

## Chicago entrepreneurs get big Motorola boost

October 3, 2005

**BY MICHAEL KRAUSS**

Entrepreneurship is gaining ground in Chicago. Motorola CEO Ed Zander wants that trend to continue. That's why Zander and the Motorola Foundation are pumping \$100,000 into the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center.

The grant is a major shot in the arm for the CEC, which helps entrepreneurial companies gain funding and identify customers. It adds more evidence that Motorola under Zander is committed to Chicago.

The October issue of Entrepreneur magazine signals that Chicago is embracing entrepreneurship and being recognized for it. "America's Second City is first among megalopolises when it comes to entrepreneurial activity," writes Entrepreneur's Mark Hendricks. Chicago ranked 12th overall as a venue for entrepreneurship, well ahead of New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Houston. Our town is up from a lowly 52nd just three years ago.

Motorola's grant might push Chicago even higher in the entrepreneurial rankings. It will also help assure that all Chicagoans benefit.

At Saturday's TiECon event at the Hyatt Regency, Motorola's Zander announced the launch of Education in Entrepreneurship. Zander says, "We have created and funded Education in Entrepreneurship, a program to help high school students in the area become tomorrow's innovators and leaders of their own tech companies."

CEC President David Weinstein is clearly pleased. "To get support from Motorola is huge," Weinstein says. "It validates the notion that we can spur entrepreneurship through mentorship. We believe the kids in Chicago have every bit as much potential as the kids in Silicon Valley -- maybe more."

Supported by the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, the CEC is developing a framework that can be used broadly to coach and develop tomorrow's entrepreneurs. The program will initially target schools on Chicago's South and West sides -- underserved communities where the organizers believe greater demand for entrepreneurial education resides.

Zander knows the value of entrepreneurship. The Brooklyn native helped grow Sun Microsystems to an \$18 billion company. He played a pivotal role as managing director at California private equity firm Silver Lake Partners. His turnaround at Motorola is sparking Chicago's tech community.

Clearly Zander wants to do more to stimulate Chicago's entrepreneurial culture. He's even begun calling Motorola the "original high-tech startup."

"We are getting Chicago's top emerging entrepreneurs to work with high school students to expose them to the possibilities and opportunities of entrepreneurship," Weinstein adds. "If we seed one future Motorola. If we catalyze one future Paul Galvin (Motorola's founder) the rewards will be enormous."