



The Catalyst August '09 Edition

Mark Your Calendar for September 30th: It's BizStarts' 1st Anniversary!

Be sure to mark September 30th on your calendar for BizStarts Milwaukee's one year birthday celebration. We'll recap our significant accomplishments, you'll receive our first annual report and we'll announce some exciting new initiatives. All of this will be wrapped with great food, excellent networking and a who's who of well known entrepreneurs in the region. Watch for your invitation in early September!

Our advice? Consider an Advisory Board

A great way to gain valuable advice is to recruit one or more boards of advisers. An advisory board can be a group of business and technical experts who provide occasional advice to management but who are not full-time employees of the company. Advisors generally do not commit the same amount of time to the company as directors, nor do they bear the same legal responsibilities. As a result, it is often possible to get talented people involved with the company who could not otherwise make the commitments necessary to be a member of the Board of Directors.

Entrepreneurs use advisory boards in many ways. The ultimate goal is to get ideas, advice, and direction from experts in the industry. Advisory board members may be scientific or technological experts, bankers, marketing consultants, industry experts, financial consultants, customers, or other established entrepreneurs. They may meet monthly, quarterly, or as needed by the entrepreneur. They are usually compensated in some way, although compensation is generally relatively small—a meal during the meeting, a small payment per meeting, or in some cases, equity in the company. Few advisers join an advisory board for the money. Many established entrepreneurs attribute their success to the help that they received from mentors and advisers, and they feel that serving on an advisory board allows them to give back by helping someone else.

Information provided by the Kauffman Foundation

TechVenture's first graduation is Monday!

BizStarts Milwaukee's 1st TechVenture graduation will take place on **Monday, August 10th**. Eight participants will graduate with refined innovative, high-growth business concepts. The technologies covered include: medical device, internet travel, wireless advertising media, martial arts web media, internet video service, aquaponics, bicycle design and manufacturing, web based medical treatment analysis tool. TechVenture is a program of BizStarts VentureTrack.

Dave Brethauer from Pheasant Creek Aquaponics stated: "Tim Peterson, Director of the SBDC and the program facilitator, did a great job of getting people from a very diverse background in front of us for each class. Each person that spoke brought something new to the fountain, so to speak, that we could all drink from" (Dave is starting a water-related company, hence the water pun.)

Ed Dyer, who is working on a unique bicycle design company, stated: "the networking was invaluable. I really enjoyed being connected with entrepreneurs who could share their experiences of starting a company."

Mark Huber, a coach with TechVenture, said "the projects have really come together... they have become more focused and professional." For several of the participants, he said, the projects and concepts brought into the class were either viewed as a hobby or were secondary to their day jobs. "This program enabled them to see the potential of their ideas and several are now looking for team members to add to their effort, which shows a significant shift in their thinking."

Huber concluded, "this has been a great experience for me and I am looking forward to continue the work with this group and bring in several other new concepts in our fall program."

BizStarts salutes these entrepreneurs who have put a lot of time and effort into their projects!!!!

The NEXT TechVenture class is scheduled to begin October 1st, 2009.

Only 12 spots are available, so sign up soon! Contact Chelsea Krause at chelsea@bizstartsmilwaukee.com

Entrepreneurship: Engaging Students Conference Set for Tuesday, August 11th

The BizStarts College Consortium is holding its' third meeting on August 11th at We Energies from 8 am until 2pm. At the top of the program is a panel presentation on 'How to Establish and Maintain a Successful Student Business Plan Contest'. Panel members include:

- Dr. Jeffrey Blessing – Associate Professor and Kern Entrepreneurial Network Fellow, Milwaukee School of Engineering
- William Dugan, Chair of Entrepreneurship, UW-Whitewater
- Tim Keane, Director, Kohler Center for Entrepreneurship, Marquette University
- John Komives, Entrepreneur in Residence, Adjunct Professor, UWM

Other topics include:

- "How to Establish and Run a Successful Student Entrepreneurship Organization" and
- "Students speak out: How they've personally benefitted from campus entrepreneurial programming"

BizStarts Milwaukee is hopeful more colleges in the region will establish student business plan contests and student entrepreneur organizations.

Let's Get It Started: StartUp Accelerator ramps up and takes off September 26th!

The **StartupAccelerator** happens **September 26th** at the Milwaukee County Research Park Innovation Center at 10437 Innovation Drive in Wauwatosa.

StartupAccelerator is a day-long event focused on creating new connections between entrepreneurs, resource providers, and people with a vision or a mission through collaborative and open education sessions, opportunity identification, and social networking.

At StartupAccelerator, you are free to interact openly with anyone, and move between sessions at any time. You'll have a chance to do hands-on activities to improve your prospects and your ideas, regardless of what kind of idea you're trying to start. You'll meet and interact with a variety of professionals in different areas of business.

For more information and to Register go to: www.startupaccelerator.org. The first 100 registrants to sign up prior to September 11th will be guaranteed a Startup Accelerator t-shirt and refreshments throughout the day. Admission for the event is: a non-perishable food item or cash donation which will be given to the Hunger Task Force.

So punch the gas and join the Accelerator! It's a shot of energy for your project and high-impact aerobics for your brain.

Ideas to Profits Conference: October 1-2, 2009

What will you be doing when October begins? We know you won't be watching Brett Favre playing for the Vikings. **So, mark your calendars for the Ideas to Profits Conference** scheduled for October 1st and 2nd in Wisconsin Dells. Coordinated by the Wisconsin Innovation Service Center, the conference is geared toward innovators, inventors, entrepreneurs and manufacturers.

More than 18 experts are scheduled to speak on how to launch new ideas and products, intellectual property licensing, search engine optimization, social networks, rapid prototyping, angel investors, government funding and more. You can also enter the 2009 Juried Inventors' Showcase and Competition. Cost to attend is \$99 for both days. Check out the WISC web site for more details at: <http://academics.uww.edu/business/innovate/workshops.htm>

(Newsletter continues on next page)

Featured Entrepreneur: Michael Major, Cambridge Major Laboratories

Remember when your chemistry teacher told you everything you're learning in class might become useful someday? Many of us shrugged that off, or used the knowledge for fun and mischievous pranks. Others seized the knowledge and developed global organizations providing services to pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies worldwide. Michael Major, Ph.D., D.S.C., is one who did just that.

Major began his career as a tenured professor of Organic Chemistry at the University of Lodz in Poland. From there, he went to Northwestern University and also earned a Humboldt Fellowship at the University of Stuttgart and researched at McMaster University in Ontario. In the early 1990s as the entrepreneurial bug came calling, Major founded Major Laboratories. The company merged with Cambridge Chemical to form Cambridge Major Laboratories in 1999.



Ten years later and hot on the heels of a major (yes, pun intended) \$40 million expansion that has already added 60 new jobs in the region and expanded processing capacity from 3,000 to 18,000 gallons, Cambridge Major eyes a future with sales doubling their current annual figure of around \$50 million.

What makes Cambridge Major successful in an era where manufacturing is generally on the decline in the U.S.? According to Major, it's strong R&D. At Cambridge Major, a significant amount of R&D supports early scale-up during pre-clinical development. From that point, the company works closely with clients from molecular concept to the in-human study phase as a priority.

On a larger scale, Major is very passionate about the importance of manufacturing to an economy. "Everything starts with manufacturing," he said. But once you have the facility, "people are everything in a business." Major believes in rewarding hard work with opportunity, once they've proven themselves. "Companies that overspend for talent up front often end up with employees that aren't as productive," he noted, "When it comes to employees, show me what you can. If you show more than the average person technically and managerially and you bring value to the company, then basically, the sky is the limit."

After a lengthy tenure in academia, Major found a job with Sigma Aldrich in Milwaukee in 1992. There, he worked with chemicals at a plant amidst the tangled web of the former Marquette Interchange, which used to encircle the building.

"I was a freer spirit than Aldrich, and eventually I moved to Cambridge Chemical. I knew I had to eventually try and start my own business. I knew how to produce chemicals, but I was doing it for somebody else. I had a good relationship still with Aldrich Chemical and they agreed to order chemicals from me. I took out a second mortgage and raised additional money while applying for SBIR (Small Business Innovation Research) funds."

The money raised was used to build a chemical lab that met all code requirements. He named it Major Laboratories; Cambridge Chemical and Sigma Aldrich were among

his first customers. "Within a year, we increased cash flow by taking on new projects others didn't want to take," Major noted, "that allowed us to survive."

Early employees had some ownership stake in the business, which helped their drive and rewarded loyalty during the company's fledgling years. When Cambridge merged with Major in 1999, the infusion of employees helped launch sales to levels three times what Cambridge had formerly done alone.

"Every year we improved, I hired more people, and then motivation came from having more people following you. Suddenly, I had 15 or 20 people," Major recalled. That employment figure has since climbed into the triple digits.

In terms of being an entrepreneur, Major has two recommendations: find something in yourself that motivates you to try and do the best you can do, and then be willing to take risks and responsibilities, recognizing that both the hardest and most rewarding part will be the consequences.

One high point on Major's entrepreneurial journey occurred one day in 2004, when he won the honor of Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year in Life Sciences for the State of Wisconsin – the very same day as Cambridge Major's new facility (at the time) opened. The company's growth has continued since then despite the economic situation. "We didn't lay off anybody in the recent economic downturn," Major noted, "in fact, we hired more people. We have a lot of people coming to us now, asking for jobs."

In addition to the new Germantown facility, a 2007 business acquisition – the company's first – has given them a European facility in Peelterbaan, The Netherlands. Cambridge Major continues to bring in awards, and last year received the Frost & Sullivan 2008 North American Fine Chemicals Award for business excellence and sustainability.

Success, Major says, requires "education and special skills...and most of all, hard work. They are the prerequisites. Once you have the base, you multiply your chances of success. Hard work then tends to bring you some luck."

Amazing how that works out, isn't it?

Check out [Cambridge Major's website here!](#)

For up-to-date information on BizStarts Milwaukee, be sure to visit the website:

<http://www.bizstartsmilwaukee.com>

Lots of information and classes and other resources can be found on the **BizStarts calendar** at <http://www.bizstartsmilwaukee.com/Calendar.htm>.

And, check out the BizStarts Milwaukee LinkedIn group!

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1766387>

Pass The Catalyst newsletter on to your friend and associates! They can subscribe to our free newsletter on [BizStarts Milwaukee's Home Page](#) under **BizStarts Newsletter**.
