

Designers of the future

Two students win fine arts scholarships

By Maritza Velazquez
Staff Writer

They're the designers of the future — young, aspiring visual artists with a fiery passion for their work.

Bryce Butcher is nearing the end of her educational career with years of experience, internships and travels behind her. Augusto Piccio is leaving community college, preparing for study at the California Institute of the Arts.

Despite the differences in their experience and education, the two have been awarded for their talent and drive.

Butcher, an Art Center College of Design student, and Piccio, a Pasadena City College grad, were selected for the Fine Arts Club of Pasadena's Visual Arts Awards.

They were awarded \$1,500 scholarships during a banquet at Caltech on June 1.

"I'm so excited that we can find these artists and support them," said Anda Andersons, chairwoman for the club's Visual Arts Awards Committee. "I think in order to get through the current economic crisis, we have to be creative and paint beyond the lines. And these are the creative people that everybody's looking for. If you lack creativity, then you don't see a solution."

Andersons discovered Butcher through an exhibit at the Art Center's Student Gallery.

The Altadena resident uses her talents to create innovative medical product designs, thereby combining design and health care.

It was Butcher's "Snap" design, which is an efficient and portable device for converting blood into DNA, that first caught Andersons' interest.

The team project was part of an assignment during Butcher's time at the International Development Design Summit at MIT.

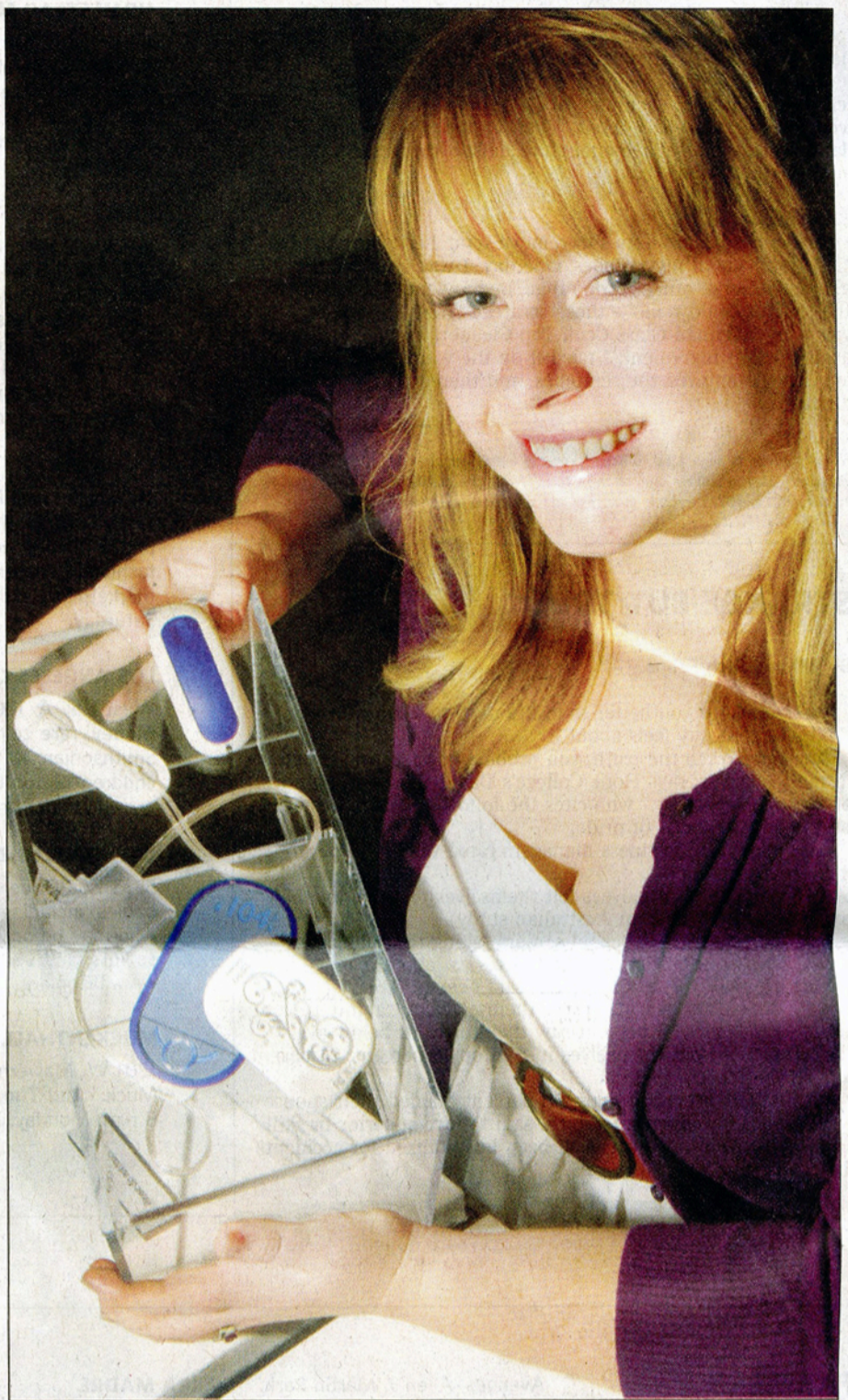
"I pitched it for West Africa," Butcher said. "I was hoping that by having a smaller unit, it can be transferred straight to the villages. People currently have to drive or ride a motorcycle (more than 124 miles) to get to a medical facility."

The design doesn't test DNA for diseases, but it lengthens its shelf life and is easier to transport.

"When we interviewed her, everybody felt the same way — that the combo was just appropriate for the time," Andersons said. "Her ideas were exploding from her head, one right after the other."

Butcher's interest in the medical world began with a course offered through Caltech called Product Design in Developing Worlds. She was among a group of students who traveled to Guatemala to research the lifestyle and come up with ideas that would benefit the population.

Butcher's idea was to improve the latrine systems. Currently, solids soak into the concrete systems that are in



Walt Mancini Staff Photographer

Bryce Butcher of Altadena is one of two winners of the Fine Arts Club of Pasadena's Visual Arts contest, held in June. The senior at Art Center College of Design designed several medical products, including this more attractive insulin pump for young adults.

use there, so the team created plastic detachable seats that created more sanitary conditions.

"That class really triggered excitement that my design could really help people," Butcher said.

Since then, she has created a whole host of medical-inspired designs that focus on the people who will actually be using the product. One design is an insulin pump made for young adults. It has a more aesthetic quality while fitting better to a young body.

Like Butcher, Piccio, a graphic artist, has a moral premise behind his designs. Graphics can create powerful images that communicate information.

About the Fine Arts Club awards

Every year, a Fine Arts Club committee selects one student from Pasadena City College and a student from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. The selection committee, which is made up of three to five club members, sends out notices to the colleges, seeing recommendations. The committee bases its choices by viewing the students' works and interviews.

"I always have to make sure that the work I create reflects my world view," Piccio said. "When I receive an assignment or get some clientele, I have to make sure that I am not compromising who I am and the work that comes out has to reflect what I believe."

Andersons said the committee selected Piccio after seeing his work on display at Pasadena City College's scholarship competition last spring. The Burbank resident combines many different mediums in his work — photography and graphic and interactive design.

"His way of presentation was professional, and the variety of work in which he excelled in graphic arts we were impressed with," said Andersons.

Piccio said he was never introduced to anything creative early in life, and didn't realize he had a talent for graphic design until his time at PCC.

"I think I had it in me and it was just brought out of me at a right place and time," he said. "So in that way, I've always felt it was my purpose ... (rather than) considering it as a job or occupation."

maritza.velazquez@sgvn.com
(626) 962-8811, Ext. 2303



Scholarship winners Augusto Piccio, left, and Bryce Butcher.