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The Tech Awards Honor Five Global Innovators With \$250,000



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SAN JOSE, Calif. - (Business Wire) Tonight esteemed innovators in the technology industry gathered to celebrate the power of technology to address global challenges and benefit humanity. At a black tie gala in San Jose, Calif., The Tech Awards, presented by Applied Materials (Nasdaq:AMAT), and a signature program of The Tech Museum of Innovation, awarded \$250,000 to five technologists, educators, scientists and entrepreneurs who are using technology to improve our world. The five \$50,000 cash prize recipients hail from the United States, Namibia, the United Kingdom and India. Each has developed or adapted technology in creative ways to solve global problems.

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"Through The Tech Awards program, we are committed to accelerating global innovation by investing in and recognizing technology-based solutions that are changing the world," said Peter Friess, president of The Tech. "In addition to honoring the Laureates and their work with these awards, we will also be honoring them in a new Tech Awards gallery in the museum. The interactive exhibits and content in the gallery will be designed to provoke discussion about the challenges facing our world, and will use the Laureates' stories and inventions to inspire an interest in science, math and engineering among all visitors that might lead to future humanitarian solutions."

The Tech Awards 2008 cash prize recipients are:

Intel Environment Award

Biomass Energy Project, Cheetah Conservation Fund: Namibia-based Cheetah Conservation Fund uses technology to convert an invasive bush species into clean fuel while restoring habitats. Cheetah Conservation Fund's Bush Project is a biomass processing plant that uses a high-pressure extrusion process to convert bush into a clean and economically viable alternative to existing products such as firewood, coal, lump charcoal and charcoal briquettes used for cooking fuel and barbecues. www.cheetah.org

Accenture Economic Development Award

DESI Power: Decentralised Energy Systems India: DESI Power helps poor villages in India build power plants and launch micro-enterprises to alleviate poverty. DESI Power uses nineteenth century technology - biomass gasification through agricultural waste - to expand the supply of electric power in more than 100 villages in Bihar, India. www.desipower.com

Microsoft Education Award

Digital StudyHall: Digital StudyHall, based in Lucknow, India, deploys DVD technology to extend the reach of skilled teachers into underprivileged classrooms in India and Bangladesh. Digital StudyHall records classroom lessons given by high-quality teachers and distributes the videos to teachers in disadvantaged schools in rural areas and urban slums. dsh.cs.washington.edu

Katherine M. Swanson Equality Award

Build Change: Build Change designs and trains builders and homeowners to build earthquake-resistant houses in developing countries using locally available skills and materials. The designs are affordable, sustainable, easy to build and culturally appropriate, and ensure that each homeowner has access to affordable technology to build a house that will not collapse, injure or kill their families in an earthquake, regardless of their income level. www.buildchange.org

Fogarty Institute for Innovation Health Award

K1 'Auto Disable' Syringe, Marc Koska, Star Syringe, Ltd.: United Kingdom's K1 "auto-disable" syringe etches a locking ring in the syringe barrel so that once the plunger is fully depressed, it locks in place and can't be used again. The simple, single-use syringes reduce millions of cases of Hepatitis B and C and HIV. The K1 syringe costs the same as standard models and its design is openly licensed to manufacturers. To date, more than one billion K1 syringes have been made, saving an estimated 3 million lives.

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"Applied Materials is proud to partner with The Tech to recognize The Tech Awards Laureates for their creativity, compassion and solutions that deliver hope and empower individuals," said Mike Splinter, president and CEO of Applied Materials. "In the end, that's what technology is all about, a celebration of entrepreneurs crafting answers to global problems, just when the world needs them most."

Since 2001, The Tech Awards have annually honored 25 innovators from around the world in five categories: environment, economic development, education, equality and health. One project is selected from each category to receive a \$50,000 cash prize. The cash prize recipients are encouraged to invest their winnings in new or existing programs that use technology to significantly improve the human condition. The 25 Laureates traveled to Silicon Valley from the 12 countries they represent for a week of meetings with potential funders and partners, various speaking engagements, presentations and the black-tie gala. This year, hundreds of nominations were received from 68 countries. Nominations for The Tech Awards 2009 are now being accepted until March 27, 2009 at www.techawards.org.

In addition to the 25 Laureates being honored, Professor Muhammad Yunus, pioneer of microcredit and founder of Grameen Bank, received the 2008 James C. Morgan Global Humanitarian Award, sponsored by Applied Materials, which honors individuals whose broad vision and leadership are helping to address humanity's greatest challenges. He joins a distinguished group of Global Humanitarian Awards recipients that includes Gordon Moore, Bill Gates, Kristine Pearson and Jim Morgan.

The Tech Awards collaborate with humanitarian, educational, and business partners through global outreach efforts, giving people around the world the opportunity to benefit from the successful technologies recognized through the Awards. The Laureates' projects address multiple humanitarian efforts including narrowing the digital divide, expanding renewable energy, improving multilingual education and empowering women in developing countries.

This year's gala was attended by more than 1,400 technology luminaries, Silicon Valley business leaders, global philanthropists and guests.

"Tonight was an incredible moment for The Tech and sponsors of The Tech Awards program, recognizing 25 individuals and organizations who have developed technologies that have a profound impact on people throughout the world," said Lee Wilkerson, executive director of The Tech Awards. "We look forward to supporting these Laureates year-round by providing them with networking opportunities and critical services that can help them further their work and its reach."

Key sponsors supporting The Tech Awards include Applied Materials, Inc., Intel Corporation, Accenture, Microsoft, The Swanson Foundation, The Fogarty Institute for Innovation, BD Biosciences, Polycom, Genentech, Wells Fargo, SAP, eBay, KPMG, Cadence, The Quattrone Foundation, Omidyar Network, NASDAQ OMX, HP, Google, Satyam, Cisco, Scott Cook and Signe Ostby, NBC Bay Area, The Fairmont San Jose, Marriott San Jose, The Sainte Claire Hotel, American Airlines, Siltronic, The Mercury News, Forbes, Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, and Stanford's Center for Social Innovation. Key partners include Santa Clara University's Center for Science, Technology, and Society, World Federation of United Nations Associations, United Nations Development Programme, World Bank Institute, Catholic Relief Services, CORE Group, National Center for Technology Innovation, Opportunity International and Acumen Fund.

About The Tech Awards: Technology Benefiting Humanity

The Tech Awards: Technology Benefiting Humanity, presented by Applied Materials, Inc., is one of the premier annual humanitarian awards programs in the world, recognizing technical solutions that benefit humanity and address the most critical issues facing our planet and its people. The awards program honors 25 scientists and innovators annually alongside the recipient of the Global Humanitarian Award. Laureates are selected by a prestigious panel of international judges organized by the Santa Clara University's Center for Science, Technology, and Society, and made up of Santa Clara University faculty as well as leaders from educational and research institutions, industry and the public sector around the world.

For more information about The Tech Awards, visit www.techawards.org.

About The Tech Museum of Innovation

The Tech Museum of Innovation is a hands-on technology and science museum for people of all ages and backgrounds. The Tech – located in the Capital of Silicon Valley – is a non-profit educational resource established to engage people in exploring and experiencing technologies affecting their lives. Through educational programs, the annual Tech Challenge team competition for youth, and The Tech Awards, an internationally recognized program, presented by Applied Materials, Inc., The Tech Museum of Innovation celebrates the present and encourages the development of innovative ideas for a more promising future. For more information about The Tech Museum of Innovation, visit www.thetech.org.

The Tech Museum of Innovation

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