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Birmingham Company Catches Next Wave in Accounting

Birmingham—Michael E. Mason, CPA, CVA, CFP, CFFA announced the establishment of [Consilium Forensic Accounting](#), a practice focused exclusively on providing investigative accounting and litigation support. Forensic accounting is a growing field that integrates accounting, auditing and investigative skills. It covers a broad range of work including fraud prevention and investigation and the examination of accounting discrepancies. The forensic accountant retrieves and examines financial data, analyzes and dissects business and accounting issues, and summarizes the findings for application to a legal issue.

"High-profile cases brought forensic accounting to the public's attention, but on an everyday basis, forensic accountants are increasingly being consulted on cases involving small and often mid-size businesses," said Mason, who notes that forensic accountants are retained by attorneys seeking a financial accounting expert for cases involving complex financial and accounting issues. "When a company's value is at issue, the stakes are high, regardless of company size," said Mason.

Auburn Pharmacy School's Innovative Ways

Auburn—The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy has named [Auburn University's Harrison School of Pharmacy](#) one of three North American winners of Innovation in Teaching Awards for 2003.

The award recognizes the AU school for incorporating community service into its curriculum for pharmacy students at Auburn. The program, which involves all the school's students and faculty, uses service-learning methods that permit students to apply skills and knowledge from the classroom while meeting community health needs.

The Harrison School of Pharmacy started the program in 1997 in conjunction with the entry-level Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum. The school places all new students on pharmaceutical care teams with second- and third-year students, and each team has two faculty members. Assisting social service agencies or individuals, each team provides basic pharmaceutical care to 12 to 15 patients in the community.

As students progress through the curriculum with mentoring from the teams' faculty members, the advanced students take on more responsibility for managing the patients' drug therapies and mentoring junior students in the program.

Two faculty members from AU will describe the school's award-winning curriculum model this month at an AAACP special session on innovation. Janelle Krueger and Diane Beck will present the material on July 22 in Minneapolis on behalf of the school's faculty.

South Alabama Banking Company Joins Index

Mobile—[BancTrust Financial Group](#) Inc., formerly known as South Alabama Bancorporation, joined the Russell 3000 Index June 30th when Frank Russell Company reconstituted its family of US indexes. BancTrust Financial Group's membership, which remains in place for at least one year, is with the small-cap Russell 2000 Index, part of the Russell 3000 index.

Membership in Russell's 21 U.S. equity indexes is determined by objective rules, such as market capitalization rankings. Annual reconstitution of the Russell indexes captures the 3,000 largest U.S. stocks as of the end of May, ranking them by total market capitalization to create the Russell 3000. The largest 1,000 companies in the ranking comprise the Russell 1000 while the remaining 2,000 companies become the widely used Russell 2000.

The announcement followed the May 28, 2003 announcement by BancTrust and CommerceSouth Inc. of their intent to merge CommerceSouth Inc., the parent corporation of CommerceSouth Banks of Florida and Alabama, into BancTrust. CommerceSouth has banking offices located in Eufaula, Montgomery and Prattville in Alabama and banking offices located in Destin, Santa Rosa Beach, Grayton Beach, Panama City Beach, Freeport and Lynn Haven in Florida. New Florida branches in Niceville and Crestview are scheduled to open later this year.

BancTrust operates 23 offices in Alabama and Florida. BancTrust Financial Group affiliates are: BankTrust in Mobile and Baldwin Counties, BankTrust of Brewton, The Monroe County Bank, The Commercial Bank of Demopolis, Sweet Water State Bank, in Alabama, BankTrust of Florida, and South Alabama Trust Company. At the conclusion of the previously announced CommerceSouth transaction, BancTrust expects to operate 36 locations in Alabama and Florida. Consummation of this transaction is subject to the negotiation and execution of a definitive agreement, certain regulatory approvals, approval of the shareholders of BancTrust and CommerceSouth and other contingencies. BancTrust's common stock trades on the NASDAQ Small Cap Stock Market under the symbol BTFG.

July 10, 2003

Buzz Lightyear Would Be Proud

Huntsville—Intergraph Solutions Group and the U.S. Air Force Association (AFA) have awarded top Utah Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Cadet Burton Gingerich an all-expense-paid trip to Huntsville, Alabama's U.S. SPACE CAMP. Intergraph chose to sponsor this award in an effort to support the United States Air Force and promote aerospace technology and exploration. The AFA partnered with Intergraph in this endeavor and supplied Burton with free round-trip tickets to Huntsville.

Sixteen-year-old Burton ranked as the top CAP cadet for Utah and was hand-selected to receive this award by the CAP Wing Commander. He currently serves as the Cadet Advisory Council Chairperson for both his Wing and the entire Civil Air Patrol Rocky Mountain Region, which includes Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, and Montana. His duties include planning activities for CAP units, chairing monthly CAP meetings and submitting proposals to senior CAP commanders. He has served as team leader at Ohio's Lunken Air Show, helped direct traffic and emergency vehicles during a helicopter crash in Blue Ash, Ohio, and acted as cadet commander for the Mission to Mars Experience held in the Utah desert.

Cadet Gingerich has been flying planes since he was 11 years old. After piloting an ASK-21 Glider and completing the Power Flight instruction course, he knew for certain that flying was what he wanted to do with his life. After graduating early from high school with a 4.0 GPA, Burton is currently enrolled in Salt Lake City Community College, majoring in flight technology. He plans on entering the U.S. Air Force Academy after college.

The Civil Air Patrol, known as the "eyes of the home skies," is an official nonprofit auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force established on December 1, 1941—one week before Pearl Harbor. During World War II, CAP volunteers participated valiantly in many missions, including coastal patrols to search for enemy submarines, search and rescue missions, and cargo and courier flights to transfer critical supplies and personnel. When the war ended, these CAP volunteers had achieved a record they could be proud of, flying more than half-a-million hours, sinking two enemy submarines, and saving hundreds of crash victims.

While attending Advanced Space Academy, a Space Camp designed specifically for older teenagers, Burton will receive in-depth, hands-on training

When You're
Out There,
You'll Definitely W
You Were In Her



and learn about the mental, emotional, and physical demands astronauts face. The SPACE SHOT simulator, training missions, virtual reality testing, rocket building and launches, scientific experiments, and IMAX movies are just a few of the activities he will enjoy during his visit.

Burton will be serving as the pilot/commander for his team during his weeklong visit at Space Camp. This role focuses on space piloting and guidance navigation and control. As pilot, his activities could include jet fighter training, water survival, land survival, search and rescue, hands-on-outdoor activities, water rescue training and escape and evasion.

"I am very excited about attending Space Camp," remarked Cadet Gingerich. "I am thankful to Intergraph for providing me with this opportunity. Participating in the Mission to Mars Experiment several years ago really got me interested in space exploration. I'd love to be the first man on Mars!"

"Intergraph is proud to sponsor ambitious students like Burton Gingerich and Jeri-Lynn Harper," stated Mike Brashear, vice president of the Department of Defense business unit at Intergraph Solutions Group. "We recognize the importance of technologically empowering America's future generation."

Inline Teaches Online Security

Birmingham—[Inline Corporation](#) will host a seminar on online security later this month. To be held on July 24, from 9 a.m. to noon at the company's headquarters (600 Lakeshore Parkway, Birmingham), the seminar will include information on network security tools and how to lock down your company's wireless infrastructure. Lunch will be provided. Online registration [can be filled out here](#).

Camp Weld-A-Lot

Carrollton, GA—[Rosie the Riveter](#) would be proud. When thermostats rise to mid-July levels, many high school girls find relief at air-conditioned malls or in the clear blue waters of a swimming pool. But the girls enrolled in the BE&K Construction Day Camp will be turning the heat up as they build skills that could lead to a career in construction.

Camp participants will be introduced to basic construction skills and complete small carpentry and electrical projects. Campers will also wield 1200-degree welding rods as they learn basic industrial metal welding techniques. The camp will conclude with a visit to Plant Yates.

The camp provides an opportunity for young women to explore careers in construction in a supportive environment. "We hope these young women will build enough confidence with their skill set to pursue vocational training. The skills are transportable and once mastered will travel with the students for a lifetime," said Robin Paulding, spokeswoman for Birmingham-based BE&K. "Labor experts project a steady demand for skilled workers with the U.S. Department of Labor predicting 1,000,000 new jobs will be available for skilled construction workers by 2005."

Contact Robin Paulding at 205-972-6688 or cell 205-601-0959 or pauldingr@bek.com for directions to the camp, schedule details with photo ops or visit www.bek.com for BE&K background.

July 9, 2003

Plastic Worms That Aren't Plastic

Birmingham—Plastic worms and lures have long been a staple in bass fishermen's tackleboxes. They work, and work well, but there's still a problem with them: fish don't eat plastic, they eat food. But, in a "You got chocolate in my peanut butter" discovery, Birmingham-based [FoodSource Lure Corporation](#) has introduced FoodSource Lures, molded fishing lures made from 100 percent natural fish food and containing no plastics or other synthetics.

According to Ed Rogers, company president, "FoodSource Lures can be made into virtually any shape and size, including worms, lizards, grubs, minnows, frogs and other natural food source designs that fish and fishermen prefer. They can include any scent or other attractant. FoodSource Lures have the look, feel and action of soft plastic lures. They hold up in fresh and salt water

after repeated casts, strikes and catches.”

Because the lures are real food, they create a natural scent trail in the water. “Rather than trying to cover up the bad taste and smell of plastic, we instead decided to make our lures out of something fish want to eat: fish food,” said Doug Ollis, a life-long fisherman, and the man who thought up the idea for the lures.

Estimates are that two billion soft plastic lures are sold worldwide every year, with about half of those sales in the United States. Most plastic lures are lost in water, weeds or woods and remain for years because they are not biodegradable. They litter the bottom of lakes and other waterways. Fish and other wildlife swallow some; however, because animals cannot digest plastic lures, they die or become malnourished.

The lures were developed at Auburn University, where a team of scientists from Auburn’s Department of Fisheries & Allied Aquacultures and Department of Nutrition and Food Science, in collaboration with sportfishermen, spent years perfecting the right ingredients and recipes. FoodSource Lures are patent-pending.

July 8, 2003

Alabama Company Gets Hepatitis Grant

Birmingham—[BioCryst Pharmaceuticals, Inc.](#) has been awarded a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Advanced Technology Grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), a unit of The National Institutes of Health (NIH). The \$600,000 grant entitled "Optimizing Hepatitis C virus NS5B Polymerase Inhibitors" supports BioCryst's efforts to develop its pre-clinical product candidates for the treatment of hepatitis C. BioCryst will be awarded \$300,000 in the first year of the grant, and an additional \$300,000 the second year.

BioCryst's research has been directed toward the design, evaluation and synthesis of novel active site-directed inhibitors of hepatitis C polymerase, an enzyme necessary for the hepatitis C virus to replicate itself, in collaboration with Emory University and the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS). BioCryst has an exclusive license to compounds resulting from this collaboration. The funding from the SBIR grant will be used to design, optimize and assay orally active inhibitors of hepatitis C virus NS5B polymerase provided by Emory University. Promising inhibitors from this program will also be assayed for activity against Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), West Nile, and Ebola viruses under agreements currently in place with NIAID and the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases.

"This grant enables BioCryst to continue advancing the development of new potential therapies for hepatitis C by identifying and developing selective nontoxic inhibitors of the hepatitis C virus NS5B polymerase," said Yarlagadda Babu, Ph.D., Vice President of Discovery for BioCryst. "The awarding of this grant underscores the recognized need for new therapeutic options to treat hepatitis C. We are excited and pleased by the progress we have made in our hepatitis C polymerase inhibitor program and believe this grant will allow additional advancements."

July 7, 2003

VAP Test Grows in Acceptance

Burlington, NC—[Laboratory Corporation of America Holdings](#) (LabCorp) today announced that it has entered into a marketing and distribution relationship with Birmingham-based [Atherotech](#), a cardiognostic company and specialty reference laboratory, to offer its proprietary Vertical Auto Profile (VAP) Cholesterol Test. The multi-year agreement includes a provision for the transfer of patented testing technology to LabCorp, after which, if certain conditions are met, LabCorp would become the first clinical laboratory licensed to perform the cardiovascular disease risk assessment assay within its own national laboratory system.

The partnership is designed to ensure broader patient access for Atherotech's VAP Test technology through LabCorp's sales and distribution network, while adding an important test to LabCorp's already broad menu of esoteric assays for cardiovascular disease.

According to the American Heart Association, coronary heart disease kills more Americans than any other illness, and reducing risk factors is extremely important. Atherotech's VAP Test is an expanded cholesterol test designed to improve the identification of people at risk for heart disease. It provides direct, detailed measurements of cholesterol subclasses that play important

roles in the development of heart disease.

"We are pleased to offer the VAP Cholesterol Test as part of our broadly available menu of service offerings for cardiovascular disease," said Myla Lai-Goldman, MD, executive vice president, medical director and chief scientific officer for LabCorp. "Many of our physician customers have been asking for this valuable test to help improve patient care. This initial strategic partnership with Atherotech is significant because it will increase patient access to important cardiovascular technology. We also continue to explore additional opportunities to further expand our relationship with Atherotech."

"Cardiovascular disease is a major public health problem affecting nearly 60 million Americans, and the need for increased access to effective cardiovascular disease risk assessment tools is clear," said Atherotech president and CEO Roseanne Varner. "This new marketing and distribution relationship with LabCorp allows us to reach significantly more physicians who need technologies like our VAP Test to develop appropriate cardiovascular therapies for their patients."

Tanks for the Memories

[Integrated Defense Technologies'](#) subsidiary, PEI Electronics, Inc., has been awarded a production contract totaling \$8.18 million by TACOM, Rock Island. The delivery order is for 227 Embedded Diagnostics Systems and 227 Diagnostic Processors for the Abrams M1A1 AIM Tank. Work on the contract will be performed at PEI Electronics Huntsville, AL, facility and is expected to be completed by December 2004.

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