

# Spanish politician's visit enhances business relations between regions

The Honourable Josep Maria Rané, minister of Employment and Industry for the Government of Catalonia, Spain, visited Waterloo Region, Canada's Technology Triangle, last week as part of a week-long Canadian mission.

Designed to enhance business relations between the two regions, the minister was accompanied by a number of Catalonian officials including the head of cabinet, the head of protocol, the director of the Center for Innovation and Business Development (CIDEM) and the director of technology transfer (CIDEM).

"We (were) very interested in visiting Canada's Technology Triangle while in Canada," says Rané.



UW PhD student Jose Imbert (left) explains some of his work to Josep Maria Rané, minister of employment and industry for the Government of Catalonia, Spain, during a stop at the school last week.

He notes that this area is on the global radar and the visit creates a great opportunity to review best practices in technology transfer fields to apply them in Catalonia. "Waterloo Region is an exceptional part of Canada and is distinguished by its

diverse clusters of excellence and rapidly growing high tech enterprises."

For Canada's Technology Triangle Inc, the visit represented an opportunity to build business connections

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## Visit opens door to new partnerships

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with Catalonia and support current industry and institutional agreements in place.

Rané was welcomed by community leaders in Canada's Technology Triangle, and the tour included a stop at Research In Motion (RIM) and the University of Water-

loo's Centre for Automotive Research (WatCar).

"The visit helps us to further explore opportunities to form new R/D partnerships with counterpart universities or research parks in strategic areas of information technology, environment and energy, materials and manufacturing, nanotechnology,

and innovation," says Drew Knight, director for international programs at UW.

The visit also builds on an earlier visit to Barcelona, Spain by the University of Waterloo, University of Guelph, McMaster University, University of Toronto and the Ontario Centres of Excellence.

The aim of the visit was the exploration of collaborative research programs and common interests between researchers. Ontario is especially interested in new research programs and partnerships in emerging fields from nanotechnology to photonics to sustainable energy systems.