

NATIONAL INVENTORS HALL OF FAME FOUNDATION

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WINNERS ANNOUNCED IN 2008 COLLEGIATE INVENTORS COMPETITION®

Student inventors receive recognition and cash prizes for their work to advance healthcare and technology by fighting bacteria, creating “plastic steel” and designing a new spherical robot

Kansas City, MO (November 20, 2008) – The National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation today announced that a new method of combating antibiotic-resistant bacteria has won the grand prize at the 2008 Collegiate Inventors Competition. Timothy Lu of Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts Institute of Technology received the \$25,000 prize during a ceremony last night at the Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week.

In addition to the grand prize, awards were also given for the top graduate and undergraduate student inventions. This year’s winners include graduate student Paul Podsiadlo of The University of Michigan for his Ultra Strong and Stiff, Optically Transparent Plastic Nanocomposite and Greg Schroll of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who created a new spherical robot with potential to drastically advance safety and technology. These winning teams each received a \$15,000 prize from the competition, which is sponsored by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and the Abbott Fund, the philanthropic foundation of the global health care company Abbott.

“This year’s winning inventions and their potential applications are ideal examples of the importance that science and technology play in our society,” said Jeffrey Dollinger, President of Invent Now, Inc., a subsidiary of the National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation. “The Collegiate Inventors Competition is a testament to the innovative work that college students are performing all across the country.”

Each entry to the competition was judged on the originality of the idea, process or technology, as well as its potential value and usefulness to society. Twelve finalist teams were announced on October 22, and on November 18 each team presented their inventions to a final panel of nine judges, including seven inductees from the National Inventors Hall of Fame and representatives from the USPTO and Abbott.

The prominent group of judges for this year’s competition includes seven National Inventors Hall of Fame inductees: Robert Bower (self-aligned gate MOSFET), Edith Flanigen (molecular

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sieves), Thomas Fogarty (embolectomy catheter), Donald Keck (optical fiber), William Murphy, Jr. (disposable medical trays and sealed blood bags), Rangaswamy Srinivasan (excimer laser surgery), and James West (electret microphone). In addition, the judging panel includes Jeff Pan, Senior Project Leader, Scientific Informatics & Automation from Abbott, and Jasmine Chambers, Group Director from the USPTO.

"At Abbott our entire business is focused on advancing science, and we know first-hand the importance of inspiring the next generation of innovators," said Abbott's Jeff Pan. "We are excited to see the inventions from the winning students and all the finalists and hope their work will make a lasting impact on improving people's lives."

"The winners of this year's competition are truly impressive," Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Jon Dudas commented. "The ingenuity of their work will help sustain America's role as the world's leader in technology and innovation."

Grand prize winner, Timothy Lu, 27, is a California native in the M.D./Ph.D. program at the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology. While working at a hospital, Lu was bothered by the infectious outbreaks he witnessed in many patients. Lu knew that antibiotic-resistant bacteria are usually treated with stronger and stronger antibiotics, leading to subsequent decreases in the antibiotics available for the treatment of future infections as resistance continues to evolve. Lu used synthetic biology to create a sustainable source of antimicrobial therapies for the future. The tools Lu developed may see broad use such as attacking superbugs, treating diseases like cystic fibrosis, and preventing food contamination. Lu's advisor, J.J. Collins, receives a \$5,000 prize.

Graduate winner, Paul Podsiadlo, 30, was born in a small village in Poland and came to the United States at age 17. After receiving his bachelor's and master's degree in chemical engineering, he was awarded his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan earlier this year. For his invention, Podsiadlo wanted to create inexpensive, high performance and lightweight materials by using nanotechnology. To create his "plastic steel," Podsiadlo uses clay nanoparticles that are individually very strong. Then, using a layer-by-layer assembly technique, he is able to achieve a macroscale end product that retains the nanoscale mechanical properties. Podsiadlo looks forward to the broad impact his innovation could have, especially in the military, aviation, medical and energy sectors. He envisions his structure being used for anything from body armor to biomedical coatings. His advisor, Nicholas Kotov, receives a \$2,500 prize.

Undergraduate winner, Greg Schroll, 22, grew up in New Jersey and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from MIT in May of 2008. As a senior thesis project at MIT,

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Schroll explored his fascination with spherical vehicles. After a broad investigation, he found that previous design concepts have significant limits in their ability to overcome obstacles or inclines. Through months of brainstorming and playing with a toy gyroscope, he conceived of a novel solution that uses two gyroscopes to dispense additional energy to aid in climbing hills, obstacles and stairs. He imagines his spherical robot having many potential uses including surveillance, reconnaissance and disaster zone assessment, especially in situations where conditions on the ground are not safe for people. Schroll's advisor, Alexander Slocum, receives a \$2,500 prize.

About the Collegiate Inventors Competition

The Collegiate Inventors Competition encourages college students to be active in science, engineering, mathematics, technology, and creative invention. The Competition specifically recognizes and rewards the innovations, discoveries, and research by college and university students and their advisors for projects leading to inventions that may have the potential of receiving patent protection. Introduced by the National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation in 1990, the Competition has awarded more than \$1 million to nearly 100 students for their innovative work and scientific achievement through the help of its sponsors. For more information on the Competition's sponsors, the Abbott Fund and the USPTO, visit www.abbottfund.org and www.uspto.gov. For more information on the Competition and past winners, visit www.invent.org/collegiate.

About Abbott Fund

The Abbott Fund is a philanthropic foundation established by Abbott, a global, broad-based health care company, in 1951. The Abbott Fund's mission is to create healthier global communities by investing in creative ideas that promote science, expand access to health care and strengthen communities worldwide. For more information on Abbott Fund, visit www.abbottfund.org.

About United States Patent and Trademark Office

For over 200 years, the basic role of the USPTO has remained the same: to promote the progress of science. Through the issuance of patents, the USPTO encourages technological advancement by providing incentives to invent, invest in, and disclose new technology worldwide. Through the registration of trademarks, the agency assists businesses in protecting their investments, promoting goods and services, and safeguarding consumers against confusion and deception in the marketplace. By disseminating both patent and trademark information, the USPTO promotes an understanding of intellectual property protection and facilitates the development and sharing of new technologies worldwide.