Nina Shapiro, Former Vice President of Finance and Treasurer at IFC, Joins Vestec’s Advisory Board

*Vestec continues global expansion by adding Emerging Markets expertise.*

Waterloo, ON, Canada (PRWEB) July 03, 2013 -- Vestec, Inc., a leader in powerful Artificial Intelligence technologies, announced today that Ms. Nina Shapiro, former Vice President of Finance and Treasurer at International Finance Corporation (IFC), has joined its Advisory Board and will help guide Vestec’s growth strategy for emerging markets.

“Advances in Artificial Intelligence research are creating a powerful paradigm shift in speech technologies for a wide variety of applications, in all major languages,” said Dr. Fakhri Karray, Vestec’s primary Founder and CEO. “We are looking forward to working with Nina to develop and market a comprehensive suite of products and services for emerging economies.”

“I am delighted to join Vestec’s Advisory Board,” said Nina Shapiro. “The digital divide is a major issue in developing countries and adversely affects access for different groups. Vestec can make a significant impact on consumer opportunity by leveraging its portfolio of unique Artificial Intelligence innovations to introduce useful, cost-effective speech-based services.”

About Vestec:

Vestec was founded by a distinguished group of Artificial Intelligence (AI) researchers from Canada’s famed University of Waterloo under the chairmanship of Dr. Fakhri Karray, a renowned expert in the field of computational intelligence at Canada’s University of Waterloo. Dr. Karray is the University Research Chair Professor in the field of Intelligent Systems as well as the co-Director of the Center for Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence (PAMI). Vestec solutions enable sophisticated speech-based user interfaces in all major languages across a wide variety of business processes. Unlike traditional speech recognition and semantic understanding technology, Vestec’s cutting-edge Artificial Intelligence-based approach significantly reduces time-to-market while increasing semantic accuracy. [www.vestec.com](http://www.vestec.com)

About Nina Shapiro:

Ms. Nina Shapiro serves as a Non-Executive Director of Man Group, African Minerals and RusRail Leasing. She is a member of World Bank Group Pension Board and is a member of the Strategic Advisory Board at New Silk Route Partners. Ms. Shapiro was the Vice President of Finance and Treasurer at International Finance Corporation (IFC) from 2000 till 2011. Prior to that, she served as the Director of Project Finance and Guarantees at the World Bank. Ms. Shapiro holds a B.A. from Smith College, a Masters in Planning from Harvard Graduate School of Design, and an M.B.A. with a concentration in Finance from Harvard Business School, where she received a Sheldon Fellowship.

About Dr. Fakhri Karray:

Dr. Karray is a world renowned expert in computational intelligence and founded Vestec to commercialize language understanding technologies developed under his supervision at Canada’s famed University of Waterloo. He is the University Research Chair Professor in the field of Intelligent Systems at the University of
Waterloo as well as the co-Director of the Center for Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence (PAMI) Laboratories, a world renowned research center in the field of Intelligent Systems. He has written over 300 scientific papers, holds 14 US patents, has supervised more than seventy Masters, Doctoral and post-Doctoral researchers, and authored a seminal textbook in the field of Soft Computing. He has also chaired numerous international scientific conferences, received several national and international awards for his work in the field of computational intelligence, and advised some of Canada’s leading corporations and entrepreneurs on technology development. He holds a PhD in Systems and Control from University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in the US as well as a BSc and MSc in Electrical Engineering from University of Tunis in Tunisia. He is a fluent speaker of Arabic, French, and English.

About Waterloo:

Waterloo Region is Canada’s premier technology hub. It is home to nearly 1,000 technology companies, generating more than $25 billion in annual revenues, and employing over 30,000 people. It hosts research centers of major international technology firms such as Google, Microsoft, Oracle, Intel, RIM, Open Text, Agfa, Sybase, McAfee, Desire2Learn and Electronic Arts. There are more than 550 startups and three business incubators for commercializing research. Taken together, the cluster represents competency in everything from software development, digital media, mobile and wireless, to advanced manufacturing, robotics, aerospace and defense, to clean and biotech, health, IT services and telecom.

The University of Waterloo plays a pivotal role in fostering cutting-edge research and technological innovation in the Waterloo Region and beyond. It has been ranked as Canada’s most innovative university and has the largest co-op program in the world. Its Engineering Faculty and Computer Science and Mathematics departments are among the largest in North America. University professors and students retain all rights to intellectual property developed by them. A quarter of the Canadian IT spinoffs trace their origins to the incubator programs at University of Waterloo.

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