



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CLIENTS BENEFIT FROM PROVINCE'S NEW TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION CENTRE

SpringBoard West Innovations Inc., Saskatchewan's new technology innovation centre, officially opened its doors today - and its clients are already seeing the benefits.

SpringBoard West Innovations Inc. is a new and unique non-profit Saskatchewan organization. It was created through the support of federal and provincial governments, the University of Regina and community organizations, to assist entrepreneurs in transforming their inventions and ideas into commercial reality.

At the opening, Raman B. Paranjape, PhD, PEng of the University of Regina and representing Regina Pipe Crawler, one of SpringBoard West Innovation's first clients, spoke about how the organization is helping him.

"We were helped in our first meeting. The discussion covered intellectual property, markets and they even suggested a refinement to the design." he said.

The Regina Pipe Crawler is a robotic device which allows water lines to be inspected without being shut down. The Pipe Crawler propels itself and sensors through the lines, enabling the detection of corrosion and cracking before the line fails. Mehran Mehrandezh, PhD, PEng of the University of Regina is the principal inventor of this robotic device. The design specifications are being refined in conjunction with the City of Regina engineers. Testing is targeted for the spring and summer of 2008.

Palliser Member of Parliament Dave Batters, on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Regina South MLA Andrew Thomson, on behalf of Saskatchewan Industry and Resources Minister Maynard Sonntag, University of Regina President Dr. Jim Tomkins, and Susan Gorges, the organization's new CEO, also took part in the official opening ceremonies.

"Canada's New Government is committed to furthering research and development just as we are committed to helping turn ideas into solutions to improve Canada's economic competitiveness and create a healthier, cleaner environment," said MP Batters. "SpringBoard West helps achieve both of these commitments."

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“Saskatchewan is a province that is innovative by nature, and a technology innovation centre like SpringBoard West continues that tradition, helping us be competitive by design,” said Thomson. “This new centre will help take the ideas from our labs to the marketplace and further build our knowledge-based economy.”

The organization will foster innovative ideas and assist in developing the most promising of these into commercial ventures. It will initially focus on projects in the energy, environmental and informatics sectors, but it welcomes all innovations.

As SpringBoard West’s new CEO, Susan Gorges believes the new organization will play a key role in creating opportunities and markets for Saskatchewan innovations.

“Saskatchewan has many, many innovative people with great ideas. SpringBoard encourages these individuals to think big. Our staff brings real world experience to our clients and helps them to turn their ideas into reality,” said Gorges.

SpringBoard West Innovations has been funded through both the federal and provincial governments. In April, 2007 it received a \$3,385,000 investment from Canada’s New Government and the Government of Saskatchewan through the Canada-Saskatchewan Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA) and an additional \$2.85 million through Saskatchewan Industry and Resources’ Strategic Investment Fund.

Backgrounder attached

For additional information, please contact:

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BACKGROUNDER

SpringBoard West Innovations Inc.

We're about great ideas

At SpringBoard West Innovations Inc. (SBWI), ideas are the tools and solutions are the products. We're an **idea** company, helping our clients take dreams to market.

SpringBoard West Innovations Inc. will encourage innovative ideas and assist in developing the most promising of these into commercial ventures. It will initially focus on projects in the energy, environmental and informatics sectors.

We're about great solutions

SpringBoard West Innovations Inc. acts like the hub of a wheel. We assist our clients by providing links to potential funding sources, market researchers, patent experts, business analysts, and more.

We also help industry locate innovators with specific product solutions as well as engineering expertise to solve intractable design issues.

We're about meeting needs

SpringBoard West Innovations Inc. is committed to providing advice and assistance to researchers, inventors and individuals. We help to get them ready for funding and assist with the launching of their businesses. We also provide assistance to businesses or industries looking for new product solutions.

We're about the world coming to us

SpringBoard West Innovations Inc. fosters the development of innovative product ideas and solutions. We encourage our clients to "think big", sending their products around the world. We also help to create a culture of opportunity and optimism which will attract the world to Saskatchewan.

We're about great opportunities for Saskatchewan people

We're helping our clients here at home so that they stay at home. We're all about building a culture where their innovative skills and expertise contribute to a strong entrepreneurial and research sector as well as continued provincial economic growth.

How we work with our clients

SpringBoard West Innovation encourages all individuals interested in finding out about commercializing their ideas to call the SpringBoard West Innovation office.

During the initial interview(s) with a client, our Innovation Officers attempt to determine the best path to commercialization, including resources required. We also determine whether the client can benefit from our assistance.

Together with the client, we then begin to develop a work plan which can include coaching and advice, as well as education and training provided by other resources in the community. We also assist clients in identifying potential funders.

Our strategic partner, the University of Regina, is critical to our success. We work as an extension of the University Industry Liaison Office (UILO), which assists clients with protecting their intellectual property.

The faculties of Business Administration, Engineering and Computer Science are important client sources for us, because they represent our first focus areas: energy, environment and informatics. These faculties, along with their Centres of Excellence are the primary sources of technologies SBWI will assist to commercialization. They also provide the expertise for clients looking to solve design problems.

The organization is rapidly solidifying relationships with organizations such as the Saskatchewan Association of Investors Network, Communities of Tomorrow, National Research Council, and Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan.

As well, SpringBoard West Innovations works with agencies such as the Centre for Business Development, Regina Regional Economic Development Authority, Saskatchewan Environmental Industry and Managers Association, the Entrepreneurial Foundation and others to help our clients find the right resources at the right time.