

State funds aid firms' research

Two Southfield companies are among eight sharing nearly \$370,000 in state research funds, state Commerce Director Doug Ross announced.

The grants will assist research projects in Michigan involving such diverse subjects as holograms, ion-bombarded tools, cell cultures and robot-related math formulas.

"We are investing in ideas, hoping to stimulate the development of products of the future," Ross said, as he announced the awarding of eight state research fund grants at the Detroit Science Center.

COMPANIES INVOLVED in the grants are:

- Holo-Source Inc., Southfield, \$49,264.
- HEM Data Corp., Southfield, \$52,736.
- IonSurface Technology Inc., Clawson, \$50,000.
- Covalent Technology Corp., Ann Arbor, \$50,000.
- Solohill Engineering Inc., Ann Arbor, \$46,000.
- Nova Engineering Co., St. Joseph, \$29,500.
- BioQuant of Ann Arbor Inc., \$55,000.
- Universal Machine Intelligence Inc., Ann Arbor, \$35,000.

"THESE ARE relatively small amounts of public money to nourish the seeds of good ideas, one of which could someday develop into a world-leading industry," he said. "We want to find people with ideas."

The research fund, since its beginning in 1982, has helped finance 32 projects, including the eight announced today, with a total of nearly \$1.6 million.

Grants go to Michigan businesses and individuals, sometimes in cooperation with educational institutions, for development of prototypes in various technology areas.

US-10 slated for widening

A three-mile stretch of Dixie Highway (US-10) will be upgraded by the fall of 1987, the Michigan Department of Transportation announced.

Dixie Excavating Inc., of Ulica, was lowest of seven bidders at under \$5.1 million for a contract to improve Dixie from Hatchery southeast 2.4 miles to Telegraph. The project includes 0.2 miles of work on Oakland Avenue (US-10 BR) southeast from Telegraph Road.

It's the first of three projects to widen eight miles of the highway. MDOT said the project is scheduled for completion in fall of 1987.

Auto layoffs hike state joblessness

Michigan's jobless rate is up 0.7 percent to 8.9 percent.

Temporary layoffs in several of the state's auto plants and a decline in farm employment pushed up the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in September, said Michigan Employment Security Commission Director Richard Simmons Jr.

Production adjustments caused the short-term auto industry layoffs, most of which lasted for only one or two weeks, Simmons said.

THE STATE is experiencing a drop in agricultural employment because of the heavy rains and flooding which began striking mid-Michigan Sept. 10. As a result, agricultural workers have become eligible for federal disaster unemployment assistance.

According to the labor force estimates that were prepared by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Michigan's jobless total climbed by 35,000 in September to 391,000. In August 356,000 workers, or 8.2 percent of the state's labor force, were unemployed.

In September Michigan's labor force grew by 21,000 to 4,309,000. Total employment declined by 14,000 to 3,978,000.

THE STATE'S September jobless rate is at its lowest level for the month since 1979 when it was 8.2 percent.

It still is well below the rate of a year ago. In September 1985, Michigan's unemployment rate was 10.6 percent with 400,000 out of work. Simmons pointed out that the improvement in Michigan's year-to-year unemployment rate is a sign of the steady improvement in Michigan's economy. Monthly unemployment rates have remained below their year-ago levels since July 1983.

Nationally the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the civilian labor force climbed to 7.0 percent in September from 6.8 in August. The number of jobless workers grew by 302,000 during the month to 8.3 million.

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