

Collaboration wins innovation category at Lord Stafford Awards

A web-enabled medical device, developed with help from Staffordshire University to improve the lives of people living with diabetes, has been recognised with a top business award.

Mediche Ltd was set up to develop the ground-breaking insulin injector pen which automatically records information when diabetics take their injections.

The project was announced as winner of the Impact Through Innovation award at the finals of the Lord Stafford Awards which is held each year to recognise and encourage greater collaboration between businesses and universities.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Paul Richards said: "This was yet another proud moment for Staffordshire University and a glowing testament to the staff and graduates who helped to develop the product and to the wider expertise that exists within the University."

"To be recognised with two innovation awards in two years is great for the University and we hope it will encourage more companies to work with us to develop the ideas they have into viable and successful products for the market."

Rugeley company MarchantCain Design developed the product to prototype stage by linking up with Stafford-based businesses EPX Ltd and Rich Media Company, both spin-outs from Staffordshire University.

The three companies worked with the University's Electronics Design Centre (EDC) to develop the digital technology of the product with backing from the Manufacturing Advisory Service-West Midlands and Index voucher scheme.

EDC development engineer Mark Hanstock said: "We were approached in June so we've moved fairly quickly on this. We worked with three of our graduates in order to develop the project and this helped with the award as we were able to demonstrate greater collaboration between the University, it's former students and outside companies."

The inspiration for the product came from diabetic restaurateur and chef James Bower who has to take between eight and 10 insulin injections each day and was looking for a way of accurately measuring how frequently he was injecting.

Rob Marchant, Managing Director of MarchantCain said: "Although there is a range of insulin injector pens on the market, none of them has the capability to upload and store the necessary details of date, time and dose of medication. It has massive potential and we strongly believe that once it gets to market, we will have a product on our hands that could have an impact nationally and internationally."

The winners of the Lord Stafford Awards were announced at a gala dinner held at Gaydon Motor Heritage Museum. Former crafts graduate Charis Jones who is busy making her name as an artist blacksmith was also in attendance having been shortlisted in the Entrepreneurial Spirit category.

Last year the Knowledge Transfer Partnership between Staffordshire University and Aynsley China Limited was named winner of the Achievement in Innovation category.