



# Nicol Entrepreneurial Award

## Backgrounder/FAQ

### What is the Nicol Award?

Introduced in 1997, the Nicol Award reflects the entrepreneurial passion of Wes Nicol, a successful Ottawa-based business leader. Wes' vision was to introduce an award that:

- Recognized, celebrated, and championed the entrepreneurial spirit
- Mirrored real-world pressures and conditions that an entrepreneur must face to get the financial backing and support required for his or her idea
- Attracted the brightest students from a range of disciplines in addition to business: engineering, philosophy, science, art, and others
- Helped to develop the next generation of entrepreneurs to drive Canada's economy

The original Award was endowed at Carleton University, Wes' alma mater, and has been a successful annual event at the Sprott School of Business ever since. This year, 14 Canadian universities hosted local competitions. The top teams then gather in Ottawa for a national competition and an exhilarating gala event.

### What's different about this competition?

Being a business or MBA student doesn't guarantee that you have what it takes to succeed as an entrepreneur. Unlike many traditional business plan awards, The Nicol Entrepreneurial Awards is not about who delivers the most polished presentation. It recognizes the importance of the entrepreneurial spirit and its key role in the success of a business.

No other business award program offers participants an experience that is as true-to-life, or one that is open to any student, with any new idea, in any program. The award is supported by celebrated entrepreneurs, leading academic institutions, and a long and growing list of successful alumni.

## **When and where does the competition take place?**

The 2010 Nicol Competition takes place on March 30 at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa.

At 1:15 p.m., the teams gather in the Quebec Suite. After an introduction of the judges and an explanation of the rules, each team will have 30 minutes to present its pitch and answer questions from the judges. Presentations are scheduled to end at 5 p.m.

An hour later, at 6 p.m., the 2010 Nicol Award Gala begins with a reception outside the Chateau Laurier Ballroom. Dinner is from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Videos of each team's "elevator pitch" (a two-and-a-half-minute summary of the business idea) will be screened during dinner. The keynote speaker is Richard L'Abbé, co-founder and former CEO of Med-Eng Systems Inc. At the end of the evening, the winning team will be announced.

*Note: All of the above events are open to media.*

## **Who judges the Nicol Award finalists?**

The finalist judges are all respected professionals who dedicate many hours during the year to reading plans and providing feedback to teams. Finalists deliver a 15-minute oral presentation of their plans, including demos if appropriate. The judges have about 15 minutes for questions and answers with each team. After all teams have presented, the judges select the runners-up and the winning team. This year's judges are:

### **Niraj Bhargava**

Chairman & CEO, Energate Inc.

Niraj Bhargava is Co-Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Energate Inc, a company specializing in home energy management solutions. Previously, Niraj was President and CEO of Enerstat Limited, the company that first commercialized the electronic programmable thermostat. After Enerstat, Niraj became a Professor of Entrepreneurship at Queen's University, CEO of Queen's Centre for Enterprise Development, and then Dean of the Business School at Royal Roads University.

Earlier in his career, Niraj held a number of positions at Bell-Northern Research, Northern Telecom and General Electric, and was General Manager of GE Energy Management. Niraj has a BAsC from University of Waterloo and an MBA from Ivey Business School, including an International Business Certificate from Stockholm School of Economics.

### **John Callahan**

Adjunct Research Professor, Carleton University

John Callahan is an Adjunct Research Professor in the Technology Innovation Management program within the Department of Systems and Computer Engineering of Carleton University. His research focus is in open source company strategy, product development, organizational structure/product architecture interaction, and tech based startups. John is writing a book on managing tech based startups and recently taught an MBA course at the University of Ottawa on this subject. John coordinated the Nicol Entrepreneurship Award Competition at Carleton from 2001 through 2008.

John holds a BSc (Hon) from Carleton, and an MA in Applied Mathematics and a PhD in Industrial Engineering from the University of Toronto.

**Denzil Doyle**

Chairman, Doyletech Corporation

Denzil Doyle, Chairman of consulting firm Doyletech Corporation, has been a long-time player in the Ottawa High Technology Industry. He has been a Director of the National Research Council, Newbridge Networks, Mitel, and Med-Eng Systems and has successfully founded a number of high-tech companies.

From 1995 to 2005, he served as Chairman of Capital Alliance Ventures Inc., an Ottawa-based venture capital firm specializing in technology investments. He is also the author of *Making Technology Happen*. In 2005, Mr. Doyle was invested as a Member of the Order of Canada.

**Peter Eddison**

Partner, Reid Eddison Inc

Peter is a founding partner of Reid Eddison Inc, a boutique management consulting firm that works primarily with high-growth technology companies across Canada and the United States. He was previously a co-founder of a number of Ottawa-area companies, including Mobius Software, Nabu Manufacturing, and Fulcrum Technologies, and from 2001 to 2005 was the President and CEO of AutoSkill International Inc, a leading provider of education software for the K-12 market.

A graduate in Economics and a Tricolour Award winner from Queen's University, Peter currently serves as the National Program Director for the Nicol Entrepreneurial Awards.

**Brad Forsyth**

Chairman, Mxi Technologies

Brad co-founded Mxi Technologies in 1996 and was the President & CEO until 2004, when he transitioned into the role of Chairman. As CEO, Brad oversaw the development and implementation of the strategic plan that established the company as a market leader in aviation maintenance software. In addition to his role at Mxi, Brad serves as a director on a number of other corporate boards and provides strategic management consulting services to a variety of clients.

Brad holds an Institute of Corporate Directors, Institute-certified Director (ICD.D) designation in addition to a Master of Science (M.Sc.) and Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Engineering from the University of Saskatchewan. Brad is also a Professional Engineer (P.Eng.)

**Mark Norton**

President, Pakenham Holdings Limited

Mark Norton has been the President of Pakenham Holdings Limited, a private investment company, since 1981. He is a director of Green Avenue Ventures Inc., an investment and management company, International Datacasting Corporation (TSX:IDC) a satellite communications company, and CMA Holdings Inc., the principal holding company of the Canadian Medical Association. Until recently, Mark was also a director of Med-Eng Systems Inc, a manufacturer of body protection and electronic counter measures systems.

**Caroline Somers**

Co-CEO, Cassidy Bay Group

Caroline Somers is the co-CEO and founder of [Cassidy Bay Group Inc](#), which provides executive and entrepreneurial coaching services primarily to early stage companies. Caroline has a wealth of business and operational experience gained in a long and wide-ranging career in the high technology industry and has been an angel investor in more than two dozen companies. Among other notable roles, Ms Somers was co-founder and VP Marketing and Product Management of Vienna Systems, a pioneer of Voice over IP products that was acquired by Nokia in 1998.

Strongly believing in giving to and helping grow the community, she serves on many non-profit and commercial boards of directors. Caroline is a certified coach and MBA graduate from Queen's University.

**How can I get more information?**

Press kits are available at [www.nicol-award.com/media/press-kit.htm](http://www.nicol-award.com/media/press-kit.htm). Please direct any questions to:

Alison Canavan  
Co-Producer  
613-290-4456  
[alisonc@aceeventmanagement.ca](mailto:alisonc@aceeventmanagement.ca)