

Access Alberta

Deck For Success!

What's the secret to going from a \$2.5 million company to a \$6 million company in just 15 months? For Nisku-based **Pultronex Corporation**, support to hire good people seems to be the answer.

By taking advantage of WD's First Jobs in Science and Technology program (FJST), Pultronex was able to hire Michael Yeats, a civil engineering graduate of McGill University in Montreal.

"WD made it possible for Michael to be here, because the company was too small," says Gary Loblick, company president. "Because we are first and foremost a technology company, it has enabled us to move from a start-up company to a medium-level company very quickly – in less than two years."

As a strong technology-based company, Pultronex produces materials from a fiberglass composite. They have proprietary rights to two main product lines: **E-Z Deck**, a fiberglass decking material, and Water Front sheet piling. In addition, the company can build to custom specifications.

The First Jobs program provides up to 50 per cent of a graduate's salary in the first and second year of the program (maximum \$15,000/year) and 25 per cent in the third year (up to \$7,500). For companies like Pultronex, this means they can hire employees they may otherwise not have been able to afford.

Loblick says, "We need support for good people. That's our biggest need as a company. And, we got great service from WD."

Pultronex is not the only winner in this arrangement. The first jobs program offers benefits for the graduates as well. "I wanted to get in on the ground floor," says Yeats. "At the other jobs I looked at, there was no room for growth. I wanted to use the tools I had learned, and put them to work."

After graduating with a Bachelor of Engineering in 1998, Yeats had looked across Canada for different job opportunities in his field. "I was doing some consulting work when I came out to



Alberta. I had done past work with Pultronex while working on my undergraduate degree," says Yeats who was also familiar with the First Jobs program.

"If I wasn't here, I would probably be in the States," says Yeats, a native of Vancouver; who, like many university graduates, welcomes the opportunity to stay and work in Canada.

When asked about whether or not he enjoys the program, Yeats said, "Oh yeah, very much. I couldn't have asked for a better place to work. Myself and Pultronex are a good match."

Since 1997, the WD first jobs program has supported a total of 161 graduates in Alberta. For more information on this or any other WD program, please call 1-888-338-WEST(9378)

Upcoming Events



Youth Entrepreneurship Camp planned for Alberta Eagle's Nest Ranch in Cypress Hills from August 20-26th

If you're aged 13-15 and want to learn about and explore the potential of entrepreneurship, then the fourth annual Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp might be the ticket. The camp teaches youth about starting and operating a business – all set in a fun, interactive and recreational environment.

The 2000 Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp will be held at the Eagle's Nest Ranch in Cypress Hills from August 20-26th. The camp – a partnership of 12 Community Futures offices, Western Economic Diversification Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, and Shell Canada – provides youth with the opportunity to experience operating a business in a summer camp environment.

For more information, contact your local CF office or Troy Payne at Entre-Corp Business Development Centre in Medicine Hat at (403) 528-2824.

Banff Venture Forum, September 8-9, 2000 Banff Centre for Conferences, Banff, Alberta

The Information, Communications, Electronics and Technology (ICET) Alliance, Alberta's only active information, communications and technology industry association, is hosting an international venture capital forum that will provide western Canadian businesses in the ICT sectors with an exciting opportunity to showcase their businesses to investors from across Canada and abroad.

The day-and-a-half event will feature dynamic presentations and discussions, and informative guest speakers.

If you're looking for venture capital for a small information technology business and would like to attend or obtain more details, contact Keith Gylander from the ICET Alliance at (780) 440-5190 or visit the event Web site at www.banffventureforum.org.

Technology for Success (TFS) November 14, 2000 Shaw Conference Centre, Edmonton, Alberta

The fourth annual Technology for Success (TFS) tradeshow and symposium is scheduled for November 2000. The TFS Steering Committee is an inviting participant to partner with them for this special event in the Edmonton Capital Region.

The past three shows have been increasingly successful. Technology for Success '99 realized a healthy 25 per cent growth from the '98 show, with over 500 participants.

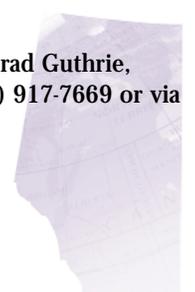
The TFS 2000 theme has not been finalized. Ideas are currently centred around the identification and capture of financial, human and other resources that spur company growth.

TFS organizers are anxious to host the 85 exhibiting organizations from last year, and are currently exploring several expressions of interest from new sponsors.

Organizers of Technology for Success are inviting corporate and community participation. The objectives for TFS 2000 are to:

- showcase advanced technology companies and products in the trade fair;
- provide opportunities for networking, permitting developers of new technology to interact with Edmonton's established firms (consumers of technology), including providers of technology assistance and commercialization infrastructure; and,
- host a forum for information exchange following a predefined theme.

Please forward suggestions and enquiries to Brad Guthrie, Executive Director, Innovation Centre at (780) 917-7669 or via email at bguthrie@ede.org.



Passport To The E-Future (July 12, 2000)
Shaw Conference Centre
Edmonton, Alberta

If you've ever asked: How do I get involved in e-business? – This conference is for you.

This conference features demonstrations by Alberta-based companies of e-business. Companies are grouped according to their level of e-business involvement. Participants will walk through the site conferring with companies just getting into e-business and ending with companies that are totally e-business connected. The demonstrations will be grouped into 3 categories:

1. E-Business First Steps
 - 10 IT supply companies demonstrating how they can get a company started in e-business.
2. Implementation of E-Business
 - 20 Alberta-based companies demonstrating how they successfully implemented e-business applications into their organizations.
 - 10 Alberta-based (or Canada-based) supply companies demonstrating how they helped these 20 Alberta companies with their e-business applications.
3. Total E-Business
 - 4-5 Alberta or Canada-based companies which are completely e-business connected. These companies demonstrating their Internet and Intranet sites on large screens will end the "tour."

A contest for junior high school children will be run the day before. The contest is open to all Edmonton area junior high schools. The contest will be marketed to all the junior high schools and the deadline for entries is June 15. The entries will be grouped according to the four quadrants of the city (North, South, East and West). One school from each quadrant will be chosen by a random draw. Junior High teams (teams of 2-4 students plus a teacher supervisor) will compete in the creation of a web page. The students will arrive at the Shaw Conference Centre at 9:00 a.m. After being given a description of a company, their task will be to create a web page for that company, by noon. A panel of judges (from WD, industry and partners) will judge the web pages based upon set criteria (to be determined).

The winning web page and prizes will be announced and distributed following the keynote address.

Company demonstrations will continue into the afternoon. And, roundtable discussions will be held to supplement earlier sessions.

For further information on this event, please contact Lyn Bilida at (780) 495-5780 or outside Edmonton at 1-888-338-9378.

In Reach Rendez-vous 2000
Small Business Trade Show
October 23 – 26, 2000 Canada Place
(9700 Jasper Avenue), Edmonton

Want to meet hundreds of great business prospects in one Place? Join us at Canada Place for the InReach Rendez-vous 2000 small business trade show.

This special trade show brings together government buyers with the small businesses in Edmonton who have products and services to sell. More than 150 small businesses will have the chance to market their services and products directly to buyers from all levels of government at In Reach Rendez-vous 2000 small business trade show. Buyers from federal, provincial and municipal governments will be invited to attend the week long trade show, which is also open to the general public.

Canada Place houses over 4,000 federal employees. Many are buyers who can purchase everything from office supplies to specialized services directly from suppliers. In Reach Rendez-vous 2000 is designed to help small business deal directly with government agencies and gain access to new markets. It is an opportunity for small businesses to garner experience in the process of selling to government. The trade show coincides with Small Business Week, which highlights the achievements and economic impact of small businesses in Canada.

Each day of the weeklong show, over 30 different exhibitors have the opportunity to display and promote their products or services. For further details and costs of becoming an exhibitor at the show, contact Noreen Gallagher at (780) 495-6434, or call toll free 1-888-338-WEST (9378).



Women In Business... Leading The Way

By: Jill Hilderman, communications and investment program manager with Alberta Women's Enterprise Initiative Association (AWEIA).

In Tally McLaren's kitchen, the aroma of fresh baked cookies mixes with the smell of burnt leather. McLaren has just finished branding her business logo into small strips of hide. Later in the afternoon she'll sew the leather pieces onto the customized horse blankets she designs and manufactures from her Tofield home, forty miles east of Edmonton.

As a home-based business owner and mother, McLaren has crafted an opportunity for herself that supplements her family's income and allows her to be home with her two small sons.

McLaren is one of a growing number of Canadian women embracing entrepreneurship as a career option. Industry Canada reports women are starting businesses at twice the rate of their male counterparts. In Western Canada, women with a passion for business have been assisted over the past five years by the women's enterprise initiatives and their services designed to help women start and grow their own businesses.

McLaren has been sewing since she was a child. With a recent return to riding...and a new horse, she planned to make blankets, boot bags and riding vests for herself. Friends encouraged her to consider the possibility of turning her talents into a business venture. Husband Todd, an enthusiastic supporter, assumed the role of mentor and encouraged McLaren as she explored the possibility. She spent a year in the planning, and accessed business coaching from Alberta Women's Enterprise Initiative Association (AWEIA) to help keep her on track. With folders set up to hold information on each area to be addressed within her business plan, McLaren broke down the arduous work to a less intimidating project. "Working with the AWEIA Business Coach really helped me to bring my idea alive. I felt confident in the steps I was taking and knew I had support, encouragement and knowledgeable feedback available to me."

With her business plan complete, McLaren applied to AWEIA for a small loan to purchase an industrial sewing machine,

fabric, permits, advertising and promotional materials and in March of 1999, **TMT Custom Horse Products and Apparel** officially opened for business. Customers include local riding stables and horse enthusiasts. Word of mouth referrals have been significant in contributing to business growth. McLaren's ongoing plans include increased marketing of her customized sizing services and stable colors, and expanding her design and manufacture of jockey silks.

"Knowing AWEIA is there to offer additional business coaching, links to resources and to other women in business...or, additional financing should I require it - is simply wonderful!"

Tally McLaren and TMT Custom Horse Products and Apparel may be reached at (780) 662-2057.

Supported by Western Economic Diversification, the women's enterprise initiatives are active in the four western provinces.



Tally McLaren with sons Cooper and J.W. and the horse Oaks, wearing a fleece cooler made by Tally in her business TMT Customer Horse Products and Apparel

They offer financing, business information, training, mentoring, networking and business advisory services.

Alberta Women's Enterprise Initiative Association (AWEIA)
In Edmonton (780) 422-7784
In Calgary (403) 777-4250
Alberta-wide 1-800-713-3558
www.awei.ab.ca

Women's Enterprise Society of British Columbia
In Kelowna (250) 868-3454
BC-wide 1-800-643-7014
www.wes.bc.ca

Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan
In Saskatoon (306) 477-7173
In Regina (306) 359-9732
Saskatchewan-wide 1-800-879-6331
www.womenentrepreneurs.sk.ca/

Women's Enterprise Centre
In Winnipeg (204) 988-1860
Manitoba-wide 1-800-203-2343
www.mbnet.mb.ca/

