

For Immediate Release
April 11, 2005

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Ferris Rubber Engineering Technology alumni serve award-winning firm

BIG RAPIDS – A California rubber company that employs four recent Ferris State University graduates has received a prestigious award and is being considered for a national honor.

Westland Technologies, Inc., of Modesto, CA, was recently selected as the US Small Business Administration 2005 Region IX Prime Contractor of the Year, and is competing with other regional award winners for the title of National Prime Contractor of the Year. Westland will receive its regional award April 26-28 at the SBA Expo in Washington, DC, where the national award winner will be announced.

Sharing in the spotlight are Ferris alumni and Westland employees Rob Bryson (Dec. '03), Teresa Gritzmaker (Dec. '02), Corry Jobin (May '03) and Matt Lape (May '04). The four represent the majority of the engineering staff for the firm of some 100 employees. All are graduates of the College of Technology's Rubber Engineering Technology program in Ferris' National Elastomer Center.

The Ferris program, the only one of its kind in the nation, teaches mixing and testing rubber compounds for industry standards and processing these compounds into finished products. Classes emphasize hands-on learning with the same type of equipment currently used in industry. Students in the innovative program serve two paid internships in industry, for a minimum of 10 weeks each, gaining invaluable first-hand experience.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are immediately employable in engineering positions such as process, product or project engineer, quality control engineer, or technical sales representative. The program has experienced 100 percent placement in recent years, and the rubber industry looks to graduates of Ferris' program to become its senior engineers and managers of the future.

Westland is a full capability rubber company, specializing in high performance products in the full range of organic, silicone, and fluoroelastomeric rubbers. This capability has made Westland, which adheres to the motto "Performance, Not Promises," a key partner on thousands of consumer, industrial and military projects that demand quality and timely service.