



# eNewsletter

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Welcome to the latest edition of the *Maryland Minority Research and Development Initiative (MMRDI) eNewsletter* sent to you courtesy of TEDCO and its partners in this Initiative. This issue provides not only timely and relevant resources to aid in your SBIR submission process, but also a recap of the intellectual property issue raised at the SBIR conference in March.

If you are close to completing your submission, please remember you can take advantage of our pre-submission proposal review services. Call today to schedule an appointment.

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## **I. SBIR Conference Recap: Revisiting the Patent Issue**

On March 4, 2008, TEDCO hosted an SBIR conference entitled “From Awareness to Awards and Commercialization”. A break out panel during the conference, Funding Transitions: Phase I to Phase II and Beyond featured three (3) companies and their success in all phases of the SBIR process. This panel delivered a number of valuable and insightful take-home messages, not limited to the following:

- Having an SBIR Phase I award with one agency opens up possible sole source arrangements with every Federal Agency with technology needs.
- Focus the proposal on systems and not just a piece of technology, as your technology is most likely to be integrated into an entire system.
- In view of system integration and other factors, it is desirable to have broad patent protection.
- Broad protection may provide the vehicle that allows submission of SBIR proposals for a variety of uses and to a number of agencies.

We also learned that the SBIR process exposes your technology, especially after the Phase I and Phase II stages, to a myriad of federal officials, including administrative and technical managers. These officials interface with large companies – their contractors or systems integrators – and are under pressure to deliver goods to their technology users. Even though these federal officials may be subject to Confidential Disclosure Agreements (CDAs) or even Non Disclosure Agreements it is possible and sometimes likely that your technology and even your company financials end up in the hands of a large entity competitor. Without adequate patent protection, from a practical and financial standpoint, there is little a small company can do to recover this technology or to even reap financial rewards, other than the SBIR funds, if the integrator decides to take your wrongly disclosed company technology and run with it.

Your protection is ideally a broadly written and claimed patent or soon-to-issue patent application that covers generic features of the invention and the specific application that the integrator wants to use. On the issuance of a quality patent, you or your attorney (highly recommended) should be able to coax the large entity integrator into a paying license arrangement for the specific use that leaves your company free to continue to innovate and use your invention for research or commercial purposes in this specific field and other fields. In such an instance, you can turn a potential financial disaster into a royalty stream by binding an integrator who is now selling its integrated system with your part to one of the largest costumers in the world.

*Submitted by guest correspondent James A. Poulos III, Esq., TEDCO Vice President, Director of Technology Transfer and Commercialization.*

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## **II. SBIR Managers: Your Access Point to a Variety of Funding Opportunities**

Regular readers of this newsletter will know that scheduling a time to meet with the SBIR program manager at the target agency is strongly recommended for companies pursuing an SBIR. Program managers can help you frame your ideas toward a specific SBIR solicitation, and guide you through the particulars of their agency's SBIR process. But beyond this, did you know that SBIR and STTR program managers have access to many of their agency's other funding opportunities? Even if you are 'out of sync' with an agency's SBIR solicitation schedule, you're probably not 'out of luck'. Your program manager may know of additional funding vehicles with similar topics that you can take advantage of in the short term while you prepare for the next cycle of SBIR solicitations.

While SBIR program managers are a great resource, don't expect them to do your homework for you. Learn as much as possible about your target agency before you schedule an appointment with the program manager: the time you spend will benefit both of you.

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### III. Spotlight on Success



[Encore Path](#) is a medical device company formed in 2006 to commercialize a clinically proven stroke rehabilitation device developed at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. The device is known as BATRAC, the bilateral arm trainer with rhythmic auditory cueing. BATRAC has been shown in clinical studies to significantly improve arm movement in stroke survivors who are moderately paralyzed.

It works by "retraining" the brain to communicate with the arms by recruiting new neural pathways around the damaged areas of the brain. Encore Path has redesigned the BATRAC arm rehabilitation device for the home exercise market. Prototypes of the new design will be available in April 2008, and the device will be launched in summer 2008.

Encore Path was recently awarded a 2008 NIH SBIR grant to develop its second product, a hospital-based version of the BATRAC that will contain software for patient tracking and feedback. The award will also be used to conduct a clinical study of the device in a rehabilitation hospital. Further grant funding is being sought to develop other rehabilitation devices for paralysis.

For more on Encore Path, go to <http://www.encorepath.com/about.html>.

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### IV. SBIR Tip of the Month - Prerequisites to Bidding

Many agencies require firms to register with the federal Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database (<http://www.ccr.gov>) BEFORE submitting an SBIR/STTR proposal. Registration in the CCR requires a Dunn and Bradstreet number (DUNS). A DUNS number identifies contractors and grantees of the US government. You can request a DUNS number at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>.

Both DUNS numbers and CCR registrations are free, but they take time to receive and must be done in sequence. DON'T WAIT until the last minute to complete these required items. If you submit to most DoD agencies, such as the US Navy, you will be required to submit through the DODSBIR e-submission web site at <http://www.dodsbir.com> (Click on "Submission"). This site also requires registering before you can submit a proposal. The CCR and DUNS are required as well. The DODSBIR website has an on-line tutorial that you may find helpful before your first submission.

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**V. Pass It On! Upcoming MMRDI SBIR/STTR Events and More**

- **“How to Win SBIR Funding”<sup>SM</sup> Workshop – focus on Department of Defense**  
Date: May 9, 2008  
\*\* Hosted by MMRDI and the SBIR Resource Center \*\*  
Time: 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
Location: Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation  
1100 Mercantile Lane, STE 115-A, Largo, MD 20774  
Contact: Jacqueline Du Bois  
Phone: 410-715-4176  
Registration: Click [here](#). **RSVP extended to Monday, May 5, 2008.**  
Cost: \$100 per person to MMRDI and Prince George's County businesses.
- **SBIR - Max<sup>SM</sup>**  
Date: May 13, 2008  
\*\* Hosted by SBIR Resource Center and MTDC Incubator \*\*  
Location: Maryland Technology Development Center (MTDC) Incubator  
9700 Great Seneca Highway; Rockville, Maryland  
Contact: Duc Duong (MTDC) – or - John Davis (SBIR Resource Center)  
Email: [dduong@md.hitech.org](mailto:dduong@md.hitech.org) – or – [sbir@sbir.us](mailto:sbir@sbir.us)  
Program and registration details: <http://sbir.us/course/SBIRmax.html>
- **TEDCO Advance Lab for Business: Tools and Strategies for Getting Your Product to Market**  
Date: May 15, 2008  
\*\* Cosponsored by Greater Baltimore Technology Council \*\*  
Time: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM  
Location: [bwtech@UMBC](mailto:bwtech@UMBC)  
1450 South Rolling Road; Baltimore, Maryland 21227  
Contact: Robbie Melton  
Phone: 410-715-4164  
Programmatic details: Click [here](#).  
Registration: In an e-mail with “May 15 workshop” on the subject line, send your contact information to [rmelton@marylandtedco.org](mailto:rmelton@marylandtedco.org). **RSVP extended to May 6, 2008 for NO COST rate.**  
Cost: Free to TEDCO portfolio companies, MMRDI companies, and ACTiVATE students. All others, \$50.
- **2008 National SBIR/STTR Conference**  
Date: May 27 - 30, 2008  
Time: Varies  
Location: Rosen Centre Hotel; 9840 International Drive; Orlando, Florida  
Contact: Lewis C. Attardo  
Phone: 850-473-7805

Email: lewis.attardo@floridasbdc.org  
Program and registration details: <http://www.sbirflorida.org>

**For other events and resources, check out TEDCO's [Calendar of Events!](#)**

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NOTE: You are receiving this eNewsletter because of your interest in either SBIR or STTR programs. If this is in error or you choose not to receive future *eNewsletter*, please contact [cjohnson@marylandtedco.org](mailto:cjohnson@marylandtedco.org).

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