

All Together Now

UB School of Engineering professors awarded CQIA Gold Innovation Prize for connecting engineers globally.

School of Engineering team Susan Kristie, Dean Tarek Sobh, and Associate Dean Khaled Elleithy had the vision to bring engineers together, despite the miles.



If ideas are the currency of trade in academia, then conferences are its central banks where researchers, scholars, and other experts share valuable information on vital topics that shape our world.

Yet all too often, conferences are prohibitively expensive or time-consuming to attend, so the exchange of research and ideas, however great, gets mired in logistics.

UB School of Engineering Associate Dean Dr. Khaled M. Elleithy and Dean/Senior Vice President for Graduate Studies Dr. Tarek Sobh set out to change that, by launching the first online engineering conference in the world. They were helped by Susan Kristie, the administrative manager at the School of Engineering. Now, thanks to their success in seamlessly bringing engineers together for over a decade, UB has won a Connecticut Quality Improvement Award Competition (CQIA) Gold Innovation Prize.

CQIA awards recognize organizations that develop products, services, or processes that are new to Connecticut and have reached their internal or external markets in the

last five years.

Sobh's and Elleithy's contributions were first made in 2005, when they began the International Joint Conferences on Computer, Information, Systems Sciences, and Engineering, known as CISSE.

"At the time," said Elleithy, "it was an unheard of solution because anyone with an Internet connection—authors, presenters, and attendees—could participate. It attracted people who typically couldn't go to conferences. We have people from the U.S., from Asia, from Africa—from many, many countries."

CISSE participants have submitted more than 6,000 research papers. Half of those have been published by Springer, the world's largest engineering publisher, and they are easily accessible at <http://cisconference.org/springer-proceeding-books/>.

More importantly, CISEE events continue to bring together engineering experts who have much to share with the world, but not always the means to do so. ■

—L.G