Cos Cob, Conn. – The Davidson Institute for Talent Development has announced the 2018 Davidson Fellows. Among the honorees is 17-year-old Rahul Subramaniam of Cos Cob. Subramaniam won a $50,000 Davidson Fellows Scholarship for his project, *An Early Warning System for Zika Virus in Mosquito Populations Based on Real-Time Field Detection of Viral RNA in Mosquito Saliva*. He is one of only 20 students across the country to receive this honor.

“This scholarship is incredibly meaningful to me, as it shows that all the hours I’ve spent working on my project after school and on weekends were significantly worthwhile,” said Subramaniam. “Considering that this is one of the most prestigious high school scholarships, I feel deeply honored that my work was chosen as being highly impactful to my field.”

Zika virus is one of the most urgent health crises of the decade, having infected millions of people worldwide and causing birth defects in thousands of newborn babies. Subramaniam’s work involved the construction of an early warning system, using a low-cost mosquito trap to capture mosquitoes and detect virus in their saliva. Through his research, he discovered that viral detection is visible to the naked eye as a red-to-clear color change in sucrose bait in only 15 minutes, a major improvement over currently used methods that take weeks to process. Subramaniam found that language barriers as well as the need for specialized lab equipment are also circumvented, allowing for easy deployment and use by health workers around the world to prevent infection.

As a Greenwich High School senior, Subramaniam will continue to take Advanced Placement (AP) classes, as well as self-studying prerequisite classes before he heads to college. Outside of science, he enjoys biking, spending time with his younger brother who shares his same interests and reading science-fiction novels.

He hopes to attend Columbia University or Harvard University in the fall of 2019.

“We are thrilled to recognize the 2018 Davidson Fellows not only for their incredible projects, but also for the journey they forg}
Scholarship and the Davidson Academy of Nevada. For more information about the 2018 Davidson Fellows, please visit www.DavidsonGifted.org/Fellows-Scholarship.

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*High-resolution photos are available at* www.DavidsonGifted.org/Fellows-Scholarship.*