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April 14, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FORMER EIU STUDENT/COUNTY RESIDENT TO TELL PERSONAL SUCCESS STORY

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University will host Coles County native and EIU alumnus Robert Knollenberg Monday, April 20, when he returns to campus to discuss his experiences and accomplishments as professor, research scientist, inventor, entrepreneur and CEO.

His talk, "A Career Path Through Science Academia, High Technology Manufacturing and Investment," will begin at 4 p.m. in Phipps Lecture Hall, Physical Sciences Building, and be preceded by a reception beginning at 3:15 p.m. in the chemistry conference room (S-310). Admission to both events is free and open to the public.

Knollenberg will provide an overview of his past work and experience which include teaching, academic and institutional research, high-technology manufacturing and venture capital investments in new technology. He will describe his successful -- though non-traditional -- career path requiring a recognition of opportunities, assessment of risks

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and insightful timing for critical career path moves.

One of 13 children, Knollenberg grew up on a farm in Coles County. His decision to go to college was a last-minute one, made after graduating from high school and realizing that the opportunity to farm did not exist. In 1961 he graduated from Eastern -- his mother's alma mater -- with a degree in chemistry.

A number of his siblings also graduated from Eastern, including his brother, Joe Knollenberg, who was a United States Representative from Michigan for many years.

While at Eastern, Knollenberg was particularly influenced by Harris Phipps, Dalias Price and Scott Smith. Phipps, chair of chemistry for 35 years and now deceased, stimulated his interest in physical chemistry; Price, a retired professor of geology/geography and local weather man living in Charleston, his interest in atmospheric sciences; and Smith, retired physics instructor living in Charleston, his interest in physics. Knollenberg combined these interests at the University of Wisconsin, where he received his doctorate in cloud physics in 1967.

After holding a faculty position at the University of Chicago, he founded Particle Measuring Systems, Inc., in 1972. He is best known for the design of light scattering and particle-size spectrometers for use on aircraft, for liquid contamination measurements, and for inventing laser resonant cavity techniques for aerosol measurements. He holds numerous patents on instrumentation related to particle-size measurements.

Knollenberg was the principal investigator in 1978 on the Pioneer Venus Particle-Size Spectrometer Experiment, the only particle-sizing device having flown to

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another planet. In 1994, Particle Measuring Systems, Inc., spun off its electro-optics division, forming Research Electro-Optics, Inc., where Knollenberg is currently CEO and chairman of the board.

Particle Measuring Systems was sold in 1996 and, primarily from the proceeds of that sale, Knollenberg started Sensor Technology Development Fund (STDF), which invests in early phase start-ups focusing on sensors and instrumentation front-ends with emphasis on electro-optics technologies.

Eastern honored Knollenberg last fall with a Distinguished Alumnus Award.

His presentation is being sponsored by Eastern's Graduate School; the chemistry, physics and mathematics departments; and the College of Sciences as part of this year's Graduate Forum series.