

Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation: High-Tech manufacturers on revitalizing the Wisconsin Idea

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MADISON, Wis. – Drawing on the legacy of the industrial heartland, national award-winning inventor Daniel Ludois and Cecil Edirisinghe, CEO of Velicon, call for “a 21st century version” of the Wisconsin Idea in a new essay series from two dozen state leaders.

Read their essay “[On the shoulders of giants: Innovation and the Wisconsin Idea the old-fashioned way.](#)”

Beloit-native Ludois and Edirisinghe, originally from Sri Lanka, are collaborating on electric motor technology that “leverage[s] old manufacturing techniques with a high-tech twist.”

They write, “We believe that living the Wisconsin Idea is about using our skills at the university as inventors and engineers and in the trades as machinists [and] electricians...to revitalize this industrial heritage in a modern context. We believe that to achieve that it is a priority to teach our local children, and to encourage them to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics.”

The online series of articles is called “[Innovation and the Wisconsin Idea](#).” In addition to Ludois and Edirisinghe, contributors include university researchers and educators, business leaders and entrepreneurs, investors, and public officials who share their views on the crucial interdependence between university innovations and the strength of the Wisconsin economy.

Co-authors represent different regions of the state while sharing a common bond through the field they represent, from agriculture and engineering to health care and policymaking.

Contributors to the series include:

- Erik Iverson, Managing Director, Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation
- Governor Tommy G. Thompson and Professor Mike Sussman
- Chris Salm, CEO of Ab E Discovery, and Dean Kate VandenBosch
- Dr. Alan Kaplan, CEO of UW Health, and Dr. Susan Turney, CEO of Marshfield Clinic
- John Neis, Executive Managing Director of Venture Investors, and Cory Nettles, Founder and Managing Director of Generation Growth Capital Inc.
- Dean Ian Robertson and Greg Piefer, CEO of SHINE Medical Technologies
- Zach Brandon, President of the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, and Tim Sheehy, President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce
- Arjun Sanga, President of WiSys, and Zach Halmstad, Co-Founder of Jamf
- State Senator Luther Olsen and Dean Robert Golden
- Chancellor Dean Van Galen and Tom Still, President of the Wisconsin Technology Council
- State Senator Alberta Darling and Rock Mackie, Professor and Entrepreneur
- Mike Knetter, President of the University of Wisconsin Foundation

For more information about the series Innovation and the Wisconsin Idea, please visit warf.org/wisconsininnovates. Comments on the series are welcome at wisconsinidea@warf.org.

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The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) helps steward the cycle of

research, discovery, commercialization and investment for the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Founded in 1925 as an independent, nonprofit foundation, WARF manages more than 1,900 patents and an investment portfolio of \$2.7 billion as it funds university research, obtains patents for campus discoveries and licenses inventions to industry. For more information, visit warf.org and view [WARF's Cycle of Innovation](#).