

# Robotics innovator honored by state

## *Boyer runs drug automation firm*

**BY MY-LY NGUYEN**

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**JOHNSON CITY** -- Innovation, planning and hard work helped Joseph Harry Boyer create and develop one of the leading companies in the pharmacy automation industry.

His efforts were formally recognized Thursday when he received the New York State Small Business Person of the Year award during a ceremony at Innovation Associates, the company he founded 32 years ago. Boyer now serves as the company's chairman and chief technology officer.

The award is presented annually by the state Small Business Advisory Board to recognize outstanding contributions to New York's small-business community.

"It's an unbelievable compliment from the state of New York and one that I'm very proud of," said Boyer, 68. "It feels wonderful to help to bring pride to this community."

Boyer founded Innovation Associates in 1972 as an engineering and technical services manufacturing company. By 1995, he shifted the company's focus to pharmacy automation. Today, Innovation Associates is one of the industry's leading pharmacy automation technology providers.

"Harry Boyer is a fine example of a small-business person whose ideas, innovation and relentless hard work ultimately produce great success," Lt.

Gov. Mary Donohue said. "He stands as a role model for other small-business entrepreneurs."

In the past three years, the privately held company has grown from 53 employees and \$8.8 million in sales to 91 employees and \$17.4 million in sales.

Innovation Associates' pharmacy automation systems have been installed in more than 1,000 locations in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia.



**Joseph Harry Boyer, Innovation Associates chairman and chief technology officer, was named the New York State Small Business Person of the Year for 2004 by the state Small Business Advisory Board. He is seen in the Johnson City company's PharmASSIST training area.**

*WAYNE HANSEN / Press & Sun-Bulletin*

About seven years ago, Boyer also founded Innovation Associates Professional Placement, a temporary staffing business. The company, based out of Innovation Associates' Field Street facility, employs about 100 people.

The innovation at Innovation Associates will continue as the company adds to its software intellectual property and launches its retail robotic systems by the end of this year, Boyer said.

"We're going to be the new gold standard in retail robotics," he said. "We have an incredibly bright future."

Innovation Associates plans to hire 15 more people by the end of next year as it gears up to build robotic pharmaceutical refill centers for Air Force bases in Phoenix, Las Vegas and San Antonio.