Case Western Reserve University and RoadPrintz Inc. have signed a licensing agreement to advance a robotics-driven technology. Plus, Kent State University has received a $175,000 federal grant to launch an 'on-site augmented-reality experience' for the 50th commemoration of the events of May 4, 1970; an upcoming program at Cuyahoga Community College tackles the topic of media reliability; and more.

Case Western Reserve University is teaming up with a company called RoadPrintz Inc. to help make road-painting "safer, cheaper and faster."
That's how the university in a news release characterized the goal of a licensing agreement it has signed with RoadPrintz, a company that's the brainchild of CEO Sam Bell, a retired auto mechanic and auto repair-shop owner, and chief technology officer Wyatt Newman, a CWRU professor of electrical engineering and computer science with an expertise in robotics.

Here's how it works, per CWRU's release:

*Their technology is incorporated into a special truck equipped with a robotic arm. And a new licensing agreement through Case Western Reserve's Technology Transfer Office provides the so-called university "spin-out" with exclusive rights to make, use and sell the technology or products using the technology.*

*Construction of a prototype is expected to begin in February and be completed in the spring, said Bell, who spent 40 years running his Cleveland Heights auto-mechanic shop and is a contributing editor at Motor magazine.*

The licensing deal is further validation of the promise of the technology from RoadPrintz, which previously received a $100,000 grant from the Ohio Third Frontier Technology Validation and Start-up Fund and two Great Lakes Innovation & Development Enterprise grants totaling $100,000.

CWRU said it "owns the patent for certain technology relating to customized robotic road-painting systems and retains an equity stake in the company."

Mike Allan, senior licensing manager in the university's Technology Transfer Office, said in a statement, "What really strikes me is the size of the market opportunity RoadPrintz is attacking. More than $3 billion is spent annually to paint roads in the United States. But even more impactful is how the company will improve road-worker safety. Anything that can be done to reduce the average of two deaths per day that occur because of work-zone injury crashes in the U.S. is significant."