

Innovation Place Newsletter
May 2002 Edition

Tastad awarded Rotary Golden Wheel

Douglas Tastad was named the recipient of a Golden Wheel Award at the 16th annual Awards of Excellence presented by the Rotary Clubs of Saskatoon on April 16. The awards honor individuals who contribute to our community on a national and international basis, in the categories of education, arts, commerce and industry, charitable volunteer and outstanding Rotarian.

Tastad received the Golden Wheel Award in the Commerce and Industry category, in recognition of his involvement in the development of Innovation Place, which is recognized internationally as one of Saskatchewan's greatest assets.

Tastad has been responsible for Innovation Place since 1984. Under Tastad's leadership, Innovation Place has experienced steady growth over the past two decades. The research park is now home to 115 companies, employing over 2,000 individuals. In 2001, Innovation Place generated almost \$250 million in the provincial economy, through the purchases of goods and services and net payroll.

Other recipients of the Golden Wheel Awards include Dr. Gwenna Mary Moss in the Education category; Don Ravis in the Charitable/Voluntary sector; Gary Gullickson in the Arts category; and Elmer Lundback, the Rotarian of the Year.

Amana Tech to participate in trade mission to Dubai

In a city with no personal income tax, no corporate tax, and three free trade zones, why wouldn't a small IT web-based solutions company from Saskatchewan export its services to the largest IT hub in the Middle East, Dubai?

In May, 2002, Marketing Director Janea Bellay of Saskatoon-based Amana Tech Inc. plans to travel 36 hours across the seas to embark on an IT trade mission, offering their services in web hosting, web design, and database development.

"The goal is to set up partnerships with companies similar to ours," says Nezar Freeny, president of Amana Tech, located at 112F - 116 Research Drive in Innovation Place. "Our partners will be able to offer their clients low cost services from Canada, but will also be able to do business in their official language." Freeny will travel to Dubai in October to follow-up on the partnerships made by Bellay in May.

"Currently the web solutions industry in Saskatchewan and Canada is flooded with local web-based solutions companies, all offering the same service, trying to undercut one another," says Bellay.

"The key is survival of the fittest," continues Bellay. "Our competitive advantage is our multilingual services specialized in native-Arabic, native-Chinese, and native-English. In a market where more companies are going global, our clients are looking to offer their services in multiple languages. Thus, we need to offer that niche service to our clients."

Amana Tech Inc. opened its doors at Innovation Place in March 2001 and has since acquired over 50 key clientele. "With our focus on the Saskatchewan and Canadian market, our growth has been moderate, like any other start-up business," says Freeny. "However this trade mission to Dubai will increase our business substantially."

Amana Tech Inc. recently signed on Al-Ghurair, the top Group of Companies located in the UAE to become its key partner in Dubai. Al-Ghurair is a privately owned company specialized in joint ventures, business partnerships, and franchises in the UAE.

Dubai, the second largest emirate of seven in United Arab Emirates, is located on the southeastern peninsula of Saudi Arabia. Dubai offers complete freedom of capital movement and is promoted as a sophisticated communication facility and an international business center.

For more information, contact Janea Bellay or Nezar Freeny at (306) 933-9825, visit their offices at Innovation Place at 112F - 116 Research Drive, or check out the website at www.amana.ca.

Learn more about Dubai by logging on to <http://www.dubaitourism.co.ae>, or Al-Ghurair at <http://www.alghurair-pvt.com>.

Insightrix technology advances on-line surveys and analysis

Insightrix.com, located at #113 in the Galleria Building, was created as a company that provides web-based surveys using its proprietary software. The principals of the firm are Larry Goodfellow, B. Comm, MBA, President, who has many years experience in marketing and market research; Corrin Harper, B.Comm, MBA, Vice-President Marketing, who has extensive experience in research and human resource consulting projects; and Ian Kosokowsky, B. Eng, who has extensive experience in program design and administration of on-line surveys for Fortune 100 companies in the U.S.

Insightrix software provides the capability for on-line surveys and real time on-line analysis of the results. With this technology, a client is provided with a password and is able to access the results at any point in the survey, seeing how many invitations have been sent, how many have responded, and the overall results. This makes the software ideal for customer satisfaction surveys, employee satisfaction surveys, 360-degree performance feedbacks and association surveys of members. Using this software, turnaround on a project is up to one-third the time of a mail or telephone survey, and with better response rates.

Support services include designing the survey, obtaining e-mails, and producing hard copy reports. Goodfellow says, "Our aim is to offer a full range of services to the client, combining both the technology and our traditional consulting services." This includes the development of on-line custom analysis, including advanced statistical calculations and interfaces for applications such as 360-degree performance assessments.

Insightrix has developed other programs using PHP as a base. PHP is a widely-used scripting language that can be embedded into HTML. These programs include the "Review Function," which acts as an on-line bulletin board allowing respondents to view text on-line, provide their comments, and see the comments of fellow respondents.

"This application has elicited great excitement from the scientific and investment community, where peer reviews are important. This enables people to review material and share comments in real-time, without the necessity of getting together," says Harper.

At the heart of the software is the MySQL database. Kosokowsky explains, "The database allows us not only to record results, but to integrate with the client's database in a seamless fashion. For example, we can upload information that the respondent has previously provided, and the respondent can then amend that which is no longer current. We have also developed a Respondent Management System that allows us to record every interaction with respondents. This ensures that respondents aren't sent a reminder when they have already answered the survey."

One of the first applications of the software was a project for SREDA and the Saskatoon Labour Market Committee in which the "Review Function" was used to obtain input on a Labour Market questionnaire from 23 various agencies. The survey was sent to 1,100 companies in Saskatoon of which 800 responded, a response rate of 76 per cent. Chris

Broten, co-chair of the Saskatoon Labour Market Committee, says, "The technology, with its ability to branch out different questions depending upon the previous response, allowed us to obtain information that we could never before have obtained. In my view, the success of the project was in large part due to the efficiency and effectiveness of the on-line technology." A copy of the study is available at www.saskatoonwork.com.

Dale Botting, Executive Director of SREDA and Co-chair of the Saskatoon Labour Market Committee, says, "Our members, who are business owners, liked the on-line survey, as it allowed them to complete the survey at their own convenience. We can see applying this technology to other areas of SREDA, including investor surveys and member surveys. The ability to tie this technology into other forms of surveying, such as telephone surveying, makes this a very powerful and effective tool."

A key part of the Inshtrix strategy is to work with other partners. Inshtrix currently has a number of Innovation Place partners including: Blacksun, an internet service provider; Time Productions, a graphics and web designer; and, most recently, Fast Consulting, who is utilizing the Inshtrix software for delivery of on-line surveys to clients across Canada.

Doug Fast, principal of Fast Consulting, says, "This technology places us near the forefront of market research companies in North America, and combined with our 20-seat call center, allows us to be very competitive in offering both on-line and telephone surveys, with our telephone surveyors inputting the results directly into the online software."

Learn more about Inshtrix, through their website at www.inshtrix.com.

Innovation Place prepares to host the 2002 24 Hour Relay for Easter Seal Kids

Innovation Place will once again be a non-stop activity zone on June 8 and 9, as the host site of the 16th annual 24 Hour Relay for Easter Seal Kids. Since 1987, the fund-raising event organized by the Saskatchewan Abilities Council has generated over \$1.4 million in support of Easter Seal programs and services.

Event organizer Carrie Olson expects 35 teams of 20 people to participate, as team members take turns walking, jogging, running, inline skating or wheeling their way around the 2K course for 24 hours.

Other on-site activities include campsite decorating, volleyball tournaments, "humanopoly" and the wildly popular "tug-of-water" event.

"The tug-of-water was a huge hit last summer, so we're certain that it will be even bigger and better in 2002. The tug-of-water competition is open to the public as well as 24 Hour Relay teams," says Olson.

The fund-raising goal for this year's 24 Hour Relay is \$100,000. "Last year, we raised \$94,000, so we think our fund-raising target for 2002 is attainable."

Funds raised by the 24 Hour Relay go to support three important programs of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, including the operation of Camp Easter Seal at Manitou Beach near Watrous. Every summer, Camp Easter Seal offers approximately 800 children with disabilities the opportunity to "just be kids." For many, it's their first-ever chance to enjoy such activities as swimming, boating, horseback riding, wagon rides and games.

The 24 Hour Relay also helps to fund Adaptive Technologies, which provides specialized computer equipment to help disabled children communicate.

Summer Fun is the third program to benefit. Summer Fun day camps are held in Saskatoon, Regina, Yorkton and Swift Current, bringing children with disabilities to recreation and leisure facilities.

A special guest at this year's 24 Hour Relay will be Devon Sears, the 2002 Saskatoon Easter Seal Ambassador. Devon is a Grade Six student at Lakeridge School in Saskatoon, who has

participated in sessions at Camp Easter Seal for the past three years. Like many other disabled children, Devon has gained greater self-confidence and independence through his Easter Seal experiences.

Many of the 24 Hour Relay teams are already hard at work raising funds, says Olson. "There are some really unique fund-raisers happening - wine tastings, car washes, bake sales - there's a little bit of everything." As in previous years, prizes will be awarded to the top fund-raisers, in both team and individual categories.

This year, donations can be made on-line, at www.24hourrelay.sk.ca. Make a donation to the team member of your choice or to a non-specified team.

The website also provides updates on pre-relay activities, including the Performance Financial Services Hawaiian Dance fund-raiser, Friday, May 10 from 9 p.m. to 1 p.m., at Sutherland Hall. Contact Kelli Mossing at 374-2366 for tickets or e-mail kellimossing@hotmail.com.

Olson requests that all team captains attend a Captains' Meeting on Tuesday, May 28, at 7 p.m., in the Sask. Abilities Council conference room.

The 24 Hour Relay is also in need of volunteers to help facilitate the event on June 8 and 9. "The 24 Hour Relay doesn't happen without the help of hundreds of volunteers. There are still lots of volunteer shifts to fill, so we invite everyone to call in and register," says Olson. To register as a volunteer, call Olson at 374-4448.

Get help cutting through the red tape

If regulations and red tape are affecting your business, you may want to contact the Competitiveness Branch of Saskatchewan Industry and Resources.

Established in 1997, the branch is tasked with helping the business community to identify regulatory irritants.

Branch staff address irritants and paper burden issues brought forward by: assessing the issue; identifying the responsible regulator; and ensuring the issue is resolved or the reason for the regulation or process is understood.

The branch has worked with industry groups such as the oil and gas industry, the Hotels Association of Saskatchewan, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and the Electrical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan to address regulatory red tape and paper burden affecting their sectors.

Staff also work with individuals of various businesses to identify and resolve specific concerns that impact their operations.

To assist in its ongoing efforts, the branch has recently added business analyst Colleen Mackenzie to the offices of the Competitiveness Branch, Saskatchewan Industry and Resources, 206 - 15 Innovation Place. Colleen can be reached at (306) 933-7209 or e-mail at: cmackenzie@ecd.gov.sk.ca. You are also invited to visit the website at: www.gov.sk.ca/econdev.

An on-line survey is also available at www.gov.sk.ca/econdev/survey for businesses to identify business irritants and red tape burdens.

TRLabs appoints new CEO

TRLabs Board of Directors has announced the appointment of Dr. Roger Pederson as Chief Executive Officer of TRLabs, effective immediately. Dr. Pederson, TRLabs Chief Operating Officer, has been on secondment to TRLabs from TELUS since 1997.

Prior to joining TRILabs, Pederson held a variety of technical and managerial positions with TELUS. His extensive industry experience is complemented by an M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering. Pederson has also been involved in provincial and national science and advanced technology advisory committees and boards such as NSERC, CATA, and ASTech. Board chairman Reg Bird says, "Roger is a recognized leader in the high technology sector, having spent almost 30 years in progressively more responsible management positions at TELUS. We look to Roger's vision, energy and leadership to position TRILabs for continued success at a very important time in the evolution of TRILabs."

In its 16-year history, TRILabs has generated 132 patents (granted or pending), created 250 technologies adopted for use by companies, trained 700 post-graduate students, expanded to five labs across the prairies, and grown from three partner sponsors to 57.

Under Pederson's guidance, TRILabs is expected to solidify its research strength, expand its technology transfer program to accelerate the movement of TRILabs innovation into the marketplace, and forge new partnerships with technology users, venture capitalists and other professionals who work the TRILabs sponsor network to accelerate innovation.

ABIC 2002 to converge on Saskatoon

From September 15 to 18, 2002, the world will look to Saskatoon, Canada as it hosts the 4th Agricultural Biotechnology International Conference (ABIC). This year's theme, "Agbiotech: cultivating convergence," highlights the coming together of agricultural biotechnology with life sciences, bioinformatics, health care, and nutrition. ABIC 2002 will showcase the industry's growing strengths and exciting new directions in bioproducts. The conference will also provide important insights on global stewardship and benefit sharing.

ABIC 2002 will feature more than 60 national and international speakers, a poster session, tours, and exhibits. New features include a Public Forum: Ask the Experts, a Bioproducts Showcase, and an opportunity for scientific researchers to win synchrotron beam time and expertise.

Peter McCann, president of Ag-West Biotech Inc. and official host of ABIC 2002, is enthusiastic about the caliber of the conference and the opportunities it will offer delegates, visitors and the industry as a whole. "As a world class conference, this is a must-attend event for the industry and those interested in it. ABIC 2002 will bring together over 800 members of our growing community - world-renowned scientists, investors, industry leaders and policy-makers. It will also provide a tremendous opportunity to learn about the latest life sciences technology in the post genomics era."

ABIC 2002 is also an opportunity to: update knowledge on the latest developments in health, bioeconomy, technology transfer, emerging technologies, investment opportunities and more; showcase new bioproducts; and develop strategic contacts with leading researchers and scientists, international business leaders, investors, researchers and funding agencies. More information on ABIC 2002 program, registration, sponsor, and exhibitor information can be found at www.abic.net or by phoning (306) 683-2242.

Who's new to Saskatchewan's research park community?

New to Innovation Place in Saskatoon is:

- Bioriginal Food & Science Corp., with greenhouse space at 401G - 410 Downey Road.

**The Saskatchewan
Woodworkers' Guild
presents
WOOD '02
24th Annual Exhibition
of Fine Works**

June 1 - 8: 11 am to 9 pm

&

June 9: 11 am to 4 pm

Galleria Building

15 Innovation Boulevard

Further information available at www.saskwoodguild.ca

**Innovation Place Golf Tournament
in support of 24 Hour Relay for Easter Seal Kids**

May 30, 2002

Moon Lake Golf Club

- Fee: \$60 per person, includes golf, supper and prizes
- Sign up as an individual or as a team
- Stroke play format

Check the IP web site under News, Special Events for more details:

www.innovationplace.com