

News Release

Dobbs Ferry High School Senior Nikolas Greenwald Named Intel Science Talent Search Semifinalist

Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. January 14, 2016—Dobbs Ferry High School senior Nikolas Greenwald has been named a semifinalist in the prestigious Intel Science Talent Search contest for his project "Improving Singing Synthesis through Survey Administration and Job-Plugin Development for the Vocaloid Editor™". Nikolas was one of 300 students (out of 1,750 entrants) selected nationwide and 1 of 27 selected from the Lower Hudson Valley. He will receive a \$1,000 award from the Intel Foundation with an additional \$1,000 going to Dobbs Ferry High School.

Greenwald's project initially focused on investigating the reasons it is more difficult to use and understand a singing synthesizer with the English language versus the Japanese language. He developed a survey that could be used to assess participant's thoughts on understandability of several audio clips. This survey was applied to the idea of "parameters", or audio-adjusting controls in the Vocaloid™ Editor to see which parameters, and at what values, were more useful. Subsequently, Greenwald developed a job plug-in that would alter the parameters of a singing synthesizer to effectively increase our ability to understand it.

"Nikolas has worked tremendously hard on this project and I can't imagine it going to a student who deserves it more," said Erica Curran, Dobbs Ferry High School Science Research Program Coordinator. "The numbers of Westchester students being selected as Intel semifinalists has been increasing yearly and I think it is reflective of the quality of the science research programs in the area and the level of support that each school has built among fellow colleagues, community mentors and the science research students themselves. We all know and encourage each other."

Greenwald is an IB Diploma Candidate and a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society. He participates in the High School Chorus and last year played the lead in the school musical "Little Shop of Horrors." He is also a member of the High School Orchestra and has been playing the violin since third grade.

"At first I was hesitant about committing to the science research program because I wanted to find a project where I could meld science and music together," Greenwald said. "I knew it would be hard to find a mentor, but once I began to research my idea, I really got into the science behind it. Partly as a result of this great experience, I'd like to double major in computer engineering and music in college."

Since its inception in 2007, Dobbs Ferry Science Research students have won numerous national and regional competitions each year. Approximately 40 high school students are currently enrolled in the science research program.

According to the Intel STS website, student entries are reviewed by three or more PhD scientist, mathematicians or engineers in the subject area of the entry. Semifinalists and finalists are selected by the judges, using all available entry evidence, with the greatest weight given to the Research

Report. Judges are looking for students exhibiting exceptional research skills, a commitment to academics and to their communities, innovative thinking and promise as a scientist.

On January 20th, 40 of the semifinalists will be selected as Intel Science Talent Search finalists. Finalists will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC from March 10-16, where they will compete for more than \$1million in awards.

For more information, please contact:

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