SEMI announces recipient of SEMI European award 2008

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The organisation honours industry leadership of one of the world's most prestigious independent microelectronics research institutes.

Professor Gilbert Declerck, CEO of IMEC, was honoured with the European SEMI Award 2008 for leading IMEC into its position as one of the world's most prestigious independent microelectronics research institutes. The award was presented at the SEMI Executive Summit at SEMICON Europa 2008 in Stuttgart, Germany.

Professor Declerck, led process technology research at IMEC from its foundation in 1984, and grew this technical area into the most successful domain in IMEC. By building teams with the ambition and skills to match leading research with the needs of the industry, he implemented his vision and leadership and developed a highly regarded and world class institute.

Over the years, he has been extraordinarily successful in keeping IMEC's research in many areas at the forefront of required semiconductor process development.

Professor Declerck was a driving force in the creation of a strong IMEC position in European co-operative projects during the early 1990s. This enabled IMEC to become a recognized leading research centre in Europe by the end of that decade. This coincided with a transition from basic process research to full CMOS process integration R&D, with increased value for the main European players. European partnerships, both at university and industrial level, increased considerably during that decade.

In the new millennium, Declerck realised that a sustainable continuity of world class R&D could only be guaranteed with an ambitious innovation program in terms of facility capabilities (300mm), resources, and state of the art targets. This required an unprecedented commitment to collaboration with worldwide industrial partners in many semiconductor segments.

Professor Declerck has always been an advocate of cooperative R&D as the optimum method to stimulate IC manufacturers, equipment manufacturers, material suppliers, and leading groups to join IMEC. Together with Dr. Luc Van den hove, he has set up a cooperation model for IMEC's nanoelectronics platform, which helped attract the world's leading semiconductor companies to IMEC with substantial commitment toward leading edge sub 32nm CMOS research.

Over the past five years, they took up the challenging and risky task to build IMEC's research platform, which now employs 1500 people on site with an annual budget of 240 M€; over 80 percent this is from of industrial partnership contributions. Most leading world semiconductor manufacturers participate in this effort along with all major equipment and material suppliers, which makes it today the world's largest R&D consortium for semiconductor research in partnership. IMEC has built on this success by expanding its activity toward memory related research. IMEC is able to sustain this industrial focus, while at the same time excelling in conference presentations, with a growing number of publications, IP filings, and so on.

Over the course of his career, Professor Declerck has always adopted an open minded strategy toward the industry, building from its strong European base cooperating with the US and Asia, as he has always been convinced that a stronger European industry would emerge from strong worldwide alliances. Professor Declerck carefully and steadily invested in scientific and industrial relationships all throughout his career. At the same time, he continues to fight for Europe in various boards and committees such as ENIAC, Catrene, and others.

Today, many of the world's major semiconductor manufacturers have contracted research programs at IMEC. As such, IMEC plays an important role in the creation of new semiconductor technologies, which are manufactured and commercialized by IMEC's industrial partners. The R&D program at IMEC has given a major boost to the European capabilities on semiconductor technologies. It has been instrumental in the development of a cooperative academic/industrial ecosystem in Europe.

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