

U Sponsoring Conference for Small Businesses

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The U Engineering Experiment Station is sponsoring a conference on small businesses and inventions to aid in their commercialization this week.

The conference is aimed at new inventors in small businesses, and will include representatives from the U.S. Department of Defense and the National Institute of Health for both panel discussions and one-on-one meetings with guests in attendance.

The governmental representatives are also involved with the Small Business Innovation Research Program, which aids small businesses.

"The SBIR is just one of the ways government is helping small businesses succeed," according to Terrence Chatwin, director of the Engineering Experiment Station.

The two-day conference will include more than 20 workshops, which include integrating the Internet to commercialize new ideas, developing leadership skills and preparing winning proposals.

The conference's keynote speaker is James Sonnett, vice president for innovation support services at Battelle, a nonprofit technology and product-development corporation.

Other speakers include Richard Clayton, an employee of Technology to Market. T2M is a nonprofit group which tries to accelerate the commercialization of new technologies.

In addition to Sonnett and Clayton, the annual Pathfinder Award will be given to a U professor. The Pathfinder is an award given to an inventor who has helped assist a small business during the year. This year's recipient is Dr. Carl Wittwer, a professor of pathology in the School of Medicine.

Wittwer will be honored for his help in developing and commercializing rapid DNA analysis technology.

Wittwer has also worked with Idaho Technology Inc., a Salt Lake City-based corporation whose work has included the effectiveness of drugs in treating various strains of HIV, and the detection of biological weapons like anthrax spores.

Advance registration ended Friday but tickets are available for \$95, with a student fee of \$65. Tickets are also available at the door for \$115 or online at <http://www.utah.edu/uees/i2c.html>.

The conference will be held at the Larry Miller Entrepreneurial Center in Sandy.

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