

## AWARDS

### Developmental engineering.

As a Peace Corps volunteer in Botswana, Amy Smith saw



how simple technological innovations could improve people's lives in remote parts of the world. So she returned to her alma mater, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), to develop low-cost technologies for problems such as purifying water and

milling grain. Last week, the work earned her a \$500,000, 5-year MacArthur Fellowship.

The 41-year-old mechanical engineer, now an instructor at MIT's Edgerton Center, will use some of the money to help Haitians develop ways of making charcoal from the byproducts of sugar cane. Smith is also helping undergraduates further their own ideas for developing world technologies.

Six scientists and engineers are among the remaining 22 MacArthur Fellows chosen this year. The complete list is at [www.macfound.org/programs/fel/winners\\_overview.htm](http://www.macfound.org/programs/fel/winners_overview.htm).

**EMBO prize.** Spanish molecular oncologist Maria Blasco has won the 2004 gold medal from the European Molecular Biology Organization. Blasco, a researcher at the Spanish National Cancer Center in Madrid, receives the honor for her work on telomeres.

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**Incomparable foodie.** Food writers typically undertake only gastronomic experiments, but then Robert Wolke isn't your typical food writer. The retired nuclear chemist turned *Washington Post* columnist occasionally runs chemistry experiments to debunk common

interpreting chemistry for the public. Although the former University of Pittsburgh professor has hauled in other awards for his food writing, "this one means an awful lot to me because it is from my own chemistry colleagues," he says.

## CAMPAIGNS

**Apes for a cause.** Nine researchers from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, were among 650 participants at the Great Gorilla Run held in London on 19 September to raise money for gorilla research and conservation. The Leipzig team, composed largely of scientists who study genetic material collected from wild gorilla droppings, called itself DNApes—short for DNA Analysis of Poop, Excrement, and Scat. The runners "walked briskly" for the 7-kilometer route, says team leader and gorilla researcher Linda Vigilant, who claims that limited vision in the gorilla suits prevented a faster pace. The group raised \$4000 that will go to the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund.

