

Popular Mechanics SA Inventor of the Year announced

Media Update reports that University of Cape Town bio-engineer Dr George Vicatos was named as South Africa's Inventor of the Year by sci-tech magazine *Popular Mechanics* at a black-tie ceremony in Johannesburg following the third annual *Popular Mechanics* Inventors Conference.

Vicatos received the award for his development of a versatile and potentially life-changing facial reconstruction system. The R50 000 prize money included an award for top spot in the Cutting Edge category of a nationwide inventors' competition.

Vicatos' invention, the judges said, "demonstrated his commitment to a better understanding of the human organism and the tireless pursuit of practical solutions for its frailties". South Africa's Inventor of the Year runner-up was Gerard de Vaal of Cape Town, who developed and patented a revolutionary cooling system for LED products that could result in significant advances in the lighting industry. *Popular Mechanics* editor Alan Duggan told Media Update he was extremely impressed by the quality of the entries, commenting: "The judging panel worked through a large number of entries, including some way-out ideas for 'free-energy' devices, but most submissions were well thought-out and carefully researched."

First place in the Going Green category (sustainable energy/environmental conservation) was awarded to Somerset West inventor and businessman Jamii Hamlin for his versatile, ecologically sound and finely engineered Ecostake and Elektrostake stainless steel products for agricultural trellis and fencing applications. Kagiso inventor Lucky Mokalusi received a Special Merit Award of R10 000 in the Emerging Genius category for his work on a "virtual-reality training cycle", which employs an exercise bicycle coupled to a monitor and employing GPS data logger software to simulate real-world training routes.

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