

Innovation Awards reflect strength of region's expanding tech sector

Philip Eggers is passionate about creating and caring for his inventions. "It's like having a child – you have to look after it and nurture it until it can stand on its own."

Eggers is a named inventor on more than 165 patents, primarily on medical devices. Most recently, he developed a device that tells doctors whether a certain congenital condition in a patient's heart may lead to a stroke. He says his invention will provide a non-invasive, low-cost, highly sensitive screening method that avoids the discomfort of current diagnostic methods. An entrepreneur as well as inventor, he's built a company to commercialize the device and has received commitments from seed venture funds. That company, Cardiox Corp. in Dublin, is sixth in a series of companies he's launched to take his medical inventions to the marketplace.

Eggers' passion was recognized when he received Inventor of the Year Award at the 2008 TechColumbus Innovation Awards this month at the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

"I had always found it necessary to go outside of Ohio to find funding in the past," he said. "This time I wanted to establish a medical device company here in my home community. Reservoir Venture Partners and TechColumbus helped direct me to the funding I needed to do that." Companies and individuals received awards

in 13 categories in this year's Innovation Awards event. About 175 finalists – a 50 percent increase from the previous year – competed for the honors. "Winning this

award meant a lot to me – it's recognition for all the years I've labored in this field," Eggers said. "To be selected among a group of very worthy candidates is quite meaningful."

Gathered at the celebration this year were 1,000 people compared to 100 who attended 13 years ago at the first event of its kind in Columbus. The fact that the event has grown in attendance as well as award nominations signals the strength of technology in Central Ohio, says Jay Jordan, Chairman of the Board of TechColumbus and President and CEO of OCLC in Dublin. "This event is capturing the attention of a lot more people than it ever has, and that is a sign of the importance of innovation in this community."

Award winner Michael Lanese took home the prize for Executive of the Year for his leadership of ClearSaleing Inc., a Columbus firm that helps large advertisers improve their return on dollars invested in online marketing. Despite the category in which he was honored, Lanese says an executive is only as good as his or her team, and credits his management team – Adam Goldberg, Randy Smith, Luke Tuttle and Ryan Memmelar – for his company's success. "It's not just about one person."



Philip Eggers, Cardiox Corp.



Michael Lanese, ClearSaleing Inc.



Local TV newswoman Andrea Cambern hosted the 2008 TechColumbus Innovation Awards.

Lanese also counts TechColumbus as part of that team. "We've received a lot of support from Ohio TechAngel's investors and TechColumbus – this award is great testament to this team that worked hard for seven years to build this company."

Another team effort resulted in the Outstanding Service Award (more than 50 employees). OCLC's WorldCat Local is a new service that allows library users access to a single search window to find materials housed in just about any library in the world. "When I was at the awards ceremony, my first reaction was that we were competing against some very brilliant people," said Matt Goldner, OCLC's Executive Director of End User Services. "I was so happy for our team members who worked tirelessly for 18 months, putting in incredible hours. This was truly a jewel in our crown."

Events such as the Innovation Awards are ways that Columbus can convey its value to the outside world, Jordan says. "At one point, we weren't very good at telling our story outside – or even inside – our own community. Now, we're fostering an environment for growth – we're attracting capital from outside Ohio and people are beginning to understand that tech innovation will be one of the key drivers to lead us out of this difficult economy. I'm very encouraged by all the positive indicators."

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2008 TechColumbus Innovation Award winners

Green Innovation
Velocys Inc. • Plain City

Outstanding Service (less than 50 employees)
KidsLinked.com • Columbus

Outstanding Service (50 or more employees)
WorldCat Local
OCLC • Dublin

Outstanding Product (less than 50 employees)
Laser Bond Inspection System
LSP Technologies, Inc. • Dublin

Outstanding Product (50 or more employees)
Liebert XD
Emerson Network Power • Columbus

Innovation in Non-Profit Service Delivery
TECH CORPS Ohio • Columbus

Executive of the Year (less than 50 employees)
Michael A. Lanese., CEO
ClearSaleing, Inc. • Columbus

Executive of the Year (50 or more employees)
Mark Boyed, VP of Information Technology
Zomax • Dublin

Outstanding Woman in Technology
Dr. Alice T. Epitropoulos
Epico / Ophthalmic Surgeons
Columbus

Inventor of the Year
Philip E. Eggers
Cardiox Corporation • Dublin

Outstanding Start-Up Business
EXCMR, Ltd. • Columbus

Outstanding Technology Team
Center for Innovation in Pediatric Practice
Dr. Kelly Kelleher & Dr. William Gardner
The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital
Columbus

Minority Owned Enterprise
Flairsoft Ltd • Westerville



OCLC WorldCat Local team