Cancer-screening software wins wireless competition

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A software program for screening for cervical cancer, particularly in developing countries with limited resources, earned the top award and $10,000 in the Qualcomm Wireless Innovation Prize at UW-Madison. The AlgoCerv software enables people with limited medical training to scan Pap smear slides and provide results to a patient before she leaves the clinic. "It was the right mix of having something that was original and meeting a specific key need," said judge Samir Gupta of Qualcomm, about the project. "The real need in industry was quite clear."

Sponsored by San Diego-based global semiconductor company Qualcomm Inc., the wireless innovation competition at UW-Madison is inspired by the Qualcomm Venture Fest, an internal entrepreneurship challenge designed to develop people and real business ideas.

At UW-Madison, students who participate in the Qualcomm Wireless Innovation Prize develop new wireless technology products, as well as business plans for marketing and selling those products.

A team that developed an inexpensive wearable electronic patch that uses the user's unique gestures to execute a pre-programmed command, such as making a cell phone call or sending a text message, earned second place and $5,000 in the competition. RETE adheres discreetly to the wearer's body somewhat like a temporary tattoo.

The third-place, $2,500 winners designed a wearable pulse oxitelemeter that frequently measures a chronically ill patient's blood oxygen at home

and transmits the data to his or her physician through the 3G cellular network. For people who suffer from severe asthma, congestive heart failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, the device reduces the burden of recording and sending this data regularly to their healthcare provider.

The competition's 11 entries also included ideas for a smartphone texting app that incorporates media sharing and social networking features, an eye-tracking interface for mobile devices, and a universal remote that gives users control over any electronic device via a smartphone or tablet computer, among others.

Provided by University of Wisconsin-Madison