



CABI News

Official Newsletter of the Canadian
Association of Business Incubators

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President's Message

by Marie Lussier, CABI President, CRC Innovation Centre, Ottawa, ON

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and prosperous 2004.

Did you know Joe Mancuso established the first incubator in North America in 1959 in Batavia, New York? Canadian Association of Business Incubators' (CABI) research indicates the Charlottetown Industrial Mall, established in 1975 as a joint funding initiative of federal and provincial governments, is recognized as Canada's first business incubator.

Did you know Andrew "Mack" Duffus (Nova Scotia), David Jackson (Ontario), John Parsons (Newfoundland/Labrador) and Nancy Schneider (Alberta) founded CABI in 1992? CABI was then federally incorporated in 2001.

From its humble beginnings, convening annually at the National Business Incubation Association's conferences, CABI has grown from six dedicated members to its present membership. With representation from all Canadian provinces and territories, the association has become the leading and respected voice of business incubation in Canada.

The 12th annual CABI conference took place October 15 to 17, 2003, in Edmonton, Alberta. Hosted by the Northern Alberta Business Incubator Society (NABI), more than 100 delegates were treated to western hospitality. A hearty thanks has to be given to NABI's Lorne Ross and staff for organizing a great conference. Thanks Lorne! People thoroughly enjoyed the networking and sharing of experiences. For the first time, CABI held a pre-conference workshop, attended by 30 participants. Its success ensures pre-conference workshops will be an integral part of all future conferences.

Mark your calendars for the 13th annual CABI conference, to be held in Gatineau, Quebec. Scheduled for October 17 to 20, 2004, the Technology Business Development Centre will host the conference. October 17 will be pre-conference workshops and October 20 is slated for international delegates.

As I have said numerous times CABI is a member organization without paid staff. Looking back over the past 12 years, there are many things we would never have accomplished without the dedicated efforts and support of our volunteers behind the scenes: our unsung heroes.

One of the many privileges I have as president of CABI is to award the President's Award, whereby I get to recognize the efforts of one of these volunteers. At our fall conference it was my pleasure to recognize Dawn House for her ongoing efforts in creating our newsletter and publishing it on a quarterly basis. Dawn is an employee of InNOVAcop based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Thanks Dawn!

At CABI's 2003 general meeting, members reelected three directors and welcomed two new members, Karen Keppler from Winnipeg and Don Lyon from Moncton, to the board of directors.

While Normand de Montigny was not reelected, we would like to thank him for his many contributions to CABI during the years he served on the board. Paul Podstawa tendered his resignation prior to the conference and we also thank him for his contributions over the past two years. Thank you both for serving on the CABI board. Your knowledge and participation was greatly appreciated. I would also be remiss if I didn't thank Lorne Ross for his work as the chair of CABI over the past two years.

CABI's Executive Committee met for three days in January to revise CABI's business plan. These were very full days and the resulting document is being shared with CABI's board of directors. This business plan will assist us in securing the funding necessary to move the organization forward. The Executive Committee is also working on business development that will extend services to CABI membership.



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

by Ed Hobbs, CABI Chair, General Manager, Toronto Business Development Centre, Toronto, ON

It's hard to believe another year has passed us by. Although 2004 is well under way, I think it appropriate to reflect on CABI's progress over the past year. Last year's conference in Edmonton, Alberta, sponsored by the Northern Alberta Business Incubator (NABI), marked the first time CABI held its annual conference in Western Canada. Thanks to Lorne and his crew, attendees all agreed the "bar" was significantly raised for the CABI conference. Thank you folks for a job well done. As Marie mentioned, this conference also marked the first time CABI offered a pre-conference workshop, "Developing an Incubator's Business Plan." Based on the positive feedback received, CABI hopes to expand the pre-conference workshop at this year's conference in Gatineau, Quebec. We would be pleased to hear your suggestions for topics you would like offered at this year's sessions.

The National Business Incubation Association's (NBIA) annual international conference was held in Richmond, Virginia in May 2003. CABI co-sponsored the international networking event, hailed by most attendees as the best networking event at the conference. In addition, CABI's exhibit booth presented the many incubation activities across Canada with an ongoing PowerPoint presentation courtesy of Diane Franci and Jean-Jacques Ledoux. A special thanks to you folks for an excellent presentation. Once again, one of CABI's member incubators, the Toronto Business Development Centre (TBDC), was selected Incubator of the Year for 2003. Let's hope a CABI member incubator can make it a "three-peat" this year.

CABI's director of international relations, David McNamara, represented CABI at an incubation conference in the United Kingdom last October and has subsequently made terrific progress in establishing links with United Kingdom Business Incubation (UKBI). We will be hearing more about this initiative throughout the upcoming year. Thanks David, we look forward to the details once they are confirmed.

I would like to echo Marie's thanks and congratulations to Dawn House. As well, a warm welcome to our new CABI board members, Karen Keppler and Don Lyons, and many thanks to Paul Podstawa and Normand de Montigny for their tireless efforts on CABI's behalf over the past years. Finally, I would like to thank Lorne Ross for his past leadership as CABI chair and look forward to his continued contributions as a member of the board.

As you can see, 2004 is already shaping up as another full year of CABI growth. Exciting times are both truly here and ahead for CABI.



CLEAN SWEEP AT THE MANNING INNOVATION AWARDS

by Colette O'Hara, InNOVAcorp's Business Incubation Group, Halifax, NS



Manning Innovation Award recipients

Photo Credit: Michelle McCurdy

Atlantic Canada continues to show its innovative side. Reflective of the region's growing technology and innovation sectors, Atlantic Canadians were the recipients of all four 2003 Manning Innovation Awards - a first-time milestone for the region.

"This is a very significant achievement," says David McNamara, director of incubation at InNOVAcorp. "Atlantic Canada is leading the way in the

technology and innovation sectors. We're making unprecedented contributions, and these contributions are changing the world."

Nova Scotia's Tim Edmonds, P.Eng., was the recipient of a \$10,000 Manning Innovation Award for his Air Chamber Crab Processor, developed at an InNOVAcorp incubator in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. The automated processing machine removes meat from crab legs and replaces traditional machines that required workers to hold the legs while a burst of compressed air forced the meat out. Microscopic bits of crabmeat would float in the air, causing many workers to get a respiratory condition called *crab asthma*. "People were getting sick and it was hurting the industry and preventing it from growing," Edmonds says. His revolutionary innovation responded to this problem, helping Canada's crab processing industry more than double in size.

The Principal Award recipient (\$100,000) was Dr. Nancy Mathis, P.Eng., of Fredericton, New Brunswick, who was recognized for her non-invasive thermal effusivity sensor that determines the heat-transferring characteristics of a wide range of materials. The Award of Distinction (\$25,000) went to Chris Griffiths of St. John's, Newfoundland, a graduate of the Genesis Centre, a St. John's incubator. Griffiths won for his invention of a one-piece glass fibre guitar bracing system that forms the structural frame of all Garrison Guitars. Kirk Swinimer of Chester, Nova Scotia, won the other Innovation Award (\$10,000) for his invention of an engineered footing form for construction tubes that enables the integral pouring of concrete footings and columns.

The Manning Innovation Awards were presented on October 3, 2003, at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax. For more information about any of the recipients, visit www.manningawards.ca.



QUEBEC BIOTECHNOLOGY CENTRE INAUGURATES NEW FACILITIES

The mark of any great organization is growth. In the case of the Quebec Biotechnology Innovation Centre (QBIC), growth comes in many forms, most recently in the physical.

A 28,000 sq. ft. complex, Phase 3 of the Innovation Centre will be home to new and exciting companies entering the field of biotechnology. At present, resident companies and graduates from the QBIC have global assets of \$117 million. The addition will add to this significantly, as well as create new opportunities for the industry.

"The addition of these new laboratories and offices will enable us to better meet the needs of companies starting up in the biotechnology sector," says Dr. Jaques Gagné, chairman of the QBIC's board of directors.

Inaugurated on October 20, 2003, Phase 3 of the development will be built in the Biotech City of Greater Montreal in Laval.



MAKING A PERFECT MATCH

by Colette O'Hara, InNOVAcorp's Business Incubation Group, Halifax, NS



**Business student Curtis Mercer
and Blue Ocean president,
Paul Anderson**

Photo credit: Karen Roche

It's a partnership that makes perfect sense. Business students helping businesses. At Memorial University's (MUN) Genesis Centre, the classroom is meeting the real-world. And everyone is benefiting.

Business incubators are known for finding creative and innovative approaches to building businesses and helping their clients. So the Genesis Centre's initiative to facilitate MUN student projects for clients should come as no surprise. It's a win-win situation for both clients and students.

"What I love about this initiative is that it accomplishes many things for all parties involved," says Keelin O'Leary, Genesis Centre manager. "The Genesis Centre gains high

awareness among the students of today, who may be entrepreneurs of tomorrow. Our clients accomplish useful tasks, they benefit from the freshness and enthusiasm of the students and they preview potential future employees."

Curtis Mercer was one of seven students from MUN's Business Communications 2000 class who partnered with Genesis Centre clients. He worked with Blue Oceans Satellite Systems Inc., a company that offers a satellite phone and service that is compliant with new Department of Fisheries and Oceans Vessel Monitoring Systems. The opportunity to develop and administer a survey of fishing vessel owners gave Mercer experience he couldn't achieve in the classroom.

"I think the biggest thing I got out of doing the Genesis project was the advantage of putting the textbook material into the real world. Also, it was an excellent opportunity to help out a new business in an area they needed work completed," Mercer says.

Paul Anderson, president of Blue Oceans Satellite Systems Inc., agrees. "Blue Oceans definitely benefited by participating with students in the business faculty. As a small company, we are limited by the amount of market research we can do. This project provided us with the opportunity to do extensive research we would otherwise have had to do without. The quality of work performed was excellent and will be used by us for our business planning," Anderson

explains.

The success of this project has been resounding. And according to O'Leary, this is just the beginning. "Such a positive start bodes well for the Centre's hopes to expand this initiative to other business courses and other faculties."



SUCCESSFUL SYMPOSIUM FOR NEW ORGANIZATION

by Karen Keppler, Smart Partners of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB

The first annual Association of Manitoba Incubators (AMI) dinner and symposium was a complete success. On January 22, 2004, incubator managers, incubator clients and government officials gathered to celebrate the formation of the AMI. Dr. Rey Pagtakhan, Minister of Western Economic Diversification, spoke to the group about the important role of business incubation in Western Canada. Dr. Ian Smith, director general of the National Research Council's Institute for Biodiagnostics and member of AMI, reviewed the state of business incubation in Canada and Manitoba.



Dr. Rey Pagtakhan and Karen Keppler at AMI's symposium

The keynote speaker for the evening was Lorne Ross, executive director of the Northern Alberta Business Incubator. Ross reviewed some of his experience as the director of an award-winning incubator and presented the audience with an overview of the next day's symposium.

The symposium on January 23 included presentations by Lorne Ross and several others. The day was rich in wise advice and practical information.

The AMI dinner and symposium was organized by the chair of AMI, Karen Keppler, executive director of Smart Partners of Manitoba and its project, Virtual Incubation Manitoba. AMI has nine incubator members and seven associate members. The association was formed to encourage communication and shared events across Manitoba's incubators.



tALKING INCUBATION IN JAPAN

by Ed Hobbs, CABI Chair, General Manager, Toronto Business Development Centre, Toronto, ON

Last December I was invited to Japan to share my Canadian incubation experiences. For two days, I addressed members of the Japanese Association of New Business Organizations (JANBO) and senior members of the Japanese Ministry of Economic Development about the day-to-day activities of the Toronto Business Development Centre, as well as the ongoing activities of CABI. The audience was amazed to hear CABI is an organization managed entirely by volunteers. JANBO, on the other hand, receives 85 per cent of its funding from the Japanese Ministry of Economic Development. As such, Japanese incubator managers are required to attend regularly scheduled training sessions that JANBO offers.



Ed Hobbs making a presentation in Japan

The Japanese government supports business incubation as one of its leading economic development tools. An active member of both the National Business Incubation Association (NABI) and the Asian Association of Business Incubation (AABI), JANBO also sponsored delegates to the 2002 CABI conference in Toronto.

Japan has a population of approximately 140 million people. Each province (prefecture) is responsible for its own incubation activities. JANBO is then responsible for coordinating incubation activities on a national basis. Its offices are located in Tokyo and occupy one floor in a government ministry building.

My host was Ms. Shiho Matsuzaki, JANBO's director of international relations. She did an excellent job of ensuring my session rooms were well organized and my handouts were translated, duplicated and distributed. Ms. Matsuzaki also arranged for some very memorable sightseeing experiences before I hurried back to Canada.

I learned a great deal from the Japanese association's model and I will be sharing many of these ideas with everyone at the 2004 CABI conference in Gatineau, Quebec.



nABI GRAD WINS SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

by Lorne Ross, Northern Alberta Business Incubator, St. Albert, AB

During National Small Business Week, the St. Albert Chamber of Commerce held its annual awards banquet and celebrated the success of a number of St. Albert businesses. The Business of the Year Award winner was Diane Sabirsh of Studio 107. A graduate of the Northern Alberta Business Incubator (NABI), Sabirsh opened her business in 1992. At the time she was a 24-year-old hairdresser wanting to own and operate her own business. She started as a one-person salon in a 200 sq.ft. office in the incubator. Today she owns and operates a 2200 sq. ft. day spa and employs 23 people.

"The two years I spent in the incubator were invaluable," Sabirsh says. "I learned a lot about starting and running a business. I built my business in a safe and caring environment, and when I had a strong clientele base I was strong enough to move from the incubator."

Later this year Sabirsh will have the opportunity to compete for the provincial title of Small Business of the Year. At the 2003 CABI conference in Edmonton, Sabirsh, along with Ken Bautista of Hot Rockets Studio, presented the "Graduates Story" to conference goers. Diane is the second NABI graduate to win the Business of the Year Award.

Also winning an award (Young Entrepreneur Award) at this year's Chamber of Commerce banquet was Leanne Mowbray, of Mootastic. Mootastic is a retail ice cream and candy emporium in downtown St. Albert. While not a resident client of NABI, Mowbray has taken advantage of the business counselling and guidance provided to local businesses at the

incubator through its courses and outreach programs.



CELEBRATING THE SWEET SIXTEEN



Networking at Sweet Sixteen
Photo Credit: Frank Carone

The candles were lit, the food was served and the wine was opened to celebrate the Sweet Sixteen of the Toronto Fashion Incubator (TFI). Known as a launching pad for some of the best and brightest designers in the country, the TFI has much to celebrate after more than a decade and a half of catapulting designers to success. Not only has it forged the path for future fashion stars, it's the world's leader in fashion incubators. The first of its kind in North America, the TFI's success in developing innovative talent while encouraging small business growth has created an entrepreneurial culture that is envied around the globe. Cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Montreal, Vancouver, Sydney, St. Petersburg and Dublin have looked to Toronto's Fashion Incubator as a model of innovation, excellence and leadership. Congratulations, and best wishes for many more years of fashion history.



nABI CELEBRATES 15 YEARS

By Lorne Ross, Northern Alberta Business Incubator, St. Albert, AB

On May 16 of this year the Northern Alberta Business Incubator (NABI) will celebrate its 15th anniversary as a business incubator. Originally called the St. Albert Business Development Centre, the incubator was the initiative of a progressive, pro-business mayor and city council. Since its inception, NABI has graduated 65 businesses into the region.

NABI's graduates and the incubator itself have had a profound economic impact upon the City of St. Albert. A recent study conducted by the city's Economic Development and Tourism Department indicated that NABI's annual economic impact over the past 14 years has been \$92.5 million. As NABI looks toward the future, and a new expanded facility, it's projected that the annual economic impact will increase to \$233.1 million by 2010. Plans are now underway to mark the anniversary with a grand party and hopefully the kick-off to a major fundraising drive for the new facility.



CABI BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Below is a list of our CABI board of directors, officers and committee chairs:

Executive Committee

Ed Hobbs, Toronto, ON - Chair
Marie Lussier, Ottawa, ON - President
Michel Fortier, Gatineau, QC - Vice-President
Jean-Jacques Ledoux, Ottawa, ON - Treasurer
Cheryl Mulgrave, Toronto, ON - Corporate Secretary

Committee Chairs

Executive Committee (see above) - Business Development Committee
Michel Fortier, Hull, QC - Finance Committee
Laurence Hewick, Hamilton, ON - Research Committee
Ed Hobbs, Toronto, ON - Conference Committee
Jim Hughes, Calgary, AB - Elections Committee
Jean-Jacques Ledoux, Ottawa, ON - Membership Committee
David McNamara, Halifax, NS - International Relations Committee

Board of Directors

Keelin O'Leary, St. John's, NF
John Parsons, Pasadena, NF
David McNamara, Halifax, NS
Don Lyon, Fredericton, NB
Michel Fortier, Gatineau, QC
Jean-Jacques Ledoux, Ottawa, ON
Marie Lussier, Ottawa, ON
André Lafrenière, Kawartha Lakes, ON
Ed Hobbs, Toronto, ON
Andrew Maxwell, Mississauga, ON
Laurence Hewick, Hamilton, ON
Judy Sander, Thunder Bay, ON
Karen Keppler, Winnipeg, MB
Jim Hughes, Calgary, AB
Lorne Ross, St. Albert, AB

The board of directors meets every two months via conference call. The CABI executive committee meets regularly and communicates daily to deal with CABI's day-to-day activities.



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LINK TO THE CABI NEWS TEAM

CABI News is your chance to connect with your peers in the incubation industry all year long. Send your articles via email to incubation@innovacorp.ns.ca, via mail to InNOVAcorp's Business Incubation Group, 1721 Lower Water Street, Halifax, NS, B3J 1S5, or via fax to 902-421-2733.



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