

MIT professor wins top AI award for cancer, drug research

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In this April 5, 2017, photo, Regina Barzilay, a professor in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, poses at MIT in Cambridge, Mass. The world's biggest AI society awarded Barzilay its top prize on Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2020. MIT said Barzilay is a breast cancer survivor whose 2014 diagnosis led her to shift her machine-learning work to creating systems for drug development and early cancer diagnosis. (Jonathan Wiggs/The Boston Globe via AP)

A Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor using computer science to detect cancer and discover new drugs has won a new \$1 million award for artificial intelligence.

The world's biggest AI society awarded its top prize Wednesday to Regina Barzilay, a professor at MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory.

MIT says Barzilay is a breast cancer survivor whose 2014 diagnosis led her to shift her AI work to creating systems for drug development and early cancer diagnosis.

Her early diagnosis tool has been tested in multiple hospitals, including Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital and others in Taiwan and Sweden.

She's the inaugural winner of the new annual award given by the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence and funded by Chinese online education company Squirrel AI.

It's meant to elevate AI advancements to the level of a Nobel Prize or computer science's Turing Award, while also highlighting AI research that benefits society.



In this April 3, 2017 file photo, students walk past the "Great Dome" atop Building 10 on the Massachusetts Institute of Technology campus in Cambridge, Mass. The world's biggest AI society awarded its top prize Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2020, to Regina Barzilay, a professor at MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory. MIT says Barzilay is a breast cancer survivor whose 2014 diagnosis led her to shift her machine-learning work to creating systems for drug development and early cancer diagnosis. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa, File)

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