



## **Fuel Cell Challenge 2010 winners gain backing to commercialize fuel cell technologies**

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**San Antonio, Texas, October 20, 2010** – Today, The USC-Columbia Fuel Cell Collaborative announced the winners of the Greater Columbia Fuel Cell Challenge 2010 the Fuel Cell Seminar & Exposition 2010 in San Antonio, TX. The Challenge, organized by the University of South Carolina (USC), the City of Columbia, SCRA, and EngenuitySC, is an innovation-based business plan competition focused on commercializing novel hydrogen, fuel cell, and clean technologies.

Since its creation in 2006, the Greater Columbia Fuel Cell Challenge has gained national recognition by accelerating the commercialization of ideas and discoveries and providing a springboard from which pioneering technologies can be deployed. This year, the Challenge organizers reached out to a panel of industry experts from science, academia, industry, and the investment community. Applications were received from across the U.S. and Europe.

Winners were announced in two innovative spaces and will be receiving access to startup capital, incubation resources and business planning support to take their innovative technologies out of the lab and into the marketplace in the Greater Columbia, South Carolina.

“The Fuel Cell Challenge demonstrates on a global scale the Columbia region’s level of commitment to cutting edge fuel cell and clean technologies,” said Bill Mahoney, CEO of SCRA. “The Challenge is more than a one-time prize; it’s an investment in ideas that will have a driving effect on the industry.”

Weylchem Sustainable Materials, LLC, was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place for its proposal to produce low cost chemical compounds as a source for hydrogen generation utilized in fuel cells and other commercial applications. Weylchem, based in Germany, but with operations around the U.S., stood out to the challenge’s invited panel of industry experts because of its unique cost-effective method to produce chemical compounds at a high level of purity, its potential for multiple market opportunities, and a unique partnership with a Columbia-based startup company, Boroscience International.

“We are so pleased to receive this honor, and believe that it’s the best platform to take our ideas from lab scale to commercial scale,” said Dr. Andreas Maier, Vice President for Sales & Marketing at Weylchem US.

A second prize was awarded to a proposed new venture called Bio-Blu, a synthetic fuel and fuel cell integration joint venture between Florida-based Neutzler & Associates and researchers at the University of South Carolina, with support from Los Alamos National Labs. Bio-Blu’s proposal was focused on developing a new novel fuel source, a unique approach for hydrogen storage and fuel cell power generation. The company will produce, distribute, and package their environmentally friendly fuel as well as develop custom fuel cells.

“It is an honor to receive this award and we look forward to joining the Greater Columbia Commerce in this new innovation”, stated Jay Neutzler, one of the new venture partners for Bio-Blu.

“Each year the Fuel Cell Challenge presents novel ideas that have the capability to have a tremendous effect on Columbia’s growing clean energy industry and also advances on a worldwide scale,” said Neil McLean, executive director of EngenuitySC. “The competition is successful because we harness the power of innovative ideas and give them the support to develop into significant energy solutions.”

#### About the USC Columbia Fuel Cell Collaborative

The University of South Carolina – City of Columbia Fuel Cell Collaborative was formed by the University of South Carolina, the City of Columbia, EngenuitySC and the SCRA to position Columbia, SC as a leader in hydrogen fuel cell innovation and technology. Its mission is to attract private sector partners, top fuel cell scientists, entrepreneurs, and innovators to the Columbia region to help grow an innovation pipeline from discovery to development to deployment of fuel cell technology. For more information, visit [www.fuelcellcollaborative.com](http://www.fuelcellcollaborative.com).