

# Innovation Awards honor eight regional inventors, entrepreneurs

The Athens Messenger

Posted: Friday, March 15, 2013 11:55 am | Updated: 9:04 pm, Fri Mar 15, 2013.

The Innovation Awards, a regional celebration of entrepreneurship and creative innovation, honored eight individuals on Thursday for their advances in business and technology.

TechGROWTH Ohio, a public/private partnership administered by Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs, presented its first annual regional awards in six categories. In addition, Ohio University announced the first two recipients of the Konneker Medal for Commercialization and Entrepreneurship, which will be presented annually to outstanding faculty members, alumni or students.

Forty-six individuals from across southeastern Ohio were finalists for the Innovation Awards, which were judged by panels of external reviewers. The recipients are:

- Francesca Hartop was named Entrepreneur of the Year. Hartop is the co-founder of Yost Engineering, Inc. of Portsmouth. Yost has developed the YEI 3-Space Sensor, a line of miniature, high-precision, high-reliability, Attitude and Heading Reference Systems (AHRS) /Inertial Measurement Units (IMU). These sensors allow users to know, very precisely, how something is moving and turning in 3-D space, while reducing or eliminating the usual problems of drift and error.
- Kelly McCall received the Outstanding Woman in Innovation Award. McCall, an assistant professor of endocrinology in the Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, has been heavily involved in innovative research, studying the pathways associated with the treatment of diabetes and various types of cancer, while mentoring students and teaching others about commercializing their research.
- Brad Mitchell, representing the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative, received the Social Innovation Award. Responding to the regional challenges of rural and small town education, Battelle for Kids and a collaborative of 21 Appalachian

Ohio school districts-serving more than 37,000 students-joined forces to create and implement a comprehensive approach for transformational change.

- Geoff and Michelle Greenfield received the Green Innovation Award. The Greenfields founded Third Sun Solar of Athens to accelerate the growth of clean energy systems. For more than a decade, the company has custom designed and installed more than 300 renewable energy systems for its commercial, institutional, government and residential customers across the Midwest.
- Jason Trembly received the Outstanding Faculty Innovation Award. Trembly, an assistant professor in Ohio University's Russ College of Engineering and Technology, has invented the Integrated Precipitative Supercritical (IPSC) Process for conversion of flowback/produced water from oil/gas operations into a reusable water product.
- Huiwen Cheng, an Ohio University doctoral student in chemistry, received the Outstanding Student Innovation Award. At the Edison Biotechnology Institute, Cheng is developing a new group of safer, gentler NSAIDs for the treatment of pain and inflammation. These new drugs also have a potential positive effect on cancer cells.

Two individuals were selected by the Ohio University Foundation for the Konneker Medal for Commercialization and Entrepreneurship, which is named for distinguished alumnus and entrepreneur Wilfred Konneker. The recipients are:

- David Scholl, an Ohio University alumnus, is the former president and CEO of Diagnostic Hybrids, Inc. Under his leadership, the Athens, Ohio company grew from a four-person startup to the Inc. 500 list, emerging as a world leader in cell- and monoclonal antibody-based diagnostics. Scholl is a current partner in the venture capital firm Athenian Venture Partners and a member of the Ohio University Board of Trustees and Foundation Board.
- John Kopchick is the Goll-Ohio Eminent Scholar and Professor of Molecular Biology in Ohio University's Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine and Edison Biotechnology Institute. Kopchick and his group were the first to discover and characterize growth hormone receptor antagonists, which led to the development of an FDA-approved drug (Somavert(r)) for patients with acromegaly. The drug has benefited thousands of patients and has generated significant licensing income for the university.

The event was held in conjunction with the fifth anniversary of TechGROWTH Ohio, a program funded by the state Third Frontier program, OU and industry sponsors to provide investments and business expertise to startup companies in southeastern Ohio. TechGROWTH Ohio is part of an entrepreneurial ecosystem that includes programs that support university and regional technology

commercialization and small business incubation.

Hosted by TechGROWTH Ohio, the event was sponsored by WesBanco, ED MAP, Bricker & Eckler and Ohio University's Vice President for Research and Creative Activity, Scripps College of Communication Russ College of Engineering and Technology and Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs.