this public/private partnership.

“Each is vital to our success and deserve to be included in this honor. Great things happen when talented folks come together for the greater good” stated Howe.

The joint work of OU and SODI is culminating with a variety of industry commitment to the site.

Redevelopment will launch with Trillium H2 Power, LLC (tH2), a Newpoint Gas company, building it’s \$1.585 billion h2Trillium Energy and Manufacturing (h2TEAM) complex, which will transform land from the former DOE PORTS facility into an integrated decarbonized hydrogen power generation and closed loop manufacturing facility producing clean ammonia and clean silicon. Earlier this year, Newpoint Gas announced it will purchase approximately 250 acres owned by DOE that will be deeded to SODI, the DOE-designated community reuse organization for the PORTS site. During h2TEAM’s construction phases, an estimated 2,600 jobs will be created, and an estimated 532 operations and maintenance jobs will result. For the project, Newpoint Gas’ tH₂ has established teaming agreements with key industry partners. CDM Smith will serve as the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) partner, Babcock & Wilcox will serve as a foundational technology partner, and J.W. Didado will be the primary electrical contractor.

Oklo, an advanced small modular nuclear reactor company, plans on developing power plants to provide emission-free, reliable, and affordable energy. Oklo recently signed an agreement to deploy two commercial power plants on property owned by SODI at the site. The plants will provide up to 30MW of clean electric power, and over 50MW of clean heating, with opportunities to expand. The plants will also support job creation in the area.

Additionally, a global energy company is planning large-scale battery storage at the site for renewable energy solar arrays in the region.



(left to right) Stephanie Howe, Director of Energy Programs at the Voinovich School, Chris Fetzer, NADO President, and Tracy Plouck, Dean of the Voinovich School receiving the award at NADO's annual training conference in Cleveland on November 8th.



Tracy Plouck, Dean, Voinovich School

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