

## Kalamazoo's SmartZone

### Western Michigan University's Business Technology & Research Park

#### Program Description

As one of Michigan's 11 SmartZones located in 10 counties around the state, Kalamazoo's SmartZone offers a collaborative environment to stimulate the growth of high-tech businesses and jobs by aiding in the creation of recognized technology clusters of excellence.

The Kalamazoo SmartZone was designed to achieve several goals:

- Create a nurturing environment to support the creation and operation of high-tech businesses and of research and development labs.
- Assure a fostering environment including a ready supply of smart workers, students and interns, venture capital, access to ideas, research and development, intellectual property and university personnel available for consultation through its strategic location in Western Michigan University's Business Technology & Research Park.
- Foster collaboration among entrepreneurs, business leaders, the university and units of government.
- Increase awareness of Michigan's advantages in technology and its abundance of premier locations in which to start or grow technology-oriented companies.

#### SmartZone Benefits

Business accelerators help entrepreneurs and researchers identify technology with commercial potential, develop the technology into viable businesses and assist in securing necessary start-up financing. Types of services offered at the accelerators include but are not limited to:

- Technology mining
- Technology assessment
- Business feasibility studies
- Business planning
- Entrepreneur training
- Venture capital preparation
- Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer Program (STTR) assistance
- Grant writing assistance
- Product development
- Management recruitment
- Business development mentoring
- Incubator space
- Market analysis

Additional benefits of locating within Kalamazoo's SmartZone are:

- Availability of wet lab space and high-tech business incubator space
- Access to university resources for research and development
- Networking capabilities for business-to-business collaboration
- Identification of technology for new business ventures
- Business assistance such as strategic business planning, legal, market assessment, technology cost assessment, financing and patenting
- Available personnel to support technology businesses
- Access to capital for new business ventures

For more information about this program, contact Southwest Michigan First at 269.553.9588.