



**Dr. Gary E. Spanner**  
**Recipient of the 2006 Sam Volpentest Entrepreneurial Leadership Award**

Dr. Gary Spanner manages Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's Economic Development Office ([www.pnl.gov/edo](http://www.pnl.gov/edo)). Since 1994, Gary has applied PNNL's technological resources to expand the technology sector of the economy and create high-value jobs for the Tri-Cities, Northwest region, and the nation.

The Tri-Cities is home to 290 technology businesses, most of which know Gary. PNNL's economic development programs have added more than 1,100 jobs and millions of dollars to the economic base of the region.

Gary has implemented a number of innovative programs to serve the technological needs of businesses and diversify the local and regional economy. Perhaps the most notable is the Technology Assistance Program, where PNNL engineers and scientists apply their skills to problems defined by businesses. Since 1994, PNNL has conducted more than 370 projects for 210 Mid-Columbia companies and another 347 projects to 188 companies nationwide. Under Gary's direction, PNNL also has provided business assistance, including business planning help and connections to strategic partners and sales channels, to 48 businesses since the 1990s, most of them in the Tri-Cities.

Gary leads a committee of community organizations to create land-use and marketing plans for the Tri-Cities Research District. This effort, funded largely through a Congressional appropriation, is aimed at recommending how the 1,600-acre Research District, which contains 85 organizations with more than 5,000 employees, should be developed and marketed over the next few years as Hanford's workforce shrinks.

Well aware of the inadequate supply of equity funding for local emerging businesses, Gary supported the Washington Technology Center in establishing the area's first private equity investment group, the Columbia Investor Group, in December 2005. Gary's office launched the bi-monthly Three Rivers Entrepreneur Network breakfast meetings, where experts speak and entrepreneurs network, and helped get the Small Business Survival Group started. He also established widely used resources like the award-winning SBIR Alerting Service (free updates about a \$2 billion source of federal R&D funding for small businesses), the Technology Business Directory of the Tri-Cities, the Entrepreneur Support Catalogue, the monthly Tri-Cities Tech Business Update, the Tri-Cities Innovation and Technology Index, and the Tech Job Connection, an online job- and resumé-listing service.

Gary is highly regarded by local, regional, and national leaders with whom he works, from the 40+ Tri-Cities organizations that support businesses to the Washington Technology Center; Technology Alliance; Washington state's Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development; Northwest universities; among many others.

Gary and his programs have received 18 national and regional awards and honors over the years, including the U.S. Department of Commerce naming PNNL one of seven "best practices" labs in economic development in 2003, out of 300 such labs nationwide; the 1999 National Partnership for Reinventing Government Hammer Award for the SBIR Alerting Service, awarded by Vice President Al Gore; the 2003 e-gov Trailblazer Award for the SBIR/STTR Alerting Service; the 1999 SBIR Support Person of the Year Award from the Small Business High Technology Institute; the 1995 U.S. Department of Energy Technology Partnership Customer Service Award for Individual Achievement; and a 1990 Federal Laboratory Consortium Excellence in Technology Transfer Award.

With a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, MBA, and Ph.D. in Industrial and Management Systems Engineering, in addition to careers in research and industry, Gary is credible, smart, and strategic as he directs and advises on tech-based economic development. He supports the Tri-Cities' education and quality of life as a Junior Achievement in-class instructor and a member of the unlimited hydroplane racing teams, doing turbine engine work.

As a Richland (Columbia) High School graduate and a long-time resident of the community, Gary has always had a passion for the growth of the Tri-Cities. Through vision, leadership, persistence, and the ability to connect people and resources to solve problems, Gary is truly a gem of the Tri-Cities entrepreneurial community.