



REGINA  
RESEARCH  
PARK

# newsletter

November, 2003  
www.innovationplace.com

## It's shorter. Honest.

### Innovation Place/Regina Research Park Client Survey

Innovation Place and the Regina Research Park are committed to the highest quality of facilities and services for the research and development community in Saskatchewan.

Your feedback is a critical element for our strategic planning and plays a large role in directing our future. In order to get this valuable feedback, Innovation Place has retained Insignitrix Research Services, an independent third party, to administer a confidential customer satisfaction survey. We hope this will allow for frank comments and ratings.

## We need your opinion.

Two different surveys will be circulated. A CEO survey will be administered to the CEOs and another to the general client population.

The CEO survey will be conducted combining two survey methodologies. Each CEO in the park will be contacted by telephone by an Insignitrix researcher and asked to participate in the survey. The CEO will be asked to complete the survey online or has the option to complete the survey via telephone. If the online option is chosen, an email with a link to the survey will be sent to the CEO's inbox.

## German Ambassador tours Saskatoon research cluster

Mutually beneficial linkages between the Saskatchewan research community and Germany were explored on October 17 as a delegation, including the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany Christian F. Pauls and the German Honorary Consul Dr. Gunter Kocks, toured the University of Saskatchewan, Innovation Place and the Canadian Light Source.

The visit was organized by U of S International Communications Co-ordinator Rob Norris, with help from Innovation Place, the Canadian Light Source, the Saskatchewan-German Council and the Saskatchewan Office of Protocol.

"It was an opportunity for the Ambassador to see the research cluster that Saskatoon has and that continues to evolve here," says Norris.

"There are increasing opportunities for partnerships between Canada and Germany, but at the same time, there is a lot of work to be done to see that those opportunities are realized."

The Ambassador's visit to Saskatoon began with a lunch hosted by U of S Chancellor Tom Molloy and U of S Special Advisor on Aboriginal Initiatives George Lafond at Boffins, located at Innovation Place.

Innovation Place President Douglas Tastad then escorted the German delegation on a walking tour of the research park.

An impressive number of firms within Innovation Place conduct business in Germany and have well-established relationships with German companies and organizations, says Norris. These companies include AMEC Engineering, Bio-ID Diagnostic Inc., Pelican Forge Software Corporation, TRILabs, Schulte Industries, the National Research Council-Plant Biotechnology Institute and Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited.

Following their tour of Innovation Place, the delegation visited the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron. Canada Research Chair and Professor in the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics Alex Moewes and Public Relations and Marketing representative Sandra Ribeiro proudly showed off the state-of-the-art new generation synchrotron facility.

The visit also provided Ambassador Pauls with an opportunity to meet with German students currently enrolled at the U of S, along with select faculty members who have scholarly interests in Germany. Approximately 20 students attended a reception hosted by the College of Arts and Science.

This was Ambassador Pauls' first visit to Saskatoon. "Our city made a very favourable impression upon the Ambassador," says Norris.

"The tour highlighted the huge potential for scientific exchange, especially between professors and researchers. We want to alert our researchers to ongoing opportunities between Germany and Canada. We want to find ways to help ensure those ideas can actually be implemented."

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*The Innovation Place Newsletter is a publication for Saskatchewan's research parks.*

# STATE-OF-THE-ART INFRASTRUCTURE

## New director appointed to lead U of S Industry Liaison office

A veteran knowledge transfer expert with experience in both industry and universities will lead the new Industry Liaison of the University of Saskatchewan (ILUS) office.

U of S Vice-President of Research Steven Franklin announced Oct. 6 that Doug Gill, currently Director of Industry Liaison at the University of Western Ontario, will take over as ILUS Managing Director Jan. 1, 2004.

"Doug Gill brings to this position a wealth of experience and proven leadership skills that will enhance our efforts to commercialize new research ideas and discoveries," Franklin says.

The new ILUS operation will be set up in the Research Office and will replace UST Inc., currently the university's technology transfer arm, incorporating its four-member staff.

Since 1991, Gill has been involved in technology transfer at major Canadian universities including UBC, the University of Alberta, and Western. Prior to 1991, he was involved in research and development, as well as strategic technology planning, for a major Canadian petroleum company. He is a past Vice-President of the Association of University Technology Managers and continues to be involved in the delivery of its Canadian basic licensing course.

The U of S aims to triple its revenue from commercialized university-developed technology to \$3 million by 2010.

Gill says, "I look forward to leading this effort and working with an administration that puts research and technology transfer high on its priority list."

He says such activities can't happen without the support of U of S faculty and the community of Innovation Place.

"One of my first priorities will be to develop close relationships with faculty involved in a wide variety of research. Another will be to develop close ties with various levels of government, Innovation Place, industry and the investment community," says Gill.

## Province's research community invited to utilize services of Saskatchewan Structural Sciences Centre

The province's impressive infrastructure of research facilities continues to expand with the September 12 official opening of the \$11.4-million Saskatchewan Structural Sciences Centre (SSSC), located in the Thorvaldson Building on the University of Saskatchewan campus.

The multi-disciplinary research centre specializes in structure-determination services, supporting research in health sciences, material science, environmental sciences, agricultural biotechnology, synthetic chemistry and geological science.

The SSSC was made possible through \$3.7 million in support from the Canada/Saskatchewan Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA), \$3.4 million from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), \$2.8 million from the University of Saskatchewan and

\$1.5 million from the Saskatchewan government's Innovation and Science Fund.

Manager Dr. Ramaswami Sammynaiken says the facility will benefit the province's entire research community – including university and government research organizations, as well as private sector businesses.

Three research officers have been hired to provide service in the centre's three divisions: Biophysical; Magnetic Resonance and X-ray Crystallography; and Optical Spectroscopy and Laser Technology.

The SSSC is equipped with state-of-the-art leading edge mass spectrometers and X-ray diffractometers for the sequencing of genetic material and structure determination of biomolecules; a full suite of optical lasers used to determine the electronic structure of materials; several different microscopy systems to analyze interactions and image materials at the molecular level; a magnetic resonance suite to determine the structure of molecules; and a biophysical suite of instruments used to analyze interactions between molecules.

Sammynaiken sees direct benefits for the research communities within Innovation Place and Regina Research Park. He says, "Start-up companies at Innovation Place would generally not be able to afford this infrastructure. We can provide them with any type of research services that they need."

The SSSC will make its research expertise and equipment available to external clients on a fee-for-service basis. "Our research staff are here to help people achieve their research goals, both academic and off-campus," says Sammynaiken.

"My objective is to go into Innovation Place and start making people aware of the services we can offer. Up until now, I have deliberately held back, because I did not want to promise companies that we could provide services and then tell them they had to wait. The SSSC is now operational, and we are meeting the needs of people who require our services," says Sammynaiken.

The SSSC will also complement research conducted at the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron. "We will be able to provide researchers at the synchrotron with all of the services that they need," says Sammynaiken.

More information about the SSSC is available at [www.usask.ca/sssc](http://www.usask.ca/sssc).

**"Our research staff are here to help people achieve research goals, both academic and off-campus."**

**– Dr. Sammynaiken**

# NEW FRONTIERS IN HEALTH RESEARCH

## Expansion facilitates VIDO's broader research focus

With the October 16 opening of its \$17.8-million expansion, the University of Saskatchewan's Vaccine & Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) is now well equipped to fight diseases impacting human and animal health in Canada.

The expansion adds 50,000 square feet of state-of-the-art laboratory and office space to VIDO's existing facilities at 120 Veterinary Road. The new wing features modern virology, immunology, bacteriology and genomics labs, with \$4 million dollars of new analytical equipment. VIDO has increased staff to 135, recruiting more than 50 research scientists and technicians.

Funding for the expansion was provided by the Government of Saskatchewan (\$5.15 million), the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) (\$5.15 million), Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) (\$2 million) and the Government of Alberta (\$2 million).

Originally planned as a two-storey addition, VIDO's success in attracting a \$27-million Genome Canada investment meant a third floor dedicated to genomics and proteomics research could be added. Through the Genome Canada investment, WD contributed an extra \$2.5 million to the expansion. Saskatchewan Industry and Resources added \$500,000, matched by a \$500,000 investment by the U of S.

"With these new labs and an expanded scientific staff, we are well equipped to undertake ground-breaking research that will define the next generation of products for both animal and human health," says VIDO Director Lorne Babiuk, a U of S Canada Research Chair in Vaccinology and Biotechnology.

Since its establishment in 1975, VIDO has achieved international acclaim for its research, development and commercialization of products for the animal health industry.

"We have developed five 'world first' vaccines, including the world's first genetically engineered vaccine to prevent shipping fever in cattle," says Babiuk. VIDO has been awarded 52 biotechnology patents, and currently has another 27 patents pending.

Babiuk also takes pride in VIDO's role in training Canada's next generation of scientists. "There's a huge need in Canada for highly qualified researchers. VIDO has over 20 graduate students and over 25 post-doctoral fellows – a contingency of 50 people who are being trained – which is hugely important for a knowledge-based economy."

A name change in March 2003 reflects VIDO's expanding research scope and the convergence between animal and human health. Formerly the Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization, this spring the facility was renamed the Vaccine & Infectious Disease Organization.

"Approximately 79 per cent of new human diseases have an animal link, so you can't talk about control of human disease without looking at animals," says Andrew Potter, VIDO Associate Director (Research).

Renowned for its research into new vaccination strategies benefiting the livestock industry, VIDO will continue this research targeting both human and animal diseases.

Current VIDO research activities include developing new vaccine formulations and needle-free delivery systems, such as oral and intranasal delivery; developing a family of food safety vaccines to fight infections including *E. coli* 0157:H7, *Campylobacter* in poultry and *Cryptosporidium* in cattle; the development of vaccines for bovine mastitis; and the creation of novel genetically engineered live viral and bacterial vaccines.

Research is also underway on vaccines to fight diseases that have a devastating impact upon humans, including hepatitis C and SARS.

**"With these new labs and an expanded scientific staff, we are well equipped to undertake ground-breaking research that will define the next generation of products for both animal and human health."**

**– Lorne Babiuk, VIDO Director**

Potter describes the Genome Canada project as "the largest functional genomics program in the animal field worldwide." The research team is studying ways of stimulating the immune system to kill viruses and bacteria, through the identification of substances that control the expression of the immune response. "We believe that the animal and human immune system is the most efficient system available to kill microbes, but you have to learn how to stimulate it appropriately. If you can stimulate it, you can control disease."

The Genome Canada project brings together researchers from VIDO, the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, the University of Calgary, the National Research Council and the British Columbia Cancer Agency. Two corporate partners are also collaborating on the project: Pyxis Genomics Canada Inc. of Saskatoon and Chicago and Inimex Pharmaceuticals Inc. of Vancouver.

Partnerships have been the key to VIDO's success over the past 28 years. The organization currently has about 35 partnership agreements in place. Industry partners range from pharmaceutical giants like Merck and Pfizer Inc. to small Canadian biotech firms like Bioniche Life Sciences Inc.

Having celebrated the opening of its new expansion, the VIDO team is not prepared to rest on its laurels, says Babiuk. An application has been submitted to CFI to create a \$62-million international Level 3 vaccine research and development centre, adjacent to VIDO. The submission has been reviewed by CFI's international peer review panel; a final decision should be announced in the spring of 2004.

"Many of the diseases we're encountering now are Level 3 types of organisms and require higher containment. VIDO's vision is to be prepared for these future health challenges. The development of a Level 3 facility is the next step," says Babiuk.

# up DATES

## Grey Cup Street Party at Regina Research Park

Add some fun and excitement to your Grey Cup week by attending the Flat-Out Pancake Street Party, Thursday, November 13, from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. on Research Drive at Regina Research Park. Enjoy music from The Wolf 104.9 and a chance to win some excellent prizes. Hope to see you there and remember to dress "Warm" and dress "Green"!

## Innovation Place/ Regina Research Park Client Survey

*(continued from page 1)*

For all other employees in the park (excluding CEOs), a website has been developed to gather your feedback. All employees are invited to respond. Information will be circulated to your organization to explain how to access the website.

In appreciation for completing this brief questionnaire, your name will be entered to win great prizes! Watch for more information coming soon.

## Young Scientist Footsteps award

Janice Cuthbert is taking a giant leap forward towards a career in biotechnology as the Prairie regional winner of the Young Scientists Footsteps Award, presented at the 51st annual CropLife Canada Conference in Winnipeg. Janice is mapping the genetic composition of chromosomes responsible for wheat yield.

In April 2003, the Council for Biotechnology Information (CBI) introduced the Young Scientist Footsteps Scholarship Awards to recognize five regional teams of young Canadian scientists and their professor mentors in the field of plant biotechnology.

"Plant biotechnology is an important part of our industry," says Janet Lambert, President of BIOTECANADA, the national association representing the biotechnology industry and research community in Canada. "It's wonderful to see our scientists working in plant biotechnology honoured with this new scholarship."

Professor mentors and their students are nominated by Deans of Agriculture from one of five biocluster universities: University of British Columbia, University of

Saskatchewan, University of Guelph, Laval University and Dalhousie University (Nova Scotia Agricultural College). Students then submit an abstract of their research and a resume before participating in an interview with the Dean or appointed review committee.

"Our Young Scientist Footsteps Award winners embody the spirit of Canadian research," says Art Stirling, Government & Industry Affairs Manager for Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited and Chair of CBI.

"Their innovative minds have much to offer Canadians and will do wonders in keeping Canada at the forefront of biotech research."

Nominees were evaluated by a committee led by Dr. Randal Johnson, President of Genome Prairie. Young scientists selected for the scholarship each receive \$5,000 from CBI to further their graduate studies.

## On the move...

Please note the following change of address:

- The offices of **Saskatchewan Pulse Growers** have relocated to 4 - 411 Downey Road. Contact Garth Patterson at (306) 668-5556 or email: [gpatterson@saskpulse.com](mailto:gpatterson@saskpulse.com).

*Changes of address or other updates can be directed to: Wonda Kirychuk, Innovation Place, 114-15 Innovation Boulevard, Saskatoon, SK, S7N 2X8, or call (306) 933-6581. Email: [wkirychuk@innovationplace.com](mailto:wkirychuk@innovationplace.com).*

*The Innovation Place Newsletter is published monthly for Saskatchewan's research parks by: the Armstrong Creative Group. For information, call: Jeannie Armstrong at (306) 249-2459, or email: [armstrongcreative@shaw.ca](mailto:armstrongcreative@shaw.ca)*

## R&D @ IP

An Innovation Place Tenant trade show in the Galleria Building from 3:00 to 6:00 PM on November 20, 2003.

**Mark it in your calendar!**