

Water-saving device makes splash

TR company earns tech award

By Rudolph Bell
BUSINESS WRITER
dbell@greenvillenews.com

T&S Brass and Bronze Works Inc. was already working on a new spray valve design in 2005 when the federal government mandated low-flow rinsers for dish washing in restaurants.

The company's new design, which hit the market in 2007, saves the typical restaurant an average of 200,000 gallons of

heated water a year, said Jeff Baldwin, engineering manager for the Travelers Rest manufacturer.

The invention claimed the Sustainability Award at the 11th annual InnoVision Technology Awards ceremony at the Carolina First Center Wednesday night. The awards program, sponsored by the Greenville office of the McNair Law Firm, recognizes technology innovations in the Upstate.

Doug Kim, an intellec-

tual property lawyer with McNair, said the winning entries and his own practice indicate that Upstate companies are still spending on innovation even in the tough economy.

"Places like Detroit and Las Vegas are seeing massive declines in this type of activity," Kim said. "We're pretty much staying even, and that's a good thing right now."

Richard Wool, professor of chemical engineering at the University of Delaware, who was keynote speaker at the din-

ner program, talked about the use of biomaterials in various products such as a circuit board made of chicken feathers and soy oil.

Other winners, as selected by seven technology experts who live and work outside of South Carolina:

■ The Dr. Charles Townes Individual Achievement Award went to Tom Strange, senior director of research and development, with St. Jude Medical Inc.'s cardiac rhythm

management division in Liberty.

■ The Technology Development Award went to Kemet Electronics Corp. for advances in tantalum capacitor technology.

■ The Technology Application Award went to Techtronic Industries North America for a cement saw that keeps the user safe from dust particles without compromising cutting speed.

■ The Innovation in Education Award went to CQ Media Networks for a Web-based service connecting classrooms with

working professionals for mentoring purposes.

■ The Small Enterprise Award went to SensorTech Corp. for its "smart plastic" technology.

■ Co-winner of the Sustainability Award was Upstate Forever, the local environmental group, for its renovation of a 1916 house in Greenville to be its headquarters.

■ The Hall of Fame Award went to Michelin Americas Research Corp., the tire maker's research organization in Greenville County.