



For Immediate Release

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**Southern Growth Policies Board Names
Center for the Creation of Economic Wealth (CCEW)
2010 Innovator Award Winner from Oklahoma**

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC – Southern Growth Policies Board is pleased to announce the University of Oklahoma’s **Center for the Creation of Economic Wealth (CCEW)** as the recipient of its *2010 Innovator Award from Oklahoma*. Formed in 2006, the **Center for the Creation of Economic Wealth** provides an interdisciplinary environment for researchers, entrepreneurs and students to collaborate in growing, strengthening and diversifying Oklahoma’s economy through the nurturing of technology-based enterprises.

An internship program is at the heart of **CCEW’s** approach. Students from a wide variety of disciplines are selected for a one-semester internship that incorporates work with other students and outside mentors in commercialization teams as well as academic coursework that focuses on the entrepreneurial process. The semester culminates in a final presentation in which the interns present their findings to leaders from across the university and state and recommend the path each technology should follow to move forward in the commercialization process. In exchange for their efforts, **CCEW** interns receive a \$1200 stipend and the opportunity to participate in a variety of authentic business situations and get to know distinguished executives, researchers, and entrepreneurs. Additionally, **CCEW** interns engage in career development opportunities designed to propel their careers following graduation.

It is **CCEW’s** interdisciplinary approach that sets it apart from commercialization programs at other universities and research campuses. While some programs may be housed in business or engineering colleges, **CCEW** selects top students from all academic disciplines ranging from arts and sciences, journalism, and engineering to business, law, and fine arts. This approach also prepares students to succeed outside the university setting as businesses need teams with a broad range of disciplines to complete projects.

To date, **CCEW** commercialization teams have collaborated on 17 different commercial opportunities with the assistance of more than two-dozen private-sector mentors, inventors and entrepreneurs. These efforts have translated into new companies, intellectual property, licensing agreements, and over \$4 million of funding to propel Oklahoma technologies forward.

Innovator Awards are presented annually to one organization in each of Southern Growth’s 13 member states in recognition of initiatives that are improving economic opportunities and quality of life in the region. The *2010 Innovator Awards* were chosen from creative initiatives in the region that aim to help communities recover from the recession. One award winner per week will be announced in Southern Growth’s e-newsletter, Southern Compass, leading up to an official recognition of all awardees at [**Southern Growth’s Chairman’s Conference, June 7-8, 2010 in Lexington, Kentucky**](#). For more information on Southern Growth’s Innovator Awards program or Chairman’s Conference, contact Ted Abernathy, Executive Director, Southern Growth Policies Board, at (919) 941-5145 or tabernathy@southern.org.

About Southern Growth Policies Board

Southern Growth Policies Board is a regional public policy think tank based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Formed by the region's governors in 1971, Southern Growth Policies Board develops and advances visionary economic development policies by providing a forum for collaboration among a diverse cross-section of the region's governors, legislators, business and academic leaders and the economic and community development sectors. Southern Growth provides its members, and the region, with authoritative research, discussion forums and pilot projects in the areas of technology and innovation, globalization, workforce development, community development, civic engagement and leadership. To learn more about Southern Growth Policies Board, visit www.southern.org.