Maine Manufacturer Wins Coveted New England Innovation Award

Boothbay-based Maine MEP client selected as 2011 entrepreneurial “rising star”

Augusta, Maine: A small Maine manufacturing firm stood tall at the 25th annual New England Innovation Award ceremony when it received one of the region’s most coveted awards. Biovation LLC, a Boothbay firm that produces antimicrobial formulations and non-woven fiber products for food packaging and wound care, was selected as a 2011 award recipient by the Smaller Business Association of New England (SBANE). The high tech firm has been a client of the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Maine MEP) and was nominated for the award by Maine MEP.

“We’re very pleased that Biovation has been recognized as a rising technology star and won the 2011 New England Innovation Award,” said Rosemary Presnar of Maine MEP. “We know how committed Biovation is to becoming a national technology leader. They have a rare combination of engineering capability and entrepreneurial zeal; and they’re visionary in applying their technology to develop new products and create new market opportunities. Maine MEP is excited to assist them with the program’s business growth services.”

Established in 1986, the SBANE innovation awards recognize companies that have transformed innovative ideas into products and services that deliver value to customers. The awards are bestowed in three categories to for-profit companies headquartered in New England. The three business categories are technology, manufacturing and rising star. Biovation LLC was nominated for the rising star category. The companies are judged according to criteria that include: the nature of the compelling idea or technology, the demonstrated benefit to users, its ability to address a market need or create a new market, and its marketplace success.

“Virtually every company thinks of itself as being innovative, yet few can take that vision to the marketplace with financial success, especially under challenging business conditions,” said Bob Baker, president of SBANE. “This year’s New England Innovation Award winners, as diverse a group of entrepreneurs as we’ve ever had, prove once again that a powerful idea, combined with ingenuity, commitment and skillful implementation, can make business and personal dreams come true.”

Biovation’s award recognizes how the company has applied its engineering innovation to solve some of the country’s most rapidly emerging problems. The firm has developed a line of cost-effective antibacterial treatments for textiles used in healthcare facilities that reduce the risk of transmitting infection between patients and staff by preventing bacteria and fungi from thriving on fibers. Biovation’s treatments not only endure for the lifetime of the product but are manufactured from renewable resources and represent the latest development in green technology.
Biovation’s products are not limited to medical applications. The firm was selected earlier this year by the US Marine Corp to develop a boot-drying technology for troops in the field. The technology will utilize a super-absorbent liner to allow troops patrolling in wet environments to dry their boots overnight in locations where they do not have access to electricity.

Manufacturing was well represented in this year's award ceremony, Presnar noted. The companies ranged from start-ups and spin-offs, to third generation manufacturers all striving to bring new products and services to market.

“One of the most satisfying aspects of working for Maine MEP is to be able to assist start-up firms like Biovation as they develop new technologies and find creative ways of utilizing these technologies in marketplace solutions,” said Presnar. “Maine MEP specializes in helping manufacturers find innovation applications for their technologies and overcome production challenges so that they can manufacture them in a cost-competitive manner. This award is proof that Maine is home to some of the nation’s most exciting cutting-edge manufacturers.”

The Smaller Business Association of New England, Inc. (SBANE), founded in 1938, is a private not-for-profit association of approximately 700 member companies located throughout the six-state region. Click here for more information about its 2011 Innovation Award winners.