SUNY Plattsburgh lands first Start-Up NY firm

By Dan Heath, Press-Republican Email: dheath@pressrepublican.com | Posted: Thursday, January 29, 2015 3:30 am

PLATTSBURGH — SUNY Plattsburgh has landed its first company under the Start-Up NY tax-incentive program.

Eye-In Media will occupy space on the second floor of Redcay Hall on campus, one of the sites approved for the program at the college.

The business will offer internships to students in multimedia, graphics and computer sciences.

Vice President of Finance and Operations Jeff Singer told the Press-Republican the company expects to have about six jobs to begin and up to 17 if all goes as planned.

MARKETING, TECHNOLOGY

The Montreal-based marketing and technology company specializes in digital signage, digital menu boards and Wi-Fi network management.

It also develops and manages multimedia solutions that enable marketers to broadcast content across unlimited locations on screens or mobile devices.

The company, founded in 2003, numbers among its Canadian clients health-care facilities, shopping malls and fast-food restaurants.

The latter includes McDonald's Restaurants of Canada and MTY Group, which operates 26 franchise concepts with more than 2,000 locations across Canada.

KEY PIECES

Eye-In Media has been working on the expansion project for more than a year, Singer said, but needed to wait for state approval before they could actually move forward.

The company had already sought to create a U.S. presence when it heard about Start-Up NY, which brought several key pieces together.
"This was really the incentive that got us to move forward with this," he said.

Those key pieces, he said, include a site near the home offices in Montreal, a great pool of talent at the university, the financial assistance and tax incentives offered by Start-Up NY and the assistance and warm reception they have received as they met with local leaders.

**INTERNSHIPS**

One of the biggest impacts for students, SUNY Plattsburgh Start-Up NY Campus Coordinator Keith Tyo said, will be the internships.

"We are hoping some of these interns will get a chance to land a job with the company as it expands," he said.

SUNY Plattsburgh President John Ettling said he is pleased the Eye-In Media plans to hire employees from the immediate area, including college alumni.

“The company is the first of several future businesses that will cooperate with the college to provide internship opportunities for students that can result in local jobs for graduates immediately after finishing college,” he said in a press release.

'ECONOMIC BOOST'

Start-Up NY (SUNY Tax-free Areas to Revitalize and Transform Upstate NY) was established in 2013 and offers qualified new or expanding businesses up to 10 years of tax incentives tied to job creation.

The latest figures show the program has brought 73 companies on board statewide with plans for more than 2,400 new jobs and $104 million-plus in community investments.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the Plattsburgh addition is one more example of how the program provides a boost to local economies.

“By offering new companies the opportunity to operate tax-free alongside our first-class universities and talented workforce, this program is attracting significant private sector investments and creating hundreds of new jobs for New Yorkers,” he said in a statement.

**SECONDARY IMPACT**

North Country Chamber of Commerce President Garry Douglas said the chamber held one of its "Red Carpet" sessions with local service providers to help company officials learn about all aspects of establishing a U.S. subsidiary.

"This represents their expansion into the U.S. market, using Plattsburgh as dozens of other Quebec companies have done but also finding real value in collaborating with SUNY Plattsburgh and its programs," he said.
Douglas said the North Country has experienced a strong increase in queries generated by Start-Up NY advertising, especially from Canada.

Some of these are moving forward outside of that program, but it was Start-Up NY that got their attention and motivated them, he said, giving the chamber the opportunity to work with them.

"This secondary impact cannot be overstated, while we also fully expect a number of other investments over time to directly use the program," he said.

Email **Dan Heath**: dheath@pressrepublican.com