

Local startup claims award

By **Tony Lombardo** | *Staff Writer*

Saturday, May 20, 2006

REACHMD Consult had no funding earlier this week.

Today, the Augusta startup company is celebrating a \$100,000 award and an opportunity to expand its business.

REACHMD, formed out of the Medical College of Georgia, has developed a service that allows neurologists to monitor patients, and their brain scans, via the Internet to help diagnose and treat stroke.

On Thursday, the company was named the winner in the inaugural New Business Launch Competition, a statewide contest recognizing startups that emphasize information security and the convergence of voice and video data.

Coordinated by the Technology Association of Georgia and the Georgia Research Alliance, judges started with more than 50 candidates but chose REACHMD as the most promising.

"It wasn't so much a unique technology, as it was a real good application of technology for something in which there is a real market need," said Sid Elliott, the event's lead organizer.

Currently, REACHMD serves nine rural hospitals in a 100-mile radius of Augusta.

When a patient suffers a stroke, quick treatment is essential, said Dr. David Hess, the chairman of MCG's neurology department and a founder of REACHMD. Drug treatment can only be given within three hours, Dr. Hess said, so an Internet diagnosis can help reduce damage.

The plan is to turn the technology into a fee-based service statewide, Dr. Hess said. The award money will be used to improve the efficiency of the system so that the business can accommodate a network of hundreds of hospitals, he said.

"The version is going to be more expandable, more durable and more user friendly than the last version," he said.

The award also includes \$150,000 in professional services, including office space and law advice.

The young business is already meeting with potential clients, Dr. Hess said.

"We've got a big client coming in from the Northeast who wants us to help with a large number of hospitals," he said.

From the Saturday, May 20, 2006 edition of the Augusta Chronicle



Special

The REACHMD Consult team, Grant Kohler (from left), Sandeep Agate, Dr. David Hess and William Hamilton, shows off the \$100,000 check from the New Business Launch Competition.