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Breault Advises Rochester Cluster

ROCHESTER, N.Y., Feb. 17, 2006 -- Robert Breault, a founder and co-chairman of the Tucson-based Arizona Optics Industry Association and chairman of Breault Research Organization Inc. of Tucson, told the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle that Rochester needs to support entrepreneurship to create jobs and maintain its competitiveness in the optics industry, and that it needs to move quickly.


Breault was interviewed by the paper before he spoke at the annual meeting of the Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster on Wednesday.


"It's as if you have diamonds and fist-sized nuggets of gold just lying in the ground here," he was quoted as saying. "It would be a shame if people elsewhere picked them up instead of you." Breault is a leader in economic development efforts in Tucson and a proponent of the cluster model; he advised the Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster when it formed in 2000. Breault said economic developers in Rochester should place their faith in smaller companies to help the economy grow. "For example, Tucson's cluster has 300 optics member companies. Their average size? Seven employees. If one goes out of business, life goes on in Tucson," he reportedly told the group. Breault also said area universities should hasten job creation and "push relentlessly" to get technologies developed on their campuses commercialized, even if they have to foot the bill themselves.


The Rochester cluster has about 110 member companies. Breault said it should make more efforts to explore small- and medium-sized businesses' options with big area companies such as Eastman Kodak, Xerox, Bausch & Lomb and Corning, according to the article, which was published Thursday. For more information, visit: www.rrpc-ny.org

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