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GTU set to hit century of patents applications

Large scale training in patent process pays off; The faculty, students and colleges, affiliated with GTU, continue to file patents.

Gujarat Technological University's largest ever exercise in training its faculty in obtaining patents has paid off. Its students, faculty and Colleges have filed for 75 patents for their products and solutions during the last six months.

Hiranmay Mahanta, Managing Director of Techpedia.com expects that the patent applications will hit 100 by March 2013. "We are awaiting the result of our applications, but filing for such a large number of patents is an achievement in itself," Dr Akshai Aggarwal, GTU Vice Chancellor, told Ahmedabad Mirror.

In engineering education, the Final Year project is considered as the capstone, since while working on the project, a student applies the knowledge, that he/ she may have acquired in many different subjects, to develop a new or an improved product or process. Usually the project is done either by taking the help of the industry-experience of some of the faculty members or by taking the help of some industry for finalizing the project.

The first cohort of 4-year degree engineering students were to enter the Final Year in August 2011. So GTU launched GTU Innovation Council on 2nd August 2010, so that a relationship could be built with the industries. On Feb 14th 2011, the first group of students, accompanied by some faculty members visited some industries in the GTU Innovation Sankul, Naroda. This was the first or the 'pilot' 'Shodh Yatra" (i.e. Research Journey). Shri Shaileshbhai Patwari, the Co-Chair (Industry) of the Sankul Committee provided a strong support from the industries.

During the summer of 2011, all the 50,010 Final Year Engineering students went on Shodh Yatras to the industries all over the State. When the students started working on their Final Year projects in August 2011, it was found that 73% of the 17,000 Final Year projects were based on Industry Defined Problems.

According to Dr Aggarwal, the university decided to encourage patenting after the success of its academia-industry cooperation. On September 3-4, 2011 was organized the first two-day workshop on "Patenting in Pharmaceutical Sciences". 140 Faculty members participated in the workshop at AMA, Ahmedabad. It was followed by five 2-days workshops on "Patenting in

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Engineering", held during the period from September 24th-25th, 2011 to 3rd -4th March 2012. These five workshops at Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Baroda, Mehsana and Surat attracted 840 Faculty members. On April 29th-30th, 2012 and on 29th June 2012 were organized a 2-days Advanced workshop on "Patent Search & Drafting of Provisional Application" and a 1-day workshop on "Filing of Provisional Patent Application" *respectively*. 149 faculty members took advantage of the two workshops.

Dr Manish Rachchh, the Resource Person and the organizer of the Patenting Workshops said," The workshops helped save money in patenting costs. It costs up to Rs 60,000 to get a patent if applied through an expert. However, after training, researchers could file for patent on their own and these costs them just about Rs 20,000." Dr Rachchh added that stress on filing patents leads to more innovations in students' project and helps boost up R & D culture in the Colleges and at the University. "This," he said," will also contribute to improving the Global Innovation Index of our country, which has been declining for the last 2 years."

When the Final Year projects in Engineering were completed in May 2012, 1900 industries said that the projects by the young Final year students of GTU Colleges had helped the industries. Mr Hiranmay Mahanta estimated the accumulated saving to SMEs to be of the order of Rs 4 crore in an year.

During the academic year 2012-13, the University has decided to ask the Final Year students to do patent search in the area of their Final Year project. From 8th September 2012 to 3rd November 2012, GTU organized eight 1-day workshops on "Patent Search Methodology". 1,405 Faculty members participated in the eight workshops. "This will lead to more innovative and patentable projects," said Dr Akshai Aggarwal.

The University has asked every Final Year student to prepare a presentation about the patent literature he/ she studies and to show it at a meeting of all the Final Year and Pre-Final Year students of his Branch at his/ her College. Dr Akshai Aggarwal said that all such presentations will be put on the University's web-site so that every one may be able to access the information mined by the students. As an initial output of patent search, students of L J Institute of Engineering have analyzed nearly 500 patents by now.

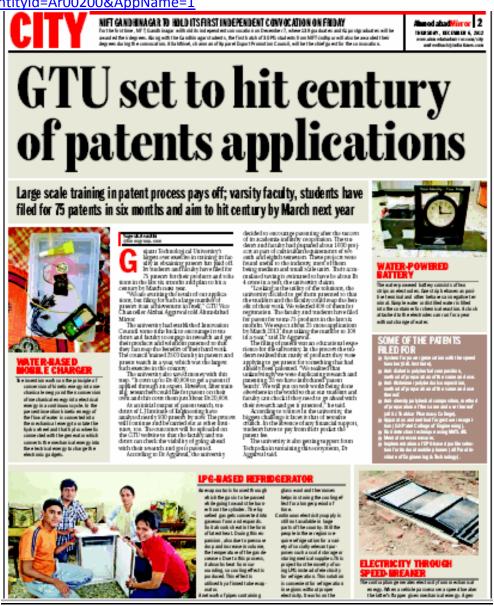
The University has set up the Student Start-up Support System (S4) for helping its new alumni to prepare a proto-type and to seek funding from angel investors and venture capitalists. It has signed an agreement with EQDC so that facilities for manufacturing sophisticated sub-assemblies can be prepared by students, if required. GTU is planning to set up an IPR cell for

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helping students, faculty members, Colleges and industries with ethical policies and with financial support for patenting, if the funds become available for the purpose.

Reference: <a href="http://epaper.timesofindia.com/Default/Scripting/ArticleWin.asp?From=Archive&Source=Page&Skin=MIRRORNEW&BaseHref=AMIR%2F2012%2F12%2F06&ViewMode=GIF&PageLabel=2&EntityId=Ar00200&AppName=1



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