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## **Chicago 3D printer startup co-hosts MIT event** Isis3D founders speak, demonstrate new product

[EDITORS: High resolution logo and images from the event and of printer available at [isis3d.net/press](http://isis3d.net/press).]

CHICAGO, Feb. 24, 2014 — Isis3D™ is hardly your typical high-tech startup, and it's not based in Boston. However, the innovative Loop-based 3D printing company was in good company with big names like Intel, Texas Instruments, and O'Reilly, co-hosting the Internet of Things Festival at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Saturday, Feb. 22. Boston native and the company's chief of engineering Marc Auger, and COO Stephanie Avalos-Bock, debuted their new professional 3D printer, and they also gave a talk on personal design and manufacturing in the latest do-it-yourself age. [EDITORS: See accompanying photos or reach us at contact above.]

“It was a real privilege to be able to return to Boston and come to MIT,” said Auger, 25. Billed as “one full day of free public celebration of creativity, technology and the internet,” the Internet of Things Festival was held at MIT's Tang Center in Cambridge, Mass. The Isis3D staff spent the day collaborating with industry-leading companies. The event sold out. [EDITORS: More details on the festival available at [ioffestival.com](http://ioffestival.com).]

“There's been a great deal of hype about 3D printing recently,” Auger said, “but most of it has focused on the novelty of the technology. The marketing usually goes something like, ‘Hey look! It's a 3D printer!’ which conveniently glosses over the fact that it doesn't always work and isn't always useful.”

Auger and Avalos-Bock are recent graduates of the University of Chicago. As it happens, they have degrees not in engineering or business, but in music. Auger is a semi-pro violinist, Avalos-Bock a talented composer. “My parents diagnosed me as an engineer when I was 18

months old,” Auger laughs. In his years at Chicago, Auger figured prominently in the school’s scavenger-hunt-on-steroids nicknamed “Scav.” Chicago’s rigorous science and humanities programs combine in this longtime institution that pits huge teams of students against one another in an epic battle of stamina that nearly shuts down campus for four days every school year. Auger led his team’s engineering four years in a row, an indication of his mechanical abilities in a dorm teeming with humanities majors.

The annual hunt features ambitious projects that at first blush look impossible, such as “Have a potato break the sound barrier” and “Duct-tape together two different stations of the El [Chicago’s transit rail system].” One that garnered particular notoriety was to build or obtain “a breeder reactor built in a shed.”

What is remarkable is that all of these things have actually been achieved by at least one team. (Even the reactor was built, though not operated, in 1999.) Auger’s most memorable project in his four years was a piano that mixed alcoholic drinks appropriate to what specific melody was played. This design was featured in a *New Yorker* magazine article on the event.

Avalos-Bock is a composer. When for their BA projects professors advised students to compose something short and sweet for solo or quartet, she instead developed a very complex work that was accepted for performance by the University’s own 60-member wind ensemble. For this audacity, she graduated with honors. Avalos-Bock also showed engineering talent at a young age, working in theater technical crews and doing a good deal of woodworking.

To call his whimsical scavenger-hunt machines Rube Goldberg devices is an injustice, says Auger. “For all its impracticality, [Scav] is tremendously practical.” Each challenge teaches resourcefulness, resilience, and organizational ability. Avalos-Bock agrees that these are the major lessons of her experiences, both in music and engineering: “It’s a marathon, it’s an endurance thing.”

In fact, it is this spirit of performing the virtually impossible that led Auger and Avalos-Bock to spend 18 months developing what they believe is the first affordable 3D printer that actually does what it claims to do. After building their own RepRap-style 3D printer as a project, the team was struck both by its huge potential and by how much it had fallen short. It was a terrible execution of a brilliant idea. The world, they believed, needed an affordable and accessible machine whose print quality and reliability made it actually useful.

### **About the Isis One**

The Isis One, the team’s first desktop 3D printer to market, closes the gap between unreliable “consumer” and prohibitively expensive “professional” 3D printers. Rigorously engineered, it features fully professional print quality, unprecedented reliability, an exceptionally large print area, and advanced capabilities that make it desirable to professionals in engineering, design, and architecture. At the same time, its very accessible price has sparked significant interest among amateurs. The team has married cutting-edge technology with innovative design, constantly pushing back the frontier of 3D printing technologies.