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## **U of S scientists honoured as finalists for 2012 Award of Innovation**

University of Saskatchewan researchers who developed smartphone applications, a commercial line of tomato plants, and a method for early detection of colorectal cancer were announced as finalists for the Award of Innovation at the SABEX “*Celebrate Success!*” reception yesterday evening.

Co-sponsored by Innovation Place and the U of S Industry Liaison Office (ILO), the award honours U of S researchers who have brought new and commercially viable technology to the ILO for development into marketable products.

“Commercialization of the innovative smartphone applications, the first viable, male-sterile line of tomatoes and the marker to identify colorectal cancer are outstanding examples of the benefits the investment in research brings.” said Glen Schuler, ILO managing director.

“Moreover, the commercialization of these technologies will benefit our city, our province, Canada and the rest of the world through better medical diagnostics, cheaper food and better communications.”

“We’re excited by this year’s group of finalists,” said Austin Beggs, Innovation Place vice-president for corporate relations. “Innovation Place has strong ties to the U of S with thousands of alumni working for our clients. The ideas behind many of the enterprises at Innovation Place began at the U of S and we are proud to celebrate all the novel products and processes that are headed for the marketplace.”

The award finalists are:

**Rajendra Sharma** and **Anuraag Shrivastav** of the U of S department of pathology have identified a marker present in the blood and bone marrow of patients with colorectal cancer, the third most common cancer diagnosed in Canada. This marker can be detected at all tumor stages, which will allow for early detection and a greater chance of survival for patients. Colorectal cancer is curable, but current methods for detection are invasive and costly. This discovery has potential to be developed into a simplified, cost-effective and accurate way to diagnose colorectal cancer.

**Chad Jones** and **Eric Neufeld** of the U of S department of computer science developed the iUsask Application (app) for the iPhone – the first app in Canada to offer university students broader, exceptionally secure access to confidential information such as grades, along with general university information. This project led to creation of CollegeMobile (CM), a company that creates both educational and business apps for smartphones and other portable mobile

devices. CM sets itself apart from competitors by programming for multiple mobile platforms and using complex security software to protect app users' information.

With an international reputation in the area of plant development and hybrid seed production, U of S biology professor **Vipen Sawhney** has been conducting research on male sterility in tomatoes for over 30 years and developed the first commercially viable, male-sterile line of tomatoes. The line significantly reduces the cost of hybrid tomato seed production by eliminating the labour-intensive process of hand removal of the male part (stamen) of tomato flowers, ensures a 100 per cent hybrid seed yield. It has now been licensed to seed companies in Italy, India, and Holand.

The winner of the Award of Innovation will be announced May 17<sup>th</sup> at the SABEX "Celebrate Success!" gala, sponsored by the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce and Potash Corp.

The Award of Innovation is open to U of S employees and students. Selection criteria include innovation novelty and potential commercial impact. The selection committee includes representatives from Innovation Place and the U of S.

Innovation Place is one of North America's most successful university-related research parks. For more information on Innovation Place, visit [www.innovationplace.com](http://www.innovationplace.com).

The ILO works with inventors to help commercialize innovations developed at the U of S. For more information on the ILO, visit [www.usask.ca/research/ilo](http://www.usask.ca/research/ilo).

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