

PRIME MINISTER'S AWARDS FOR
**SCIENTIFIC
INGENUITY**

NIHERST Rewards Citizens for Creativity in Science and Technology

A device that stabilises the voltage in batteries even through power outages, a biosensor for detecting thyroid disorders, and a solar-powered air-conditioning unit were among the prize-winning entries at this year's Prime Minister's Awards for Scientific Ingenuity. The award ceremony was held at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad where 101 citizens were recognised for their innovative use of science and technology in inventing devices and creating solutions to problems.

In his feature address, Dr. the Honourable Rupert Griffith, Minister of Science and Technology, stressed the importance of this awards scheme and other NIHERST initiatives in furthering national development goals in science, technology and innovation (STI). He expressed pride in the creativity and achievements of the participants, and affirmed that "this great nation [has] the right potential within our citizens to participate in the global economy, particularly in highly specialised niche markets. It is imperative, however, that we use the opportunities available to us to design, produce and sell our own technology."

NIHERST's Acting President, Ms. Joycelyn Lee Young, reiterated the minister's sentiments, stating that "A Trinidad and Tobago that is fully geared towards the creation of new knowledge and technology offers enormous potential in three key ways: promoting economic growth, diversification and competitiveness; creating jobs; and finding solutions to both the unique problems we face as a small island developing state as well as those challenges we share with the rest of humanity".

The award scheme has two categories of competition, both open to Seniors (18 and over) and Juniors (13-17). The Scientific Innovation and Invention Competition is open to entrants with prototypes that have the potential to be successfully commercialised. The Scientific Creative Solutions Competition judges the contributions by individuals who can conceptualise solutions to everyday problems in any domain, but who are unable to take their ideas to the prototype stage.



Top prize winners from (l-r): Andrea Kanneh, Eesa Wahid, Jesse Emamalie, John Ahloy, Nigel Edwards (representing Nizette Edwards Consolazio), Professor Prakash Persad, NIHERST Chairman; Dr. the Honourable Rupert Griffith, Minister of Science and Technology; Mr. Cecil Caruth, NIHERST Board Member; Shamiya Charles, Lexi Jaggernaut, Denika Hercules, Natasha Ramroopsingh, Nicholas Cyrus and Georgette Medford



Dr. Eesa Wahid (far right), 1st prize winner of the Scientific Innovation and Invention Competition (Seniors), explains his prototype of a constant voltage high rate lithium battery to Dr. Rupert Griffith (centre) and Prof. Prakash Persad (far left). Looking on are (l-r): Mr. Andre Thompson, NIHERST board member; Mrs. Sandra Ray Griffith, and Mr. Joseph Ryan, Programme Officer at NIHERST.



Special Prize winner, Rabinathan Rampersad, pictured with his family, was recognised for his innovation with remote-controlled helicopter navigation.



Rhona Jack from Tobago intrigues a guest with her invention, Rhona's Collapsible Multi-purpose Sewing Ruler, for which she won a Special Prize.



Katheryn Maharaj's Special Prize was for her handheld flamethrower, to be used for special effects in film-making.