

For Immediate Release
August 24, 2020



Contact: Megan Bedera,
Amplify Relations
775-997-5690

**EMERSON TEEN AWARDED \$50,000 FOR DEVELOPING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE
EFFECTIVENESS OF LUNG CANCER TREATMENTS**
Maximilian Zhang to be Named a 2020 Davidson Fellow Scholarship Winner

Emerson, N.J. – The Davidson Fellows Scholarship Program has announced the 2020 scholarship winners. Among the honorees is 18-year-old Maximilian Zhang of Emerson. Zhang won a \$50,000 scholarship for his project, *PIF1 Gene Integration: A Novel Chemosensitizing Approach in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer*. He is one of only 20 students across the country to be recognized as a scholarship winner.

“Being named a Davidson Fellow has been an amazing experience and validates that my work holds merit and potential for bringing along real change in the healthcare industry,” said Zhang.

Zhang, inspired in his high school biology class, developed a gene-therapy treatment model for non-small cell lung cancer where he discovered that overexpressing the gene PIF1 has the ability to sensitize cancer cells to the standard chemotherapeutics used in treatments. This discovery is significant because reducing the dosage of chemotherapeutics will mitigate the dozens of destructive effects correlated with high-dosage cancer treatments.

Zhang will be attending the University of California, Berkeley in the fall where he plans to study molecular biology and business with the goal of a future career in medicine and biotechnology.

“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.

###

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