



News Release

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2010 Research Center Wins Big in Business Competition

PIERRE – A medical technology company associated with a new university-based research center in South Dakota has won top prize in a business awards program.

PhotoBioMed of Sioux Falls earned \$20,000 and the opportunity to compete in the national 2006 World's Best Technologies competition. The company took top honors this month in the Governor's Giant Vision Business Awards competition, sponsored by the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Researchers at PhotoBioMed are working to perfect a sutureless, adhesive surgical process based on platform tissue bonding technology. Drs. Kaia Kloster and Ron Utecht use chemistry to bond tissue to tissue, tissue to graft material, or a drug to a tissue location in a process that will minimize or eliminate the need for sutures. The technology advances new ways to effectively and quickly close wounds, which reduces pain and promotes healing.

“PhotoBioMed is taking a new idea, developed through research at our state's universities, and translating it into a marketable business venture,” said Gov. Mike Rounds, one of the founders of the Giant Vision award. Initially, PhotoBioMed's research has focused on repairing corneas in the eye, but vascular patching, reconstructive surgery, and combat wound repair also are potential applications.

The research is a critical component of the work under way at the Center for the Research and Development of Light-Activated Materials, which is housed at The University of South Dakota's chemistry department, with Avera Research Institute and South Dakota State University as participating institutions.

The center is one of four created statewide by the South Dakota Board of Regents, and funded by the Legislature, as a planned strategy to heighten South Dakota's profile in research and development. Increasing university research, and translating that research into ideas and products that can be marketed, are central points in Gov. Rounds' 2010 economic development initiative.

“We are thrilled that work under way at our 2010 research centers is catching the attention of the business and economic development communities,” said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. “This is exactly the kind of commercialization activity that holds such promise for our state's future.”