

NEWS RELEASE

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Brazier Brothers Inducted into IDEA Hall of Fame

Entrepreneurial brothers, Dennis Brazier and Glen Brazier, were inducted into the IDEA Hall of Fame on Tuesday, May 17 in Crookston at the IDEA Competition Awards Banquet. The *IDEA Hall of Fame* was instituted by IDEA Competition partners to recognize and honor the accomplishments of the region's legacy innovators—those within the region who have inspired others with their entrepreneurial vision, leadership and achievement.

The two brothers have definitely made their mark on Northwest Minnesota, Glen as the founder of Mattracks, and Dennis as the founder of Central Boiler. Both grew up on a small farm in Northwest Minnesota. The farm was fertile soil – not just for growing crops, but also for growing ideas. The farm's machine shop was a great place for the farm boys to dream, tinker, and create.

When the boys grew up, left home, and started families of their own, the creativity did not stop. Glen Brazier's 11 year-old son drew a sketch of a truck that had tracks instead of tires. The "entrepreneur inventor" took his son's sketch and turned it into a company that occupies a 100,000 square foot facility in Karlstad, Minnesota and whose products are sold in over 45 international markets. He holds many patents and has involved himself in the development and manufacture of many products in addition to the Mattracks track systems for 4-wheel drive vehicles.

Dennis Brazier's entrepreneurial story began one cold winter, when he designed his first wood stove, laying it out on his kitchen floor with nothing more than a tape measure and some tape. The 1984 design became the predecessor to what is now known as Central Boiler's "Classic." The business that started in a farm machine shop grew to occupy a state-of-the-art 240,000 square foot facility and now ships products to hundreds of dealers located throughout the United States, Canada, and other countries.

The two entrepreneurial brothers were inducted into the IDEA Hall of Fame on May 17 at the IDEA Competition Awards Banquet, held on the University of Minnesota, Crookston campus.

The IDEA Competition is a project of Ingenuity Frontier, a collaboration of partners joined by a common purpose — to grow the economy of Northwest Minnesota by outfitting the next generation of homegrown innovators for success in the global marketplace. IDEA sponsors are Bremer Banks of Crookston and Warren, Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation, the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, University of Minnesota, Crookston, 360° Center for Manufacturing and Applied Engineering Center of Excellence, and the Northwest Regional Small Business Development Center. IDEA was made possible through a generous grant from the Blandin Foundation.