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Four Vancouver Organizations Among Recipients of $12.3 Million in Intelligent ICT Funding

Vancouver-based projects to be funded include Vision Guided Robotic Parts Selection and Intelligent Scheduling for Emergency Response

Vancouver, Ontario – March 30, 2006 – Four Vancouver organizations are among the recipients of $12.3 million in funding for the development of Canadian intelligent information and communications technology (*i*ICT) projects. The announcement was made today by Ottawa-based **Precarn Incorporated**, a not-for-profit national consortium of corporations, research institutes and government partners supporting the development of *i*ICT.

A total of 29 organizations from across the country – including companies, universities, government agencies, a municipality and a community college – making up six project teams, were awarded the funding. Precarn Incorporated is providing $4.9 million of the funds, which are being augmented by $7.4 million levered through participant funds, for a total project value of $12.3 million.

Vancouver-based recipients are: **Braintech Canada Inc.** and **University of British Columbia**, which will work on a project to develop a vision guided robotic system for auto parts, and **Actenum Corp.** and **Simon Fraser University**, which will develop an intelligent scheduling system for emergency response. Details of the projects are:

Vision Guided Robotic Parts Selection: This project will develop an intelligent system to tackle the problem of recognizing, locating, and picking automobile parts in a random pile in a storage bin. The outcome will be a solution to a long unsolved problem for robotic manufacturing where robots cannot yet distinguish parts randomly stored in a parts bin necessitating expensive structured industrial bin storage. While the initial project is directly sponsored by organizations in the automotive industry the intelligent system will have applicability in many other manufacturing sub-sectors. Led by **Braintech Canada Inc.**, project partners in addition to the **University of British Columbia** are **Adept Technologie Canada** based in Sainte-Foy, Québec, **ABB Inc.** of Auburn Hills, Michigan and **Toyota Motor Manufacturing** of Buffalo, West Virginia.

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Intelligent Scheduling for Emergency Response: This project will develop an intelligent system to support the command and control systems used in emergency response services. The outcome will be better control and faster response times to emergencies. Led by Ottawa-based **Greenley & Associates**, project partners in addition to **Actenum Corp.** and **Simon Fraser University** are **CAE Inc.** of Saint-Laurent, QC, the **Ottawa Paramedic Service**, and **McGill University** in Montréal.

The remaining four projects being funded across the country include an intelligent water monitoring system, a 3D scanning system for deformable manufactured parts, a CT bone analysis system, and an intelligent system that provides advanced communications signals between satellites and ground stations.

"The impact of *i*ICT is felt across all sectors of our economy as these new projects demonstrate," said Paul Johnston, President and CEO of Precarn Incorporated. "Addressing real problems, each of these projects brings a leap of innovation to an industry sector. The success of these projects means the Canadian manufacturing sector will compete better in the global economy; water systems will be safer; emergency healthcare will be delivered faster; and broadband communications will be less expensive and available to more Canadians, especially for our northern communities. Precarn and its network are grateful to Industry Canada for the financial support that makes ground-breaking collaborative projects like these possible."

"Each of the project teams will explore new, leading-edge developments in *i*ICT (technologies that perceive, reason, and essentially act like humans), which may one day lead to major breakthroughs for Canada on an international scale," said Johnston. "These projects bring innovative leapfrog technologies to solve real issues in the environment, manufacturing, healthcare and communications industries."

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About Precarn Incorporated

With support from Industry Canada, other federal departments and provincial government agencies, Precarn Incorporated funds, co-ordinates and promotes collaborative intelligent Information and Communications Technology (*i*ICT) research projects, such as in robotics and intelligent Systems (IS), among business, researchers and students, in order to improve the productivity and competitiveness of Canadian business. In addition to fostering greater development of the intelligent system sector, the network also aims to help develop and retain top-notch experts in the field.

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Media Information:

Gail Bergman
Gail Bergman PR
Tel: (905) 886-1340
Email: gbergman@gailbergmanpr.com

Gary Gudbranson
Precarn Incorporated
Tel: (613) 727-9507 ext. 224
Email: gudbranson@precarn.ca