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SAINT JAMES TEEN AWARDED \$25,000 FOR RESEARCH ON ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS OF THE INHALATION OF LUNAR DUST AND OTHER FOREIGN PARTICLES **Kevin Chen to be Named a 2020 Davidson Fellow Scholarship Winner**

Saint James, N.Y. – The Davidson Fellows Scholarship Program has announced the 2020 scholarship winners. Among the honorees is 17-year-old Kevin Chen of Saint James. Chen won a \$25,000 scholarship for his project, *A Toxic Lunar Environment: Adverse Effects of a Lunar Soil Simulant (JSC-1A) on Alveolar Cellular Health and Genomic Integrity*. He is one of only 20 students across the country to be recognized as a scholarship winner.

“I am tremendously honored and grateful to be named a Davidson Fellow as it serves as a huge motivator for my future scientific aspirations,” said Chen. “I am excited to join this brilliant and inspiring community and meet many talented individuals.”

Inspired by biological experiments taking place on the International Space Station, Chen wanted to contribute to expanding the knowledge of the space science community. His project further evaluates the toxicological hazards of lunar dust inhaled by astronauts so that the risks faced by future lunar exploration may be mitigated. Chen, using extensive molecular experimentation, was able to devise a pathway revealing how contact with lunar regolith (dust) at the cellular level could result in oxidative stress via the formation of reactive oxygen species, nuclear and mitochondrial DNA aberrations, and double-stranded DNA breaks. Chen’s research further refined our understanding of cellular damage resulting from the inhalation of foreign particles which can also be applied on Earth, and will be critical in protecting industrial and environmental workers from chronic pulmonary diseases.

Chen will be attending Yale University in the fall where he plans to study molecular biochemistry and biophysics.

“We are proud to announce the 2020 Davidson Fellows Scholarship recipients and applaud them for their hard work and achievement in their fields of study,” said Bob Davidson, founder of the Davidson Institute. “By being awarded this recognition, these students have shown immense skill and work ethic, and they should be commended as they continue their educational and research journeys while continuing to work to solve some of the world’s most vexing problems.”

The 2020 Davidson Fellows will be honored during a digital reception on September 30, 2020.

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 \$8.2 million in scholarship funds to 366 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](#). For more information about the 2020 Davidson Fellows, please visit www.DavidsonGifted.org/Fellows-Scholarship.

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