SPIE, University of Ottawa Chapter
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Executive Committee:
Robert Radziwilowicz – President
Ron Millet - Vice-president
Hazem Awad - Secretary
Dr. Trevor J. Hall - Faculty Advisor of the Chapter
Natalya Yastrebova - Founder and Consultant

2008 Annual Report

In the year 2008 the SPIE Chapter decided to start a long term project of creating an research and entrepreneurship network for our students at the University of Ottawa. Intensively expanding market of photonic devices in Canada together with wide stream of new ideas coming from students community brought an opportunity to create a novel project that will bring students closer to resources that will be required in their first steps as potential researchers and entrepreneurs.

Young people are full of new ideas for novel products in photonic devices design and fabrication, optoelectronics, optical telecommunication, holography, solar power and other fields related to optics and photonics. Unfortunately academic community provides to students a very limited help therefore students have difficulties going through the most critical stages of building a business around their novel ideas or products as well as there is not enough encouragement to continue the post graduate study and to become a professional researcher.

Our project address several issues that students encounter when they step into the R&D or entrepreneurship path. The project brings together students and their ideas with people who have long term experience in working for public and private R&D, running directly or indirectly a startup business or working in fields associated with entrepreneurship programs (lawyers, provincial and federal government representatives). Workshops and seminars helps students develop networking skills and gives them an impulse to learn state-of-the art technologies that go far beyond standard university education model.

The project consists of set of workshops and seminars that address number of issues associated with start-up business:
- how to create a successful business plan
- working for public and private R&D
- search for investors to collect funds for building a first prototype
- legal issues associated with start-up business
- intellectual properties and how to secure them
- cooperation with educational institutions
- federal and provincia programs of supporting entrepreneurs

Workshop consist of presentation of invited quest, discussion pannel, number of exercises to give students certain level of self-confidence. Each event is arranged in professional auditorium with audio-visual facilities as well as food and beverages are provided.

In the year 2008 SPIE organised seven workshops that address the following subjects:
1. Ontario Centers of Excellence (OCE) and its help provided to start-ups
2. How to cooperate with Technology Transfer Bureau at the University of Ottawa to secure funding for photonic devices prototyping
3. How to secure Intellectual Properties
4. Negotiations with Venture Capitals
5. Career in public and private R&D industry
6. Federal and provincial programs of support for entrepreneurs
7. Cooperation with university laboratories to test prototypes

The next several workshops are planned to address the following issues:
- legal procedures required for the technology transfer
- start-up business as a spin-off from the university
- cooperation with Ontario Center of Research and Innovation (OCRI)
- merging with public R&D institutions
- successful market targeting in photonics and optics

To increase effectiveness and to lower down the cost of events, the project is run in cooperation with Electrical Engineering Graduate Students Association (http://eegsa.site.uottawa.ca).
In near future cooperation with IEEE and OSA local chapters is planned.

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FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

SPIE Chapter Grant: $700 US ($699.30 CAD)

Workshop #1 (in cooperation with Graduate Students Association)
"Development of career in public and private R&D institutions: Photonic Devices Integration Industry" $281.68 CAD

Workshop #4 (in cooperation with Graduate Students Association)
"Intellectual Properties and negotiations with Venture Capitals: Optical Communication Industry" $113.53 CAD

Balance: $699.30 - ($281.68 + $113.53) = $304.09

LIST OF MEMBERS (as of November 2008):

Robert Radziwilowicz
Hazem Awad
Ron Millet
Natalya Yastrebova
Shiyu Gao
Honglei Guo
Majid Naji
Altaf Khetani
Chao Wang