



SEAS students sweep 2010 Collegiate Inventors awards

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Current grad students and recent alumni win top prizes for innovations in tissue engineering, genomics, and intracellular probing

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Cambridge, Mass., October 29, 2010 – Graduate students and alumni affiliated with Harvard’s School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) have won first, second, and third prizes in the graduate student division of the 2010 Collegiate Inventors Competition.

The competition “promotes innovation by recognizing inventors and scientists early in their careers, and rewarding students’ often pioneering ideas as they address the problems of today’s world.”

Alice Chen, a doctoral student at SEAS and a member of the Harvard/MIT Health Sciences and Technology Program (HST), won \$15,000 and first prize for developing a way to implant a matrix of human liver cells into a mouse’s liver, enabling new types of drug testing and therapeutic applications.

Chen’s research co-advisers are David J. Mooney, Robert P. Pinkas Family Professor of Bioengineering at SEAS; and Sangeeta N. Bhatia, an MIT Professor of Health Sciences and Technology and Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

“Alice has addressed a key challenge for biomedical research in her work here, and her success is a testament to her and Dr. Bhatia’s dedication,” said Mooney.

Erez Lieberman-Aiden (Ph.D. ’10), now a postdoctoral fellow at SEAS, won \$10,000 and second prize for developing a method of three-dimensional genome sequencing, in collaboration with the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Third prize and \$5,000 went to graduate students Bozhi Tian (Ph.D. ’10), who earned his Ph.D. in chemistry under the guidance of Charles Lieber (who has an affiliated appointment at SEAS), and Tzahi Cohen-Karni, a current Ph.D. candidate in Applied Physics, for their work on nanoscale intracellular probes. (Tian is now a postdoctoral fellow at MIT.)

The entries were judged on originality and potential value by a panel of experts drawn from industry, government, and academia.

“All of humanity benefits from the breakthrough work in which these students are engaged,” said Don Keck, one of the competition judges. “We hope this will encourage more college students to celebrate invention as part of their science and technology endeavors.”

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The Collegiate Inventors Competition is administered by Invent Now, Inc., an organization that promotes student innovation. For more information about Invent Now and the Collegiate Inventors Competition, visit <http://www.invent.org>.

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