

# Design students' safety inventions win big at NY International Auto Show

*After creating gadgets to improve vehicular safety, a trio from Shintaro Akatsu School of Design are awarded prize money at one of the world's biggest car shows*

By **Leslie Geary**

April 6, 2018



Three University of Bridgeport (UB) students have won awards, including Grand Prize, at the New York International Auto Show for devices they invented to keep drivers, passengers, and pedestrians safe from vehicle mishaps.

The students, all of whom are majoring in industrial design at UB's Shintaro Akatsu School of Design, were awarded a total of \$9,000 in prize money at the auto show's Traffic Safety Contest.

One of the biggest auto shows in the world—more than 1 million people attend the New York exposition annually—the traffic safety competition has established itself as “a premier event for automotive industry experts and attendees in search of next-generation safety devices,” said Richard Yelle, chairman of the [industrial design program at SASD](#).

Sixteen industrial design majors from SASD have won prizes at the NY International Auto Show’s safety competition since 2011.

About the 2018 SASD winners:

Jessica Chuhta, from Trumbull, CT, won the \$5,000 Grand Prize for “Sunshine Saver,” a system that helps prevent children from being locked in dangerously hot cars. The device includes a thermostat that activates when a child’s seat belt is fastened and sounds when temperatures inside a vehicle reach precariously high levels.

Zachary Sholtes won the \$2,500 Second Place prize for “Runaway & Attack Vehicle Gate.” The auto-deployed barriers use sensors and algorithms to track out-of-control vehicles and stop them with fast-acting gates that absorb impact, thereby protecting passengers as well as pedestrians. The gate can be used on roadways, paths, or other public places. Sholtes is from Brookfield, CT.

Bradley Bell, from Southbury, CT, won Fourth Place and \$1,250 for “Better Grip,” an ergonomic steering wheel grip that helps drivers to properly position hands.

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