



M A R Y L A N D
INCUBATOR COMPANY
OF THE YEAR
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maryland's Top Incubator Companies Recognized

Fourth Annual Incubator Companies of the Year Awards Highlight Six Companies

COLUMBIA, Md. (June 17, 2004) – American Express Tax and Business Services, the Maryland Business Incubation Association (MBIA), the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED), the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) and Saul Ewing LLP announced Wednesday evening the winners of the fourth annual **Maryland Incubator Companies of the Year Awards** during a reception at The Center Club in Baltimore. The awards, whose winners were chosen by a selection committee comprised of venture capitalists and government and business leaders, recognized the achievements of six current and graduate companies of Maryland's incubators.

"From a company in Annapolis developing countermeasures for anthrax to a company in Rockville revolutionizing the treatment of some of the most common causes of blindness, this year's finalists reflect the incredible breadth of innovation and technology being developed all around the State of Maryland," said Robert A. Spar, Esq., a partner at Saul Ewing. "Saul Ewing is proud to support and recognize the accomplishments of these cutting edge companies."

Secretary of DBED, Aris Melissaratos, said, "We are so pleased to recognize these outstanding companies that have benefited from Maryland's incubator system and that enhance Maryland's reputation as the State where technology starts. The Incubator Company of the Year Awards spotlight the emerging technologies that these companies have developed, as well as illustrate the impact of the prominent incubation system in the state."

The awards were given based on a company's goals and success in achieving its objectives. Judges considered a company's technology or product development; increase in employee numbers; growth in revenue or earnings; engagement of significant customers and strategic partners; technology transfer; receipt of awards or grants; attraction of outside investors; innovation; self-sufficiency; impact on the region; and ability to use an incubator's services.

"This annual event allows us as a community to recognize the progress made throughout the state in our business incubators," said Brian S. Meritt, managing director of the Technology/Emerging Growth Companies Practice of American Express TBS. "We have the utmost confidence in these companies and can only anticipate the advancements that they will achieve in the future."

The categories and award-winners (incubator in parentheses) are:

Best New Incubator Company – **BD Metrics, Inc.** (techcenter@UMBC, Catonsville) *Makes it easier for companies to create business relationships by recommending which business deals to make, matching a company's product or services to potential buyers and partners and produces reports to prove the value of the relationships.*

Biotech/Life Science – **Pharmathene, Inc.** (Chesapeake Innovation Center, Annapolis) *Treats and prevents diseases caused by bioterrorism, including anthrax, with emphasis on long-term immunity, short-term immunity and treatment for those that have been hospitalized.*

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Information Technology – Agentsmith, Inc. (Emerging Technology Center, Baltimore City) *Helps media companies maximize revenue and profits through increased advertising sales by minimizing up-front capital, increasing sales productivity and helping companies to more effectively use and price inventory.*

Technology Service – Telecontinuity, Inc. (Maryland Technology Development Center, Rockville) *Provides backup telephony for companies in the event of natural or man-made disasters by rerouting incoming calls and delivering them anywhere to any device.*

Technology Transfer – Advanced Vision Therapies, Inc. (Maryland Technology Development Center, Rockville) *Uses gene transfer technology to treat some of the most common causes of blindness, including age-related macular degeneration, diabetic proliferative retinopathy and retinitis pigmentosa.*

Graduate – Syntonics LLC (Howard County Economic Development Authority's NeoTech Incubator, Columbia) *Develops high-tech communications and timing systems for use on land, at sea and in space.*

“The incubators in Maryland provide the support needed to create a foundation for success for small, start-up businesses,” said Ann Lansinger, president of the MBIA and executive director of the Emerging Technology Centers in Baltimore. “In cooperation with this year’s sponsors, we are able to highlight just a few of the many wonderful companies currently working in our incubators.”

The judging committee for the awards was comprised of members from the investment community and sponsoring organizations, including: eCentury Capital Partners; ASM Resources; Boulder Ventures; DBED; Delaware Innovation Fund; Maryland Venture Fund; University of Maryland Dingman Center; Beacon Global Private Equity; Sterling Venture Partners, LLC; Valhalla Partners; Chesapeake Emerging Opportunities Club; Mid-Atlantic Venture Funds; Greater Baltimore Technology Council; New Vantage Group; American Express Tax and Business Services; Saul Ewing LLP; Anthem Capital; Toucan Capital Corp.; TEDCO; NextGen Capital; MMG Ventures; Quaker BioVentures, Inc.; Walker Ventures; and Enterprise Development Organization.

“Through the MBIA’s leadership and best practices for the community, the companies’ accomplishments illustrate the high-caliber incubators we have in Maryland,” said Phillip Singerman, executive director of TEDCO. “These awards showcase the many outstanding companies that have benefited from Maryland’s incubator system, one of our strongest resources to promote and enhance technology companies in the state.”

Maryland Incubator Company of the Year Awards recognize the achievements of current and graduate companies within Maryland’s incubators. Application finalists and category winners are chosen by a group of regional industry leaders and early-stage investors. American Express Tax and Business Services, the Maryland Business Incubation Association (MBIA), the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED), the Maryland Technology Development Corp. (TEDCO) and Saul Ewing LLP are the awards’ sponsors. For more information, visit www.mdincubatoraward.com.

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