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KDOT opens office on KU campus

As a means of strengthening its relationship with the University of Kansas and addressing engineer retention, the Kansas Department of Transportation has opened an office on the KU Lawrence campus.

KDOT has transferred 18 employees, including 16 engineers, from the Topeka headquarters to the Lawrence office, which opened late last month in the Bioscience and Technology Business Center on KU's West District.

"We've lost a significant number of good engineers lately," said Transportation Secretary Mike King. "Opening this office in Lawrence where all of these employees live gives KDOT an advantage in retaining engineers."

KDOT's Lawrence staff will include three road design squads and a bridge design squad. The squads do both design work and serve as managers on larger projects.

The new office also provides KDOT an opportunity to recruit engineering interns. It has the capacity to utilize up to four engineering students. In addition, KDOT will continue to offer summer internships in Topeka.

"This relationship provides our students with a unique opportunity for valuable hands-on experience. It's a great benefit for our students to interact in an office setting and in our facilities with professionals who work in the field on a daily basis. This is a true win-win," said Bob Parsons, professor of civil, environmental and architectural

engineering and director of engineering construction at the University of Kansas School of Engineering.

By leasing space in the Bioscience and Technology Business Center, KDOT will be able to maintain a presence on KU's West District that is very accessible to students and also in close proximity to KU's Structural Testing and Student Projects Facility, also located on West District.

"We are enthused to not only enable KDOT's recruiting and retention efforts in Lawrence, but also to support increased collaboration with KU's School of Engineering that ultimately ties the university and the state of Kansas more closely together," said G.R. Underwood, president of the Bioscience and Technology Business Center.

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