

For Immediate Release
August 16, 2018



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**COS COB TEEN AWARDED \$50,000 FOR INVENTING AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR
ZIKA VIRUS IN MOSQUITO POPULATIONS
Rahul Subramaniam to be Named a 2018 Davidson Fellow**

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 mosquitos 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 forged to reach this point,” said Bob Davidson, founder of the Davidson Institute. “Every year I am amazed by the depth of the Fellows’ accomplishments. Through encouragement and recognition, the Davidson Institute for Talent Development anticipates that gifted students like these will be among the pioneers who will solve the world’s most vexing problems.”

The 2018 Davidson Fellows will be honored at a reception in Washington, D.C., on Friday, September 28.

The Davidson Fellows Scholarship program offers \$50,000, \$25,000 and \$10,000 college scholarships to students 18 or younger, who have completed significant projects that have the potential to benefit society in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, literature and music. The Davidson Fellows Scholarship has provided more than \$7.5 million in scholarship funds to more than 300 students since its inception in 2001, and has been named one of the most prestigious undergraduate scholarships by [U.S. News & World Report](#). It is a program of the Davidson Institute for Talent Development, a national nonprofit organization headquartered in Reno, Nev. that supports profoundly gifted youth.

About the Davidson Institute

Founded by Bob Davidson in 1999, the Davidson Institute for Talent Development recognizes, nurtures and supports profoundly intelligent young people, and provides opportunities for them to develop their talents to make a positive difference. The Institute offers support through a number of programs and services, including the Davidson Fellows

Scholarship and the [Davidson Academy of Nevada](http://www.DavidsonAcademy.org). 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.