

# Center for nnovation

Celebrating  
**25**  
Years



# 25 YEARS OF INNOVATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INVESTMENT

The 25-year history of the Center for Innovation is a story of 1) innovation, entrepreneurship and investment; 2) becoming a very early leader in entrepreneur outreach and tech entrepreneurship; 3) transforming students into innovative entrepreneurs; 4) constant innovation and improvement; and 5) changing the entrepreneur culture of the State of North Dakota and UND. This milestone provides a good time to appreciate from where we have come, reflect on where we are, and project where we are going.



Success stories involve vision and key strategies as well as leaders and stakeholders who make a vital difference. No person or entity climbs to the top alone and rarely without severe challenges and obstacles. The UND Center for Innovation is no different. Here are the key factors to our success since our launch in 1984.

### Tom Clifford, Patron Saint

We were blessed to have the strong support of UND President Tom Clifford in the formative years, lasting long after his retirement in 1992. He was an enthusiastic supporter when he allowed me to start one of the nation's first entrepreneur outreach centers. Tom wanted innovation on campus and he was willing to back an idea that totally foreign to a college campuses at that time. Most university administrators avoid risk and unknowns outside the laboratory, and only will do the already tried and true... and well-funded. However, Clifford was an extraordinary leader who appreciated new opportunities, believed the future is often created by mavericks, and backed his campus innovators by helping to secure much needed funding. Clifford asked me to report directly to him to send a message to the naysayers, detractors and bureaucrats: the new Center enjoyed his blessing. With his extensive business knowledge, he was a positive advisor when asking for counsel, but he never interfered with operations. Clifford liked football, so I often said Tom blocked and tackled so that I could run. And he did. The Center would not have been started under most other college administrators who would be either nervous about innovation and change, or who did not see the value of entrepreneurship. I was so fortunate to launch the Center under a university leader who embraced innovation and entrepreneurship and provided good counsel and support when it was needed. I shall forever be indebted to this extraordinary leader – Tom Clifford who was a mentor and friend until the day he died this last February.

### Capitalism and Entrepreneurship

I have a strong belief that capitalism – particularly entrepreneurship – is the best way for the poor and disadvantaged to raise their heads above the crowd, supported by a good education that provides know-how, skills and the ability to think on your feet. I believe it is through entrepreneurship that the economy is fueled – creating more and broader opportunity for home ownership, savings, retirement plans and their own companies i.e. wealth and security. I grew up in modest economic conditions on a small farm with no particular advantage other than my mind and a supportive family. I never felt that I should be taken care of, and thought nearly all people have the ability to take control of their own individual destinies. Entrepreneurship is how people can best realize their potential and be rewarded for their talents. So many started with so little, and attained so much through entrepreneurship. The names on endowments, museums, foundations, and public buildings are populated by entrepreneurs who grew much from little, and gave back to their communities, universities, and the nation. I am immensely thankful to the American system of capitalism and the relative ease that people can start ventures and find their competitive advantage through innovation. Being an entrepreneur is not easy and there are many steep hills to climb, but at least not all the odds are stacked against the new and small. Entrepreneur Centers should be in every state, nation and on nearly every college and university campus. It was our American system and values that allowed the Center for Innovation to be among the first entrepreneur centers in the world, figuring how to do more and be better. I feel lucky and blessed to have played a role in the establishment of UND's Center for Innovation.

### Business Builders, Benefactors, Investors and Mentors

The idea to start the Center for Innovation came while working with UND alumni who were successful entrepreneurs. I was fascinated with these outstanding leaders who were innovators and business builders and who were strongly committed to the university and their respective communities. I thought it would be good to purposefully help young people become entrepreneurs - our nation's future innovators, employers, leaders and benefactors. In 1984, entrepreneurs were universally ignored by economic developers, universities, chambers of commerce, government officials – nearly everyone. It is difficult to remember in today's business environment that 25 years ago there was total lack of attention and priority given to entrepreneurs. Informed people now recognize that our world economy is highly dependent on a constant supply of new entrepreneurial leaders and innovation. When launching the Center for Innovation, I sensed that I could depend on successful entrepreneurs to support future entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs remembered how lonely and difficult it was to start a new venture and wished better for the next generation. In 1984, Clifford provided the first \$20,000 to launch the Center and challenged me to raise funds from UND alumni and entrepreneurial friends to operate the Center. Fifteen entrepreneurs stepped up to the plate the first year, with Walt Swingen of Grand Forks writing the very first check. When thanking Walt, I quoted a Chinese proverb: "He who gives early gives twice" i.e. leadership gifts matter greatly. He liked to tease me that quote meant he had the opportunity to give more than once, which he did as did many other benefactors. We are now approaching \$30 M invested in our two tech incubators, endowments, program infrastructure, and entrepreneur outreach. The Center exists because successful entrepreneurs invested in the next generation of entrepreneurs. Without these benefactors we would still be in a storage closet in Harrington Hall hoping for crumbs. These successful entrepreneurs were vital advocates and advisors for the Center, mentors to emerging entrepreneurs, investors in ventures, and helped form a vibrant entrepreneur community. The key experts are the successful practitioners who know the art and science of launching and growing ventures. These practicing experts were vital in building our Center that became world-class and recognized with seven national awards. We are still learning from these entrepreneur experts. And, as always, we are so very grateful for their ongoing participation and stewardship.

### Center for Innovation Foundation

When launching the Center, I was fortunate that an early leader in entrepreneurship education was a native of Ashley, North Dakota. Dr. Dwight Baumann started teaching entrepreneurship classes at MIT in the late 1950s and launched an entrepreneur program at Carnegie Mellon University in the 1970s. He strongly advised that if the university did not supply the necessary funding for the Center, he said we should utilize a 501(c)3 foundation to attract funding and entrepreneur leaders, whom serve as catalysts for change and protect the funding from the bureaucracy. President Tom Clifford agreed. Dwight lectured often that the natural enemy of innovation and entrepreneurship is bureaucracy, and that universities will embrace innovation only with strong catalysts from outside and good leaders on the inside. He was so right. The Foundation has been instrumental in attracting great entrepreneur talent as trustees as well as benefactors to help build the Center and the



Idea Lab in the Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center

academic entrepreneur program. The 25-year outcome would be quite less without the Foundation, and our future remains closely tied to the success of the Center for Innovation Foundation and its entrepreneur trustees. Entrepreneur benefactors are attracted to a foundation that has entrepreneur trustees to provide oversight and direction.

### Dean Dennis Elbert & the campus supporters

I was a strong advocate for Dennis Elbert when he was being named Dean of the College of Business & Public Administration in 1997. He was an outstanding marketing professor, a strong student advocate, had extensive military and consulting experience, had worked with entrepreneurs, and knew UND as he was a North Dakotan and graduate. When he was named Dean, the Center for Innovation found a good home in the College of Business. After many years of trying to get an entrepreneur major launched, we finally had receptive leadership. UND's entrepreneur experience is unusual in that most colleges have an entrepreneur outreach program grow out of the academic entrepreneur department. It was the other way around at UND, with the academic program growing out of the Center for Innovation in 1999. Within five short years we were ranked in the top 1% of entrepreneur programs nationally by Princeton Review becoming a signature program for UND. The Center enjoys strong support from Denny as well as many business faculty and other faculty across campus. It is not universal support, but we did have vital support from key faculty and administrators that has allowed us to excel nationally, even on a shoestring budget. We are blessed. On many campuses, entrepreneurship programs have been starved, attacked, robbed, micro-managed by the unknowing – facing every obstacle one can imagine. Politics on a college campus can be brutal, especially for the newly successful. Dean Elbert has helped us avoid such pitfalls and setbacks for which we are truly thankful. I was pleasantly surprised when UND announced their new branding statement in 2008: Creative ~ Innovative ~ Entrepreneurial ~ Spirited. The campus culture has changed, embracing key principles and values of our organization. No finer compliment can be paid.

### Public Policy Leaders

Entrepreneurs depend on a favorable business climate to increase their opportunities to succeed. From the very first year, I have advocated many tax, regulatory, legal, financing and other reforms and programs to improve North Dakota's entrepreneur business climate. I have been fortunate that US Senators and Congressmen, Governors, State Legislators and government administrators have responded so favourably. In

## Skalicky Tech Incubator



particular, I have teamed up with three leaders many times to innovate with public policy that has helped advance North Dakota as an entrepreneur-friendly state – Sen. Ray Holmberg of Grand Forks, Sen. Tony Grindberg of Fargo and Governor John Hoeven. These are great quarterbacks who will carry the ball all the way down the field. By embracing innovative policy ideas, North Dakota has programs like InnovateND, 45% investment tax credit for angel investors, the Beginning Entrepreneur Loan Program, tort reform for aircraft manufactures, \$5M for growing the UAS mission at the Grand Forks Air Force Base, and many more initiatives too numerous to mention here. Special mention should be made of Sen. Kent Conrad who was a key advocate in 1992-93 to help the Center for Innovation Foundation secure a \$3.5 M competitive grant from HUD to build the first campus incubator on the Great Plains, now called the Skalicky Tech Incubator. Our Foundation gave the incubator building to UND to secure the building's operational support at a time the Foundation was unsure it could secure those resources. It is never easy to secure funding for a new building, esp. when you are a young program with more opportunity and vision than track record and funding. We are fortunate to have these elected officials who understand and embrace innovation and entrepreneurship. North Dakota was an entrepreneur state from the time of the homesteaders and immigrants until the Great Depression, a period of 50 years. We lost that entrepreneur culture for four decades after the depression, but it is coming back strong. Our best years are ahead of us thanks to innovative entrepreneurs who have a good entrepreneur business climate in which to launch and operate new businesses right here in North Dakota.

### Entrepreneurial Students

The Center has continuously bootstrapped our operations, patching together the funds from many sources required to get the job done right. This is a constant stress and strain. Often the only talent I could afford was student talent who were looking for an opportunity to prove themselves. Entrepreneur-minded students consistently out performed in quality and quantity those 'experts' hired from the corporate or academic spheres. So we built a world-class entrepreneur center with a large dose of student talent. Many predicted that it could not be done, as experience and credentials were premium. They were wrong. We built the Center on young talent and at a fraction of the cost of other university centers, esp. at big-name schools. I would put our students from North Dakota and Minnesota against experts, students or faculty from the Ivy League and the elite universities. Our students are bright, practical, hard

working young people who are immensely resourceful and creative in a way the rich kids could not be. I have a good eye for talent, and there is lots of talent here to choose from. If anyone doubts the wonderful talent of our student body, think of the incredible number of successful alumni from UND. That number keeps growing. Bart and Lynn Holaday provided a grant in 2006 to the Center for Innovation Foundation to start up the nation's first student-run venture fund - the Dakota Venture Group. This student group works at a very high level of expertise and ability, more than 15 to 20 years above their age and credentials. Just one more example where our students do compete with anyone from anywhere. Students helped build a world-class entrepreneur center, and in turn we give them experience that they could not get anywhere else. That is a great win-win situation.

### Entrepreneurial Talent

Every great organization is built with great talent whose leadership, creativity and productivity are unleashed. As my comments above testify, I have been able to surround myself with student talent, and have worked with an amazing number of emerging entrepreneurs across the state with ideas, leadership, vision, and entrepreneur gumption. Their success reflects well on us, but they did the heavy lifting with innovation and new ventures. We were the coaches on the sideline urging them on as they were on the field competing. There are so many good people to recognize and appreciate; there is danger in mentioning some and not others. North Dakotans are cautious entrepreneurs and tend to underpromise and over deliver. Most shun bringing attention on themselves, and would rather do a very good job with no special notice. The challenge before us to is unleash the entrepreneur talent of so many more people. Good news is that entrepreneur talent is all over North Dakota, too often waiting to be empowered and encouraged. Help us unleash that talent.

Two academic colleagues - Craig Silvernagel and Jeff Stamp - deserve special attention as they are the dedicated professors who do superb work in the classroom that has resulted in our top academic rankings. The Center is the entrepreneur lab for our academic program. Our Foundation and Center have secured a good share of the necessary funding for professors, internships, programs, etc. investing in the future of young talent and great professors. Most serial entrepreneurs think about becoming an entrepreneur when quite young. Providing the knowledge and tools early will only accelerate success that our economy needs. These two professors provide the academic rigor and they have dedicated their professional lives to our students and excellence in the classroom..Every day I have evidence of their good work. When you see Craig and Jeff thank them. They are entrepreneur educators who are truly best-in-class.

### Staying on Top is Hard Work

To remain a top-ranked and nationally recognized program is hard work. Our entrepreneurship program has been ranked in the top 1% of programs in the nation for five years. Entrepreneurship has become a signature program for UND, bringing honor and recognition to our students, faculty, Center, University and State. However, our competitors and colleagues do not slack off so we can stay ahead and coast. It is just the reverse: they copy success and work harder. I have re-invented the

Center a half-dozen times in 25 years to keep it state-of-the-art, and I am in process of doing it again enhancing our programs and adding new dimensions. My early goals were to be among the best in the nation, and the best in rural America. I did not give a lot of thought during that time of growth to what it would take to stay on top. Electronics and plastics entrepreneur Shelly Schjeldahl gave me a quote from Rudyard Kipling that helped sum up the need for innovative leadership, "They copied and copied but could not copy my mind, so I left them sweating and stealing a year and a half behind." With the help of our students, entrepreneur friends and benefactors, we will stay on top.

### Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Investment

From the beginning the Center for Innovation was focused on innovation, entrepreneurship and investment - plus the programs and infrastructure that support that focus. Innovation is what provides the competitive advantage. The focus has remained consistent for 25 years as we have developed several improved and new programs, new facilities, new infrastructure, and better ways of supporting creative entrepreneurs. I have enough ideas it will take me a decade to find ways to implement them all. There are better ways to provide quality entrepreneur education that will reform entrepreneur education nationwide. It needs to be focused more on entrepreneur practitioners as professors, more leadership and entrepreneur experience for students, better integration of knowledge, be campus-wide and better engagement of students with emerging entrepreneurs for win-win situations. There are opportunities to turn on the entrepreneur spirit for middle-age folks who want a new challenge and focus in life. And there are more ways to engage potential angel investors in entrepreneur ventures. Stay tuned for more.

### Recessions provide opportunity, too

What is behind us is not as important as what is ahead of us. There is so much opportunity to capture, and so many creative people who are waiting for someone to help them start their entrepreneur journey, even in hard times. Let us not regret lost opportunity - the hardest thing to measure in the world. The Center was born at the end of the 1980-83 world recession and after the malaise and stagflation of the 1970s. We have been through several North Dakota and national recessions in 25 years. In every market - up or down - there is opportunity for those who are looking, sometimes more opportunity in a down market. Dynamic change creates opportunity, and creative destruction (thank you Joseph Schumpeter) helps us advance with innovation and entrepreneurship. Out with the old and tired, and in with the new and innovative. I am alarmed that so many leaders have quickly forgotten the great lessons of entrepreneur capitalism in the current recession. Luckily creative entrepreneurs are paying more attention to potential customers than political leaders. Often I am discouraged when I see talent and opportunity wasted, but always optimistic and rejuvenated when I am around innovators and entrepreneurs. Our country has been through 37 recessions and depressions in 230 years, and from each cycle we came out stronger than before. The leading indicator in each recovery was innovation, entrepreneur and investment activity in the private sector. Our government and institutions learn slowly from experience in economic and business cycles. Luckily there are entrepreneurs – busy seeing what others do not see with a bias for action and opportunity. There is lots of opportunity before us. Help every-

one you can find opportunity. The best resource man has is man himself, and we are everywhere. Unleash that resource.

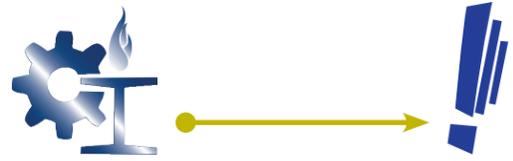
### Finding your passion

It did not occur to me growing up to become a social or campus entrepreneur, growing a non-profit to national prominence. I was around self-reliant Norwegian farmers near Crosby who were great problem solvers and practical thinkers, but I cannot think of any family or friends that I would identify as entrepreneurs. The entrepreneur gene was turned on when I was president of my fraternity learning leadership, and then asked by Delt alumni to help build a new chapter house on campus. At that time we started the first chapter educational foundation in the nation, proving the experts and naysayers wrong. I liked that. That process of innovation and pioneering helped me realize I liked the building and growth process, being creative. After four quick job changes in four industries, I found my passion and calling with the Center for Innovation a few years after graduation. I did not think I was the type that could do one thing for 25 years much less being an entrepreneur coach and pioneer in the entrepreneurship field. I underestimated the power of passion. What I wish for others is they find their passion too. It gives life such meaning and purpose. My mother died early when I was in college and my farmer father was never sure I could make a living as an entrepreneur coach in a university, but he was proud of my success anyway. Good fathers are like that, supporting your children's dreams even if it is to pioneer and not do the safe and secure. I have been blessed in so many ways, even during the tough times over this stretch of 25 years (which I will not talk about here). We learn from challenges and problems too, and as the Slavic's say, what does not kill us makes us stronger. I have dedicated my life to entrepreneurship and innovation with few regrets. There is nothing else I would rather do for a career than work with innovators and entrepreneurs. I see lots more to do to advance the entrepreneur world. I see entrepreneur talent is so many places. Too often I have not expressed my appreciation and thanks for those who were on the journey too. This is the time to do that. As the Norwegians say - mange tusen takk - many thousand thanks.

Bruce Gjovig  
Entrepreneur Coach & Director  
UND Center for Innovation



# CENTER FOR INNOVATION MILESTONES



1990s

**Aug. 1, 1984** Center for Innovation and Business Development launched. Among the very first centers in the nation focused on tech entrepreneurship and product innovation.

**1985** Mike O'Donnell joins Bruce Gjovig as second entrepreneur consultant. O'Donnell forms Ask-Me Software in 1990, the first multi-media software in national retail distribution.

CIBD Advisory Board formed, within Foundation: Gene Dahl, manufacturing entrepreneur is first chair.

**1986** Entrepreneur Hall of Fame founded. First inductees were George Bull, founder of Cream of Wheat and Thomas Campbell, the world's largest farmer and ag innovator.

Business Plan and Marketing Plan books completed—first step-by-step workbooks for tech entrepreneurs and innovators nationwide.

**1987** SBIR Outreach began - over \$26 million in North Dakota awards since that time.

Championed legislation to establish Myron Nelson Venture Capital Fund & helped organize state's first venture capital fund.

**1988** Pioneered commercial evaluations methodology for energy technologies & secured 12 year DOE contract for market assessments.

**1989** Business Innovator of the Year founded. First awardees were Doug Burgum of Great Plains Software and John Odegard of the UND Center for Aerospace Sciences.

**1989-1991** Northwest Area Foundation funds Rural Manufacturing Entrepreneur Initiative to start up manufacturing companies in rural areas—named one of most effective programs by NAAF.

2000s

**1991** Center for Innovation Foundation spun out from the SEM Foundation - Center founder, Bruce Gjovig elected Foundation President and serves as Director of the Center for Innovation.

President Tom Clifford establishes the UND Tech Park with the purchase of 110 acres of land. UND Aerospace Foundation and Center for Innovation team up to secure \$1.1 M EDA grant for infrastructure to launch park. Park attracts \$45 million in investment and grows to 9 buildings hosting 600 employees in 17 years.

**1992** Secured Patent & Trademark Library for ND and raised significant grant from 3M Foundation to buy backfiles of patents.

**1993** Championed legislation to establish a 30% seed capital tax credit to encourage investors to invest in entrepreneur ventures. North Dakota was 2<sup>nd</sup> state to offer credit, raised to 45% in 2003.

Organizes and hosts Cream of Wheat Centennial Celebration, a breakfast for 6,000.

**1995** Pioneered and co-authored "tort reform by contracts" in legislature to revive aircraft manufacturing industry, helping attract Cirrus Design aircraft manufacturing to North Dakota - ABA calls it "the most innovative tort reform bill in the nation today".

**1996** Rural Technology Center opened—new ventures have opportunity to locate in the first tech incubator in the Northern Great Plains. Later renamed Norm Skalicky Tech Incubator.

Name of Center for Innovation and Business Development shortened to Center for Innovation.

**1996** Center for Innovation awarded the national Tibbetts Award in recognition of contributions to the SBIR program and tech innovation

**1997** Kurt Mueller of the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership establishes the Mueller Entrepreneur Internship program. More than 100 student entrepreneurs have launched student venture since then, a student startup rate among highest in nation.

**1998** Center for Innovation awarded the national Tibbetts Award in recognition of contributions to the SBIR program and tech innovation.

**1999** Center for Innovation awarded the Vision 2000 Award by the U.S. Small Business Administration for tech entrepreneurship.

Established the Beginning Entrepreneur Loan Program with Sen. Ray Holmberg of Grand Forks, the nation's first program making loans based on quality of business plan and good credit rating, not collateral. Entrepreneur Loan program expanded each year to become \$8 M program by 2009.

Entrepreneur major and track launched within the UND College of Business & Public Administration. First time that business courses are opened up to non-business majors reaching out to student innovators and entrepreneurs campuswide. Entrepreneur major quickly becomes fastest growing major on campus.

**2000** Ryan Foltz of Grand Forks becomes the first graduate with an entrepreneur major in Dec 2000.

**2001** Center for Innovation Foundation board rejuvenated in April with trustees Russ Brown, James Ray, Norm Skalicky, Kurt Mueller, and Howard Dahl. Bruce Gjovig named as CEO.

Angel investor and entrepreneur James Ray makes \$3.5 million gift to Center for Innovation Foundation for endowment for Center and Entrepreneur Chair in the College of Business and Public Administration.

Center hosts first of a series of angel capital seminars for angel investors across the state to encourage accredited investors to organize to invest in entrepreneur startups.

**2002** Entrepreneur Forum founded through a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Successful entrepreneurs from around nation brought to campus to visit about innovation and a entrepreneur success to emerging entrepreneurs, students and community.

AGSCO entrepreneur Larry Brown leaves funds in his estate for the Center for Innovation Foundation to establish a Brown Ag Entrepreneur Endowment.

**2003** Diving board entrepreneur Ray Rude of Stanley donates \$1.75 million to the Center for Innovation Foundation for the Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center.

Incubator named the state's first Centers for Excellence by the North Dakota Legislature - \$800,000 funding provided for second technology incubator.

Bruce Gjovig awarded the Small Business Research Advocate Award for the state of North Dakota and the SBA's Region VIII (a six-state region).

Bruce Gjovig honored by the GNDA with statewide Entrepreneurial Spirit Award.

**2004** RTC renamed Skalicky Tech Incubator for \$1 million endowment provided by banking entrepreneur Norm Skalicky '55 of St. Cloud, Minnesota.

UND ranked 14 among the 25 top entrepreneurial campuses by Forbes and Princeton Review out of 357 universities reviewed. The Center's foundation, board, incubator, entrepreneur internships, and student startups were profiled by Princeton Review.

Howard and Brian Dahl and Dorothea Melroe establish the Gene Dahl and Roger Melroe Faculty Entrepreneur Endowments to encourage faculty to work with entrepreneur firms on innovation.

**2005** Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center opens, doubling the Center's incubator space and providing state-of-the-art office, wet lab as well as meeting and conference space. Center launched state's first operational Center of Excellence, with a 4:1 match on state funding.

Dr. Jeff Stamp named as the first Chair of Entrepreneurship, funded in part by Chair established by James C. Ray.

Center for Innovation secures 3 year University Center grant from EDA-Denver to expand incubator functions, tech-based economic development and entrepreneurship. NDSU Research Technology Park and ND Dept of Commerce are partners in grant award.

**2006** Ranked #8 out of top ten "Best Schools for Entrepreneurs" in the nation by Princeton Review and Entrepreneur Magazine out of 700 schools reviewed being ahead of such universities as Babson, Stanford, Notre Dame, University of Illinois and others.

Center for Innovation is named a "Soft Landings International Incubator" by the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) for providing assistance to international firms wishing to expand into new markets. One of six incubators worldwide to have this two-year international designation.

1980s

1990s

**2006** Angel Funds were launched in Grand Forks, Fargo and Bismarck affiliated with RAIN Source Capital in St Paul, a network of 23 angel funds in six states.

Bart & Lynn Holaday make a grant from the Dakota Foundation to launch the nation's first student-run venture fund, the Dakota Venture Fund.

InnovateND was launched after two years of working with Gov. John Hoeven to have a statewide program to foster innovation and entrepreneurship encouraging people of all ages in all industries to launch new firms. In the first three years more than 484 people worked on 247 ventures. More than 70 ventures were launched in the first two years.

**2007** Ranked # 9 out of top 25 "Best Schools for Entrepreneurs" in the nation by Princeton Review and Entrepreneur Magazine out of 900 schools reviewed.

Gas station entrepreneur Ethel Torreson Stone leaves part of her estate to establish Ethel Torreson Stone and Charlotte Klein Torreson Entrepreneur Endowment to support women entrepreneurs.

**2008** The Center continues to be recognized for its work in International business as the "Soft Landings International Incubator" status is renewed for 2008-10. Center named by the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) for providing assistance to international firms wishing to expand into new markets. Now it is one of twelve incubators worldwide to have this international designation.

Ranked #13 out of top 25 "Best Schools for Entrepreneurs" in the nation out of 2,300 schools ranked by Princeton Review and Entrepreneur Magazine. Being on the top 1% of all entrepreneur programs for third consecutive year is major feat, esp. since so many programs are well funded.

8 members of the Dakota Venture Group attend Berkshire Hathaway annual meeting to hear the "Oracle of Omaha" Warren Buffett.

Center for Innovation secures 2 year grant from EDA to foster launch and growth of technology startups and expansion of angel investment. NDSU Research & Tech Park and the ND Department of Commerce are partners.

The Department of Entrepreneurship was established and approved by various campus bodies.

Entrepreneur Rod Burwell of Minneapolis sets up agreement to establish the Burwell Chair of Entrepreneurship, and Larry Pate Ph.D. was named Chair.

The Acton Foundation of Austin, Texas, honored Chair of Entrepreneurship Jeff Stamp with its prestigious Excellence in Entrepreneurship Education Award, a national teaching award.

Gjovig named Knight of the First Class, Royal Norwegian Order of Merit from King Harald V for outstanding work on behalf of educational exchanges and entrepreneurship activities in Norway.

**2009** Center named 1st runner up in International Incubation Award by NBIA at their International Conference in Kansas City. Also named finalist in the national EDA Excellence in Rural Economic Development Award – both for forming a network of angel funds in a rural state, and serving as field agent to bring entrepreneurs and investors together around new ventures.

President Emeritus Tom Clifford passed away on Feb 4, after 25 years of supporting the Center. Months before his passing, Tom and Gayle Clifford established the Clifford Entrepreneur Endowment to support campus entrepreneurs and innovators, who can grow the next major program at UND.

**Aug. 1, 2009** The Center celebrates 25 years as a national leader in entrepreneurship.

## Entrepreneurs Supporting Entrepreneurship

Just a few of the entrepreneurs who have helped make the past 25 years a success.



### Ethel Torreson Stone

Ethel Torreson Stone was 25 years old when she opened Torreson Oil in Grand Forks in 1938. To learn more about the oil business, Ethel joined the Northwest Petroleum Association in the 1940s. Demonstrating her leadership ability in a traditionally male-dominated oil industry, she was the first and only woman to ever serve on their board. She was an active member of several community organizations and was the first women pilot in Grand Forks when she secured her license in 1947. Upon her death in 2007 at age 94, the Ethel Torreson Stone Entrepreneur Endowment was established through an estate gift of \$400,000. A suite in the Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center is named for Ethel and her mother, both gas station entrepreneurs.



### Bart and Lynn Holaday

Bart and Lynn Holaday founded and now operate the Dakota Foundation in Placitas, New Mexico. Bart is a retired venture capitalist from Brinson Partners and Adam Street of Chicago, and is also involved with the Center for Innovation, acting as chairman and trustee of the Center for Innovation Foundation. In 2006, Bart and Lynn provided a gift of \$300,000 to establish the nation's first student-run venture fund, the Dakota Venture Group. The Holadays wanted to support student entrepreneurs by providing hands-on learning experiences with startups and managing venture capital. Bart and Lynn also offer financial support for internships with angel funds in the Red River Valley, which give UND students practical venture investment experience and a competitive advantage after graduation to become successful entrepreneurs or equity investors.



### Howard Dahl, Brian Dahl and Dorothy Melroe

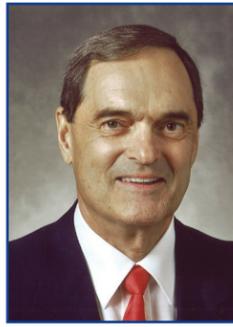
Howard and Brian Dahl of Amity Technology Fargo and Dorothy Melroe donated \$300,000 in 2004 to establish the Eugene Dahl and Roger Melroe Faculty Entrepreneur Endowments within the UND Foundation to encourage faculty to work with entrepreneurs to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. Gene Dahl was the first chairman of the Center for Innovation Advisory Board (1984-89) and a friend of many emerging entrepreneurs. Gene was instrumental in bringing two North Dakota ventures to Fortune 500 status: Melroe Bobcat and Steiger Tractor. Roger Melroe was his brother-in-law and vice president of marketing for Melroe Bobcat. This funding supports faculty to work directly with one or more emerging entrepreneurs on the issues of innovation (product, technology, services, etc.), venture development, venture growth, or financing. The Boardroom in the Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center is named for Gene Dahl and Roger Melroe to honor their entrepreneurial accomplishments.



Dakota Venture Group



Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center Break Room



### Rodney P. Burwell

A '61 graduate from UND with degrees in Industrial Engineering and Business Administration, Burwell went on to receive UND's prestigious Sioux Award for outstanding career achievement and distinguished public service in 1983. He launched Proform, Inc., an manufacturing company that created revolutionary barge covers for Cargill Corp. Over 5,000 cover systems were made by Proform, Inc., during the company's 16-year history. Burwell went on to form Xerxes Corporation in 1979, which acquired the assets of the fiberglass equipment division of Dart Environmental and Services Company. Other entrepreneurial endeavors throughout Burwell's career include: the Silvertree Hotel in Snowmass Village, Colorado; the Madison Concourse Hotel in Madison, Wisconsin; C & B Investments, which operates a group of John Deere agricultural dealerships; and Pace Analytical, an analytical testing company. With a commitment of \$2 million in 2008, he and his wife Barbara established the Rodney Burwell Chair of Entrepreneurship.



### Russell Brown

Russ Brown served as the Chair of the Center for Innovation Foundation from 2001 to 2005. He was president of AGSCO – a company founded in 1934 by his father Larry Brown. AGSCO sold farm chemical supplies to farmers and for 73 years the company pioneered agricultural technologies in the four-state region. AGSCO flourished through innovation and earned a national reputation as an innovator in the use of seed treatments, herbicides, insecticides, adjuvants, and chemical application equipment. After being led by three generations of the Brown family, AGSCO was sold to United Agri Products. In 2002, the Larry Brown Entrepreneur Endowment was established with a gift of \$310,000 to support agricultural entrepreneurship projects.



### Norm Skalicky

A 1955 UND alumnus and banking entrepreneur from St. Cloud, Minnesota, his gift of \$1 million helps advance entrepreneurial endeavors at UND and throughout the state of North Dakota. The Skalicky Entrepreneur Endowment is intended to encourage and stimulate economic growth through entrepreneurship and private investment. In October of 2004, the Rural Technology Center was renamed the Skalicky Tech Incubator to honor this banking entrepreneur.



### James C. Ray

An aerospace entrepreneur, James Ray is the second largest private donor to the University of North Dakota. He has been a long-time friend and supporter of the Center for Innovation Foundation, UND Foundation and UND Aerospace Foundation. His generosity was instrumental in establishing the Entrepreneurship Program at UND's College of Business and Public Administration. Through a \$3 million endowment, Ray has provided ongoing support for entrepreneurship and his recent gift of \$500,000 created the state-of-the-art conference facility in the new Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center. The conference facility is named the James C. Ray IdeaLab.



### Kurt Mueller

A 1960 UND alumnus, Kurt Mueller provides annual gifts totaling more than \$100,000 to date to create the Mueller Entrepreneur Intern Program. The program pays up to \$1,500 per semester for a student to develop an entrepreneur venture located in the tech incubator. Since 1987, more than 100 UND students have been able to participate in entrepreneur internships to launch their ventures. Kurt Mueller was the president of the Kauffman Foundation Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership from 1996 to 2003.



### Thomas J. Clifford and Gayle Al Clifford Entrepreneur Endowment

The Clifford Entrepreneur Endowment with the Center for Innovation Foundation continues Tom and Gayle's legacy of providing opportunities for individuals with uncommon promise. The Clifford Fellowships are available for a wide range of emerging entrepreneurial leaders enrolled at or affiliated with the University of North Dakota. The fund was established by Tom and Gayle Clifford and continues to grow with memorial gifts honoring Tom. Clifford was President of UND from 1971 to 1992.

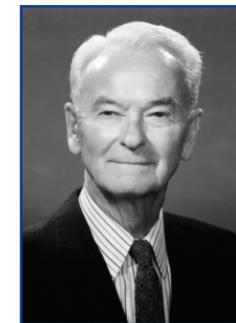


Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center Lobby



### Xcel Energy

Xcel Energy has made several grants to the Center for Innovation Foundation since 1999 totaling more than \$100,000 to support technology startup ventures through the Center for Innovation to create jobs for the region. The Xcel grants helped to cover the cost of promoting and marketing the Center's two tech incubators and the UND Tech Park. A meeting room in the Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center has been named for Xcel for their superb corporate support of entrepreneurship.



### Ray Rude

An entrepreneur from Stanley, ND, who created and patented the Duraflex aluminum diving board, provided \$1.75 million toward the construction of the Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center. The Center is named for Rude's wife, Ina Mae, who was his greatest supporter in his entrepreneurial ventures. The Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center was the first North Dakota Center of Excellence; the \$4.2 million facility was funded through private and public partnerships to provide offices for startups, wet lab space for scientists and engineers and community space for entrepreneurs.



### Dave Vaaler and Vaaler Insurance

Dave Vaaler and Vaaler Insurance have made grants to the Vaaler Entrepreneur Opportunity Fund within the UND Center for Innovation Foundation to increase the opportunities for entrepreneur-minded students to secure hands-on experience to learn and understand the practice of entrepreneurship in the formation, financing, growth, marketing and leadership of emerging ventures. These funds have specifically allowed entrepreneur students to help startup and emerging ventures in North Dakota and Minnesota. This fund provides experiential learning for students as startups companies are receiving help in growing their company they could not otherwise afford.

# Center for Innovation

Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center  
The University of North Dakota  
4200 James Ray Drive  
Grand Forks, ND 58203 USA  
Phone: 701.777.3132  
www.innovators.net

## UND CENTER FOR INNOVATION FOUNDATION

The Center for Innovation Foundation serves as a link between successful entrepreneurs and the Center for Innovation and its two tech incubators (Skalicky Tech Incubator and the Ina Mae Rude Entrepreneur Center) in the UND Tech Park to encourage and foster entrepreneur initiatives and new ventures in the region.

### UND CENTER FOR INNOVATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

#### CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD Bart Holaday

*President of the Dakota Foundation  
Placitas, New Mexico*

#### VICE CHAIR Howard Dahl

*President and founder of Amity Technology  
Fargo, North Dakota*

#### TREASURER James Ray

*President of the Aerospace Capital Group & Ray Foundation  
Naples, Florida*

#### TRUSTEES

##### Randy Newman

*Chair, CEO of Alerus Financial  
Grand Forks, North Dakota*

##### Jerry Van Eeckhout

*Founder, Retired Chair and CEO of ACT Teleconferencing  
Evergreen, Colorado*

##### Bill Ness

*Retired CEO and Chairman of Arctic Cat  
Hudson, Wisconsin*

##### Dale F. Morrison

*President and CEO of McCain Foods Ltd.  
Toronto, Ontario*

#### TRUSTEES EMERITI

##### Russell Brown

*Retired President and CEO of AGSCO  
Buckeye, Arizona*

##### Fran Jabara

*President of Jabara Ventures Group  
Wichita, Kansas*

#### EX-OFFICIO NON-VOTING MEMBERS

##### Bruce Gjovig

*Entrepreneur Coach and Director, Center for Innovation*

##### Dennis Elbert

*Dean, College of Business and Public Administration*

##### Robert O. Kelley

*President, University of North Dakota*

##### Alice Brekke

*VP for Finance and Operations, University of North Dakota*



The Center for Innovation is a division of the UND College of Business and Public Administration that helps entrepreneurs, students and researchers launch new technologies, products and ventures, develop business and marketing plans, access talent of universities and secure venture financing.