

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## NIC Named One of Top Online Innovators in the World

NIC's Remote Web-Based Science Lab is one of the best online innovations in the world, according to one of the most prestigious business schools in the United States.

The University of Pennsylvania has shortlisted North Island College's RWSL as one of the top 12 finalists for a Reimagine Education Award at the Wharton School of Business.

"Forbes ranks the Wharton School of Business as the fourth best business school in America, behind only Stanford, Chicago and Harvard," said Randall Heidt, NIC's new Vice President Strategic Initiatives. "Just being among the finalists at an event at the world's first collegiate business school is very prestigious and NIC is honoured to be in the Top 12."



More than 400 universities, businesses, and educators from 43 different countries applied for the Wharton - QS Stars Reimagine Education Awards, which offers a \$50,000 US prize fund to the winning entries. The award acknowledges educators and ideas that enrich how the world delivers education. Judges include executives from Google, Amazon, Cisco Systems and IBM as well as university and college presidents from around the world.

"The work that Albert Balbon has done to create RWSL is ahead of its time," Heidt said. "Albert is a true innovator in the field of post-secondary online education and we are honoured to have him as part of the NIC team and leading this project."

The RWSL gives any student with an internet connection access to hands-on lab experiments in real time. Students can manipulate lasers, high-powered microscopes, electrons, spectrometers and more during 25 different lab experiments.

Balbon initially invented the RWSL 10 years ago to offer hands-on science labs for an NIC instructor in Bella Bella. Since then, Balbon has presented the technology to the White House and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, shared programming with the European Space Agency and NASA, and received funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the US Department of Labor, and the Consortium of Health Employers Online.

"The RWSL already brings science experiments into the homes and classrooms of students across North America," Heidt said. "But what if we Reimagine Education and the RWSL is made available to students throughout the world, even in countries with limited broadband internet?"

Heidt, who started in November, added he is amazed by the impressive list of applied research, automation and e-learning innovation taking place at NIC.

"We are always looking for businesses, other post-secondary institutions, individuals and countries who would like to invest in the RWSL and other projects at NIC."

For more info, visit <http://www.forbes.com/business-schools/list/> and <http://reimagine-education.com/>

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