



2008 Wes 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 Wes 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 2008 Nicol Competition takes place on May 6 at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa. The six finalist teams will attend a lunch in the MacDonald Room, Mezzanine level, at 12:00pm, with guest Frank McKenna, Deputy Chairman of TD Bank and former Canadian Ambassador to the United States.

At 1:15pm, 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 5pm.

An hour later, at 6pm, the 2008 Wes Nicol Award Gala begins with a reception outside the Chateau Laurier Ballroom. Dinner is from 7pm to 10pm. 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 John McLennan, former CEO of Cantel, BCE Mobility, Bell Canada and AT&T Canada. 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 20-minute oral presentation of their plans, including demos if appropriate. The judges have about 10 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:

- **Denzil J. Doyle, Chairman of consulting firm Doyletech Corporation.** A long-time player in Ottawa's high-tech industry, Mr. Doyle has been a Director of the National Research Council, Newbridge Networks, Mitel, and Med-Eng Systems, and successfully founded a number of high-tech companies. From 1995 to 2005, he served as Chairman of Capital Alliance Ventures Inc., a venture capital firm. He is the author of Making Technology Happen. In 2005, Mr. Doyle was invested as a Member of the Order of Canada.
- **Martine M. Irman, Vice Chair, Global Trading and Distribution, TD Securities, and Senior Vice President of TD Bank Financial Group.** Ms. Irman oversees day-to-day trading and distribution activities for TD Securities and plays a key role on the firm's senior leadership team. She is a board member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto and Invest in Kids, an active volunteer for the United Way of Greater Toronto, and was honoured as one of Canada's Top 40 Under 40. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Financial Studies from the University of Western Ontario.

- **Mark Norton, President of Pakenham Holdings Limited.** In addition to running his own private investment company, Mr. Norton 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.
- **Deborah Rosati, founder of RosatiNet, inc., a venture catalyst firm focused on developing financing strategies for technology start-ups.** Ms. Rosati was co-founder/CFO of TimeStep Corporation (acquired by Newbridge Networks), a general partner at Celtic House, and previously held senior finance positions with Tundra and Cognos. She currently chairs the Board of the Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) and sits on the Board of Sears Canada Inc. and Ontario Lottery Gaming Corporation. Her community work includes leadership roles with the Ottawa Hospital Foundation, The University of Ottawa School of Management Advisory Board, Brock University's Faculty of Business Advisory Council, and OCRI's Entrepreneurship Centre Advisory Committee. Ms. Rosati graduated from Brock University with an Honours Bachelor of Business Administration and is a Chartered Accountant.
- **Peter Suma, President of PCS Systems Inc., a healthcare venture-stage company.** Mr. Suma was previously President of Start Seed Capital Inc. and SRG Software Inc., and Vice President, Investments, with GrowthWorks Capital Inc., one of Canada's leading venture capital fund management companies. He has experience on many boards and committees, including the Ontario Securities Commission Small Business Advisory Committee, and is a sought-after speaker who has presented at various institutions and events. He holds an MBA from the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business, a PDAM from the Schulich School of Business and an Honors Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Toronto.

How can I get more information?

Press kits are available at www.nicol-award.com/media/overview.html. Please direct any questions to:

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