

March 11, 2002

UC Santa Barbara Award Recognizes Entrepreneurial Accomplishments of Math Alumnus Tom Bruggere

Santa Barbara, Calif. --Tom Bruggere, a math major at the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) and the founder and former chair and CEO of the Wilsonville, Oregon-based Mentor Graphics Corp., has been awarded the Venky Narayanamurti Entrepreneurial Leadership Award by his alma mater.

The award, made possible through an endowment established by UCSB electrical and computer engineering professor John Bowers (himself the founder of three companies), recognizes "demonstrated leadership in high-technology entrepreneurship." It is named for Venkatesh (Venky) Narayanamurti, dean of the UCSB College of Engineering from 1992 until 1998, when he left to assume that role at Harvard.

Matthew Tirrell, now dean of the UCSB College of Engineering, presented the award to Bruggere on March 9 at the third Entrepreneurship 101 conference entitled "Creating Value in Turbulent Times." The event is sponsored annually by the UCSB Center for Entrepreneurship and Engineering Management (CEEM), a unique curricular and community-liaison initiative that focuses specifically on the development and management of high tech businesses, but also more generally on infusing entrepreneurship into all aspects of technology education and research at UCSB.

Bruggere recounted how he had begun Mentor Graphics in his living room when the business climate was as "turbulent" as the current state of affairs. There was even less venture capital then than there is today, he said. But his own experience has led him to the conclusion that it's best to start up in turbulent times because the expectation is that the start-up will lose money. "When things pick up," he said, "they pull you along.

"The best thing to do," Bruggere advised would-be entrepreneurs, "is to try. The worst you can do is fail and return to what you were doing, but even then you will do what you were doing better for having tried."

Bruggere founded Mentor Graphics in 1981 and led the successful efforts to pioneer the use of advanced computer software to automate the design, analysis and documentation of electronics. He retired from the company in 1994.

He is also the founder of Stamps.com, a Santa Monica, California-based Internet postage and secure electronic document company, and of Sensor.com, a wireless sensor networking company.

Bruggere has been honored as the U.S. Department of Commerce Small Business Person of the Year, Oregon Executive of the Year, Oregon High Technology Executive of the Year, and one of the Electronic Industry's Top 10 CEOs. He sits on the boards of Open Market Inc. and Will Vinton Studios.

In addition to his 1968 BS degree from UCSB, Bruggere holds an MS degree in computer science from the University of Wisconsin and an MBA from Pepperdine University. He served in combat with the First Infantry division in Vietnam.

He and his wife, Kelley, and their two children reside in Wilsonville, Ore.

Images



Media Contact

Tony Raidren

trairden@engineering.ucsb.edu

805.893.4301
