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Pioneer Awards Celebrate 10th Year of Engineering Innovation

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Todd Foggoa, the engineer who single-handedly won the Small-Team Productivity Innovation award for his Scrubber tool, poses with John Chambers and SVPs Pankaj Patel (far left), Kathy Hill (second from left), and Joel Bion (far right).



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This year marked the big 1-0 for the prestigious Pioneer Awards at Cisco. Recent ceremonies in San Jose, Boxborough, and Bangalore gave approximately 75 engineers a chance to shine as they received prized telescopes in reward for the engineering breakthroughs that they accomplished during this 10th anniversary year.

When you consider that these award winners represent only about 0.4 percent of the entire engineering workforce at Cisco, you can rightly call them this year's crème de la crème among engineers.

As the highest awards for engineering at Cisco, the Pioneer Awards, which were designed to spur feats of engineering innovation, draw intense competition among engineering teams at the company. This year was no different, with 56 nominations for just four awards: Core Technology, Large-Team Productivity Innovation, Small-Team Productivity Innovation, and Product Innovation.

"A common theme to all the awards is 'pioneer,'" said Joel Bion, SVP for Advanced Research and Development and host for the San Jose ceremony on October 29 along with John Chambers. "That word 'pioneer' is not just meant to indicate that something new was done. The teams that have won this award have exhibited risk taking. They've shown that they have an idea and can drive it through when there are doubters saying 'this is a good idea but may not be possible.'

"These are people who broke through all that and showed the best example of Cisco collaboration and teamwork to achieve an outstanding result," Bion added.

Core Technology Award

Bion introduced the Core Technology award as one that rewards "unique, deep, industry-impacting technical innovation." This year's Core Technology award went