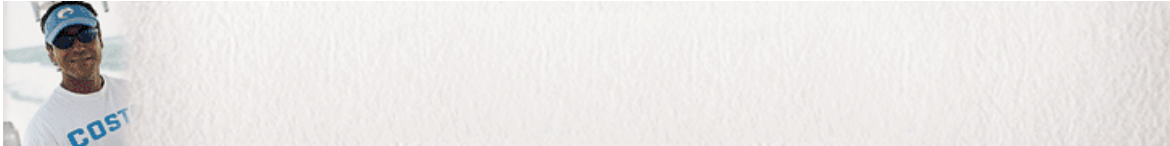




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Fibertect inventor awarded top innovation

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Posted: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 9:58 pm

Brian Howard Staff Writer | 0 comments

The Lubbock Chamber of Commerce recently announced Seshadri Ramkumar, an associate professor with the Institute of Environmental and Human Health, as the Innovation in Technology award winner for his invention of a cotton nonwovens wipe known as Fibertect.

The award will be presented to Ramkumar at the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce's inaugural Lubbock Innovations Award Luncheon on April 7.

The award selection process was divided into two different steps, Ramkumar said.

"First, you had to either submit an application, which I did, or be nominated by a third party, which I was as well," he said. "We were then asked to give a presentation of our innovation in front of a committee of eight highly respected economic and technological development leaders."

The presentation of Fibertect was the key part in ultimately winning the award, Ramkumar said.

"We actually demonstrated all the capabilities of Fibertect," Ramkumar said, "which included bringing in oil and water to display Fibertect's impressive absorbency capabilities."

The innovation and multiple uses of Fibertect have previously been recognized around the world and throughout the cotton industry, but Ramkumar said this award is distinct and meaningful in two different ways.

"It is very important to be recognized by where you're from, and the fact that our product was chosen as the best technology from many various disciplines, not just cotton, shows it has a broad technological appeal," he said. "This was done very selectively by the leaders in the area of technological innovation; it is a big honor for Tech."

While the award demonstrates the broader appeal of Fibertect in various industries, Ramkumar said it is yet another step toward putting West Texas cotton innovation on the map.

"The strategic strength of West Texas is cotton. People are advocating more and more that you need to work on your strategic strengths," he said. "This creates a local platform and helps to spearhead our technology."

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Todd Reno, director of business development at the Reese Technology Center, said the award is yet another example of the quality research performed at the center.

"It's great publicity for us and is representative of all of the research we have going on in many different fields," he said. "It showcases that we are very serious about the research that is going on here."

Reno said there could not be a more deserving person than Professor Ramkumar to receive such a high honor in technological innovation.

"I was one of many who nominated Ram for the award," he said. "He's a great mind, and it's great to have him."

Ramkumar's vision and passion for his research goes hand in hand with the main idea behind the top innovator award, said Robin Raney, vice president of business development at the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce.

"The idea behind the award is to promote Lubbock as a superior place to do business, and Dr. Ram's superior business practices and innovative uses of cotton is why he was named the first ever to be named top innovator by the chamber," she said. "He does a great job of helping people to understand a complex process; Dr. Ram is the epitome of innovation."

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