

Lakehead University 2010-2011 Report to the Community

New Ideas lead to ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Barbara Eccles

Barb Eccles is on the lookout for Lakehead U's next big promising technology. As Manager of Lakehead's Economic Development and Innovation Office (EDIO), she already has an impressive track record for identifying winners. Since Lakehead began its technology transfer program approximately a dozen years ago, Eccles has helped shepherd a half-dozen or so companies from idea to reality and helped to develop the University's profile as a research institute. In the process, she's also helped to put Thunder Bay — and, by extension, Northwestern Ontario — on the map as a growing hub for biotechnology and business development.

This year, EDIO celebrated the licensing to GreenCentre Canada of a cement additive that shows potential to significantly strengthen concrete and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The technology, developed by Chemical Engineering Professor Lionel Catalan and Chemistry Professor Stephen Kinrade, can potentially increase concrete strength by up to 40 percent and reduce the amount of Portland cement needed to make concrete.

"Technology commercialization involves four important steps: invention disclosure, patenting, licensing and finally introduction of new products to the market," says Eccles. "This license to GreenCentre Canada is an important measure of the potential commercial value arising from Lakehead-based research, moving us one step closer to direct benefits to society and economic returns to the region. It showcases once again that Lakehead is a successful contributor to Canada's overall innovation agenda."

The production of Portland cement involves heating calcium carbonate and clay at extremely high temperatures. This process is responsible for an estimated seven percent of all greenhouse gases produced annually. Globally, approximately 1.35 billion tons of Portland cement are produced each year, releasing an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide into the air.

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This short video features Professors Stephen Kinrade and Lionel Catalan, Lakehead University

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