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## **As the WTIA Celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Local Tech Leaders Offer Their Take on What Makes Washington a Center for Technology**

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**SEATTLE, Wash. — March 24, 2009** — This Wednesday night, as part of its 14<sup>th</sup> annual Industry Achievement Awards gala, the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA) will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The growth of the WTIA, the largest statewide association of technology companies, IT departments and individual technology professionals in North America, has mirrored the rise of the technology industry in the Northwest. The organization's members have helped shape and continue to drive innovation here and across the globe.

Dennis Weston, senior managing director at Seattle-based Fluke Venture Partners, has been investing in early-stage companies in the Northwest for 27 years. He describes the growth of the technology industry in the region during that period as "exponential."

"The personal computer, cell phone and Internet technologies have all changed the world, and Washington state can be given credit for so much of each of these and other related developments," notes Weston. "Tim Patterson of Seattle Computer Products fame wrote DOS and sold it to Bill Gates at Microsoft. Microsoft, using DOS, developed so much of the software that's been in use over the past 25 years, and many, many Microsoft alums have started new technology companies. McCaw cellular was a huge innovator in the cellular field and many cellular and related technology companies have since been formed by McCaw alums. The emergence of the Internet has been one of the inflection points that has allowed the creation of many, many Washington state startups over the years ... and even a few successes!"

According to Brian Webster, the CEO of Physio-Control and a life-long resident of the area, while Washington has achieved wider recognition as a technology center in recent years, the region has a rich history of innovation that stretches back much further.

"Washington state has been a home to pioneering medical technology companies for the last 50 years. The combination of a strong university infrastructure and the quality of life in the Pacific Northwest has given companies access to top technical talent that has made this a great region for medical innovation."

John McAdam, the CEO of F5 Networks, has been in the Northwest since 1995. He believes that it's no accident that global innovators like Microsoft, Amazon.com and his own company call the region home.

"Washington state and the greater Northwest have developed an infrastructure to support innovation," says McAdam. "This is a great area for finding talent. And the culture is different than in other regions."

People here are loyal to the area and to their companies. F5 has an attrition rate that is far below the industry norm. While we think that says something good about us as a company, it also reflects the nature of the people here.”

On Wednesday night, the WTIA will honor the next generation of local technology leaders with a party and awards ceremony at the Paramount Theater. For the first time in the 14-year history of the IAAs, award winners have been selected by their peers through online voting. According to Ken Myer, president of the WTIA, “The Industry Achievement Awards are a showcase for the energy and creativity of the local technology community. And as we look back over our 25-year history, it’s truly amazing to see just how far we and our members have come.”

For more information about the WTIA Industry Achievement Awards, please visit: [http://www.washingtontechnology.org/pages/iaa/iaa\\_main.asp](http://www.washingtontechnology.org/pages/iaa/iaa_main.asp). While online registration has closed, tickets will be available for purchase at the door.

### **About the Washington Technology Industry Association**

The Washington Technology Industry Association, founded in 1984, is the largest statewide association of technology companies, IT departments and individual technology professionals in North America. With more than 1,000 member companies representing more than 100,000 employees in Washington State, the association is a catalyst for sharing expertise, fostering collaboration, delivering key business services and advancing the value and global impact of technology companies doing business in Washington. The association’s global partners are Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, Microsoft, Regence BlueShield, Sun Microsystems, Vertafore and Wells Fargo Insurance Services. The association’s funding partners are AH&T Insurance, F5 Networks, GrapeCity, Moss Adams and RealNetworks. For more information, go to [www.washingtontechnology.org](http://www.washingtontechnology.org).

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