



For immediate release

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

CALGARIANS WIN PRESTIGIOUS MANNING INNOVATION AWARD

\$10,000 prize for developing the world's first life-size cow and calf simulators for veterinary schools

Calgary, AB ... The Ernest C. Manning Awards Foundation is thrilled to announce that Russell Gray and Bryan Pfahl have won the 2017 Manning Innovation Award for developing VSI Bovine Dystocia Simulators, the first life-size cow and calf model for use in veterinary schools.

The Innovation Award is one of four prizes that the Ernest C. Manning Foundation awards annually to talented Canadian innovators who are improving the lives of Canadians and others worldwide through their commercialized innovations.

"Being nominated and winning a Manning Innovation Award is a big honour, especially when considering the other amazing and talented innovators from across the country," **says Mr. Gray.**

According to Mr. Pfahl, "We're pleased that the talents of artisans and the creators of practical industrial design have been acknowledged as important contributors in an era where high-tech often over-shadows utilitarian manufacturing."

Mr. Pfahl and the other 2017 winners will be available for interviews at the Manning Innovation Symposium at OCAD U Room 270, Great Hall, 100 McCaul St, Toronto, ON on Thursday, November 30th at 10:30 a.m. EST.

While Mr. Gray and Mr. Pfahl's creativity and problem-solving skills led them to careers designing and building props for the motion picture, television, and display industries, developing functional, aesthetically pleasing life-size cows was new to them. Hands-on experience is crucial for veterinary students but the traditional use of live and preserved cadavers or biological materials in the classroom is expensive, potentially hazardous, as well as an ethical concern.

In 2010 the pair unveiled the VSI Bovine Dystocia Simulator, the first life-size cow and calf model. The cow bodies are made from steel reinforced epoxy resin-infused fibreglass, with a removable hatch granting access to inside the cow.

Veterinary professors can demonstrate dystocia (difficult birth due to a misaligned fetus) by placing the calf model in the Bovine Dystocia Simulator in different positions that could occur. The cow also features a functional udder with replaceable silicone teats. Students are able to perform a California milk test, used to detect mastitis, or inflammation of the udder, which is a common disease in dairy cows.

Canadian designed and manufactured VSI Bovine Dystocia Simulators are used in 130 institutions in more than 35 countries. Mr. Gray, Mr. Pfahl, and their team are currently developing a canine dental surgery simulator.

"Canada's innovation heroes are among our most valuable natural resources," **says Foundation President Jennifer Diakiw.** "By sharing their stories, we hope to inspire others to innovate, and foster a sense of pride in our nation."

The Ernest C. Manning Awards Foundation was established in 1980 by Alberta Energy Company CEO David Mitchell. Working with former Alberta premier Ernest C. Manning and others, he built the foundation to recognize and celebrate Canadian innovators of all ages and across all disciplines. The Foundation has built a national network of 3,000 young and adult innovators who are leaders in technology, business, engineering, and social innovation advancement. It has awarded innovation prizes to 273 Canadians who have demonstrated innovative talent in developing and successfully marketing a new concept, process or procedure. For more information visit: www.manningawards.ca.

-30-

For more information, interview requests, or photo opportunities, please contact:

Janice ter Borg, 2017 Manning Innovation Awards Media Relations
C: 403-816-6163 E: missionp@telus.net