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## Chamber honors Ramkumar, Betenbough for ground-breaking efforts

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By Walt Nett

AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

Applause, and plenty of it, filled the front of the Scottish Rite hall Thursday as the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce saluted innovators and a pair of national award winners.

It was the chamber's inaugural business awards luncheon, and to nobody's surprise, Fibertect inventor Shesadhri Ramkumar was honored for Innovations in Technology for his

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recently marketed cotton-carbon nonwoven cloth.

Presenter Todd Reno, the director of business development at Reese Technology Center, quoted a nominating letter from Steve Verett, executive vice president of Plains Cotton Growers: "In a decade of service at Texas Tech University, Dr. Seshadri Ramkumar has proven himself as a researcher, innovator and leader in his field."

The chamber honored Betenbough Homes for Superior Business Practices. The Lubbock-based homebuilder has developed a Web-based paperless communications system for staying in touch with the company's trade partners in all three cities where the company is creating subdivisions.

Betenbough's presenter, Steve Anderson of the West Texas Coalition for Innovation and Commercialization, said: "With more than 25 floor plans, and up to eight drawing variations of each floor plan during the building process, online access to the floor plans is crucial for time management, quality control and a sustainable work environment, allowing trade partners the ability to pull the floor plan drawings at the building site with their cell phones."

In addition, the company's achieved additional efficiencies because company employees no longer email, fax or hand out plans and other paperwork.

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The chamber also recognized V-tech Environmental Services and Carpet Tech as being among the 72 national Blue Ribbon Award winners selected by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The businesses were selected based on evaluations of customer service, business strategy, community involvement, employee development and entrepreneurship methods.

Luncheon speaker Tony Rubleski, president of Mind Capture Group, spoke on innovation and "capturing minds" as part of keeping businesses moving forward.

His main advice was: "Stay on the offensive."

Rubleski, based in Spring Lake, Mich., commented that when things are going well, "Complacency is very easy to settle into."

He told the audience too many businesses are waiting for conditions to change, rather than "rolling up their sleeves and getting busy."

"Don't worry about getting it right. Just get it going," he said.

To comment on this story:

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