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Media Relations

December 12, 2012

UNH's Latest Startup Company Commercializes Anti-Fatigue Hydrogel

DURHAM, N.H. – Research from the University of New Hampshire's chemistry department has resulted in an exclusive license agreement for an anti-fatigue hydrogel between the university and Wakup, Inc., UNH's sixth startup company.

The licensed technology was originally developed at UNH by Shaojun "Shaw" Yao for his Ph.D. dissertation. Yao began to consider the possibilities of starting a company around his research after participating in the university's Holloway Innovation-to-Market competition last spring. Wakup's first product, Wakup Energy Gel, is an all-natural stimulant that provides an inexpensive, calorie free, and caffeine free alternative to coffee, energy drinks, and energy shots.

"We are targeting working class folks – people who need an energy boost while working, driving or studying," said Jeff Rapson, Wakup's vice president of business development. "Wakup Energy Gel is a non-addictive, topical energy gel product. Each application gives you a non-caffeinated boost for about an hour. Why risk the jitters related to consuming too much caffeine, like you can with energy shots and drinks?"

Tristan Carrier, licensing manager in UNH's Office for Research Partnerships and Commercialization, called Wakup the "most recent example of the innovative and creative research at UNH being used to address a market need. We are eager to work with our researchers to keep growth opportunities like these local and create jobs in the state."

The goal of the Office of Research Partnerships and Commercialization is to evaluate, protect, manage, license and promote the use of UNH's intellectual assets to improve the university's academic standing and relevance, attract high quality faculty and students, engage the business community, and create local well-paid jobs. Last year the office increased royalties by 10 percent and patent applications were up 40 percent.

Wakup develops and sells safe, easy to use, non-caffeine energy products that help consumers stay alert when they're feeling drowsy. Drowsy drivers, sleepy college students and overworked business people can learn more at www.wakupinc.com.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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