

SFU Press Releases Collection

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SFU innovators net prime awards

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The B.C. Innovation Council (BCIC) recognized innovation at Simon Fraser University with two major awards announced at a special event on Sept. 23.

Engineering science professor Bozena Kaminska received the BCIC's Entrepreneurship Fellow award in recognition of her contribution to B.C.

's technology community. Hiretheworld.com, an SFU student business, took the top prize, valued at \$123,000, in the 2010 BCIC-New Ventures competition.

The Entrepreneurship Fellow award recognizes a B.C. postsecondary school faculty member who is a leader in technology innovation and commercialization for their valuable contribution to B.C.

's technology community. The award also provides \$25,000 towards entrepreneurship education or commercialization initiatives.

Kaminska, who holds a senior Canada Research Chair in wireless network sensors, is described as a petite powerhouse who fittingly invents tiny yet powerful nanotechnologies, integrated systems, and powering solutions. An electrical engineer, inventor and businesswoman who spent 10 years in industry, she's a role model for women interested in pursuing a career in engineering science and for young entrepreneurs.

Her wearable wireless biosensors for heart monitoring made headlines in 2007 and Kaminska's team has since created a new generation of devices that can be used for secure document storage and for monitoring energy, objects, and people.

'Bozena possesses a rare combination of research excellence, an excellent understanding of industrial applications and opportunities, and a venturesome spirit that translate into entrepreneurial success,' says Michael Volker, director of SFU's University Industry Liaison Office (UILO).

Hiretheworld.com - one of 10 finalists narrowed from an impressive field of 140 entries - was founded by SFU alumni Terry Beech, an instructor with SFU Business, and Arash Afrooze, along with Terry's brother Doug. The site helps new to mid-sized businesses find, employ, manage and pay an on-demand geographically dispersed workforce in a simple and cost-effective way.

Hiretheworld.com founders are participants in SFU's Venture Connection program, where they have received mentoring and incubator support as they have developed their business.

"Hire the World has great potential," said Jim Derbyshire, Mentor-in-Residence at SFU Venture Connection, " and it is wonderful to see it recognized by winning the NVBC."

'There is no better resource than being able to sit down and talk strategy with successful business owners,' says Doug Beech. 'Jim Derbyshire also introduced us to SFU's Venture Connection which has provided us with many additional resources and mentors. Our team is ecstatic about the \$123,000 in cash and prizes.'

Background:

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The B.C. Innovation Council (BCIC) develops entrepreneurial talent and commercializes technology through startup companies and partnerships between industry and academia.

BCIC focuses on competitively positioning B.C. in today's global knowledge economy in order to provide significant employment opportunities and a high standard of living for British Columbians.

The BCIC-NVC is one of North America's largest technology business-idea competitions. The five-month contest is described as a boot camp for business startups, addressing the special interests of B.C.

's early-stage technology companies and supports B.C.

's emerging technology industry.

New Ventures BC gives early-stage B.C. innovators and entrepreneurs access to technology leaders, business education and their annual \$300,000 funding competition.

Founding sponsor SFU Business established New Ventures BC in 2000 as a means of recognizing and encouraging entrepreneurship in B.C.

's technology sector.

Today, the non-profit BC Ventures Society administers and operates the competition with generous support from the public and private sectors.