Wafa Ellmani, a doctorate student of computer science and engineering at the University of Bridgeport, has won a 2015-2016 AAUW (American Association of University Women) International Fellowship.

The $20,000 prize is the most recent award in a breathtaking collection of prestigious honors conferred upon Ellmani since she began her doctorate at UB two years ago.

This year, AAUW awarded 241 fellowships and grants totaling $3.7 million for 2015-16 in four different categories.

Ellmani was the only student from Connecticut this year to win an International Fellowship, which the AAUW also awarded to students from Columbia, Duke, Georgetown, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and other universities throughout the U.S.
Wafa Elmannai

“I feel honored to receive such a fellowship and be among winners from so many respected universities. I’m proud that I can represent UB and be part of its family,” said Ellmani.

Ellmani said she will use the AAUW fellowship to advance work on a device she’s developing with her adviser, UB Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research Khaled Elleithy, to help visually impaired individuals become more mobile. She will also use funds for professional development.

Dr. Khaled Elleithy Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research, Computer Science and Engineering, School of Engineering

“I want to thank UB for supporting me with necessary research equipment and tools, and also Professor Elleithy, who is my main adviser,” she added. “He helped
me finish the AAUW application and has always advocated for me. The engineering faculty have also offered their support.”

An international student from Libya and the mother of four daughters, Ellmani has said that she wants to show young girls that “women can be successful.”

She has done just that. Last month, Ellmani was recognized as one of Connecticut’s leading innovators when she won the Connecticut Technology Council’s Women in Innovation Award. In 2014, she won the Decisyon, Inc. Big Data Analyst Award at the American Society for Engineering Education Zone 1 conference.