by Marian Nardozzi

Pittcon 2015 Editors' Awards Recognize Innovation in the Big Easy

Each year, Pittcon typically attracts approximately 150 media representatives from around the world. And each year, the assembled media representatives gather to vote on the prestigious Editors' Awards, which were established in 1996 by Dr. Gordon Wilkinson, then managing editor of *Analytical Instrument Industry Report* (later *Instrumenta*). While Pittcon honors individuals in various fields for outstanding scientific achievement, the Editors' Awards are the only recognition for product innovations. These independent awards are completely managed, operated, chosen and funded by the journalists.

On the Wednesday of conference week, editors are invited to attend a judging session. Award-winning entries tend to feature innovations in technology or enable new analytical applications.

After deliberation, a core group of 12 journalists select the Gold, Silver and Bronze winners and on Thursday morning present their plaques on the exhibition floor.

Gold Award: Shimadzu Nexera UC

Shimadzu (Columbia, Md.) won the Gold Award for the Nexera UC (unified chromatography), a fully automated system that combines on-line supercritical fluid extraction (SFE) and supercritical fluid chromatography (SFC) in a single flow path (see *Figure 1*). The system enables automatic extraction of up to 48 samples followed by seamless transfer to SFC/MS for high-sensitivity detection of targets by mass spectrometry.

The Nexera UC system permits highly reliable and stable analysis of delicate samples that are prone to oxidation or degradation if exposed to air and/or light. Automated extraction and chromatographic analysis are achieved using a mobile phase of supercritical carbon dioxide, which exhibits liquid-like dissolving power and diffusivity similar to gases, into which alcohol and other organic solvents are added as needed. The fully automated Nexera UC system has a high target analyte recovery rate and reduces the possibility of human error during analysis compared to conventional manual workflows and off-line systems. The on-line SFE/SFC/MS configuration offers a simple mechanism for determining a target analyte's solubility in carbon dioxide, which is a widely unaddressed analytical need.

"Shimadzu is extremely proud to receive the Pittcon Editors' Gold Award, an achievement that serves to recognize all of the engineers and scientists who developed the Nexera UC," said Dr. Teruhisa Ueda, general manager, Analytical and Measuring Instruments Division.

Silver Award: Full Spectrum Molecular Imaging system from Waters

Waters Corp. (Milford, Mass.) was awarded Silver for the Full Spectrum Molecular Imaging system (*Figure 2*). It is the first system to allow scientists to access enhanced matrix-assisted laser desorption ionization (MALDI) and desorption electrospray ionization (DESI) with ion mobility spectrometry (IMS) in a single mass spectrometry platform.

Based on the Waters SYNAPT G2-Si mass spectrometer, the imaging capabilities of the system enable research laboratories to pinpoint the distribution of large and small molecules within tissue samples with great specificity. Information derived from imaging experiments can greatly benefit cancer,

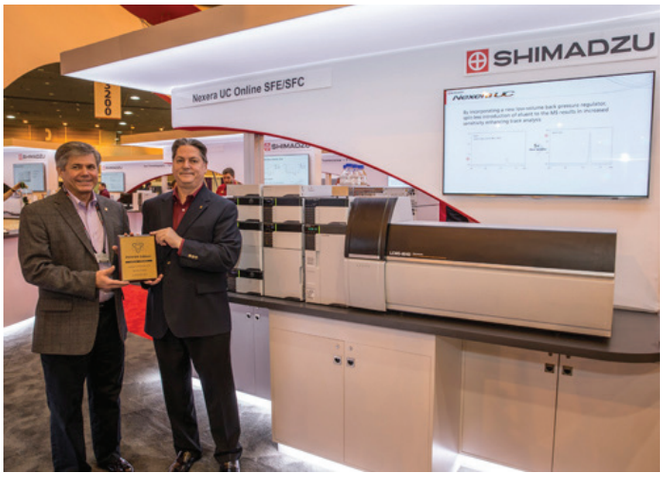

Figure 1 – Accepting the Gold Award for Shimadzu are Terry Adams, VP marketing (left), and Dr. Robert Clifford, industrial business unit manager (right).

Figure 2 – Waters was presented with the Editors' Silver Award. Pictured from left to right are Darwin Asa, Emmanuel Claude, Gordon Kearney, Robert Stevenson of American Laboratory *and Mike Wilson.*

cardiovascular and neuro-degenerative research by measuring the distribution of molecules in cells and tissues. MS imaging also allows researchers to identify different tissue types based on their molecular composition.

"We are honored by the Pittcon editors' recognition," said Dr. Jeff Mazzeo, senior director, Health Sciences, Waters Division.

Bronze Award: Grenova's TipNovus

The Bronze was awarded to first-time Pittcon exhibitor Grenova (Richmond, Va.) for the TipNovus, an innovative solution to reducing the millions of pounds of pipet tips accumulating in landfills and incinerators (see *Figure 3*).

For many decades, laboratories have been buying pipet tips and paying to have them discarded as biohazardous waste. Grenova saw this model as an opportunity to improve operating efficiency and minimize environmental impact, and thus created TipNovus.

The automated high-throughput tip washer allows laboratories to wash, sanitize and dry large quantities of pipet tips for the purpose of reusing them. The company is working to develop instruments that make it possible to safely reuse many other types of consumables.

Repeated gravimetric volume verifications have proven that the integrity of the tips is not compromised during the washing process. The results of these studies can be found at www.grenovasolutions.com.

Ali Safavi, the founder of Grenova, commented, "Grenova is especially grateful and humbled to receive an award among the many great companies offering products at Pittcon 2015. It is truly inspiring to know that others recognize the merit in the mission in which we so passionately believe."

Figure 3 – The Bronze Award was presented to Grenova. From left to right are Jonathan Hare, Fortuna Publishing Ltd.; Robert Stevenson, American Laboratory*; and Grenova's founder and CEO, Ali Safavi.*

Conclusion

According to Robert Stevenson, editor emeritus of American Laboratory, each new product presented at Pittcon has a compelling story, and the attending media are dedicated to finding and broadcasting the most newsworthy advances.

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