

NSE-led teams sweep energy innovation contest

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

On April 4 three teams led by MIT nuclear science and engineering (NSE) grads and postgraduates took the top prizes in a Boston-area pitch competition focused on finding radical new solutions to the world's energy challenges.

The pitch contest, Future Energy @ MIT, was convened by Ultra Light Startups, an organizer of pitch events, along with MIT partners the MIT Energy Club and the MIT Clean Energy Prize. The event featured eight energy and clean-tech startups from Boston-area schools who presented to a panel of venture capital and corporate investors.

UPower, a company founded by NSE graduate students Jacob DeWitt and Joseph Yurko and NSE alumna Caroline Cochran, won the competition. They are developing a 1.5 megawatt container-sized nuclear thermoelectric generator that is designed to provide reliable and economic electricity and process heat for remote communities.

NSE postdoctoral associate Bal Mukund Dhar took second place with his pitch for Agira, a developer of low-cost wave-guide concentrators for solar cells. Third place was taken by OpenWater Power, whose fuel cell power source for underwater applications was pitched by NSE graduate student Ruaridh Macdonald.

Completing the Department's sweep, NSE graduate student Sam Shaner, one of three managing directors of the MIT Clean Energy Prize, helped to organize the Future Energy event. (Shaner was recently awarded the Ronald I. Heller Entrepreneurship Grant by the Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship for his work in making 'a significant impact on the quality and overall spirit of entrepreneurship at the Institute.)

"The Future Energy event had a full house of interesting attendees and a fantastic lineup of pitches," said Caroline Cochran SM '10, co-founder of UPower. "It was a great opportunity to meet interesting people with a range of experience and thoughts on energy and where the cutting edge will take us."

Source URL (retrieved on 04/18/2015 - 3:41am):

<http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2013/04/nse-led-teams-sweep-energy-innovation-contest>