## CHAPPAQUA TEEN AWARDED $25,000 SCHOLARSHIP FOR NOVEL APPROACH TO COLLECTING AND ANALYZING INFRARED NIGHT VISION TO MONITOR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE IN REMOTE AREAS
### Anika Puri Named A 2022 Davidson Fellows Scholarship Winner

Chappaqua, N.Y. – The Davidson Fellows Scholarship Program has announced the 2022 scholarship winners. Among the honorees is 17-year-old Anika Puri of Chappaqua. Puri won a $25,000 scholarship for her project, *ElSa (Elephant-Savior): A Novel Real-time Wildlife Poacher Detection Solution Leveraging Machine Learning Driven Spatio-temporal Analysis of Nighttime UAV Thermal Infrared Videos*. She is one of only 21 students across the country to be recognized as a 2022 scholarship winner.

"For me, becoming a Davidson Fellow represents an amazing opportunity to join a community of other young people passionate about STEM and its potential to make an impact in the world," said Puri. "Doing this research has allowed me to grow into an independent, innovative tinkerer and has made me resourceful! I have realized that I may not always have all the answers, to begin with, but it's crucial to go forward and learn along the way."

Inspired by her love of animals and a family trip to India, Puri developed a new technique for collecting and analyzing thermal infrared video data used to identify wildlife poachers. Her low-cost design prototype, named ElSa (Elephant-Savior), is built with commodity components that are attached to an unoccupied aerial vehicle (UAV), mitigating the need for costly, high-resolution thermal cameras and improving accuracy of current methods by nearly 70 percent.

Puri is a first-year student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology where she will be studying electrical engineering, computer science and biomedical engineering. Puri is passionate about ensuring that women and people of color are at the forefront of AI to ensure it creates an equitable future so she founded mozAIrt. MozAIrt introduces youth to the humanistic applications of artificial intelligence through art and music and explores ethics-in-AI topics, including the impacts of facial recognition on marginalized communities.

"This year's class of Davidson Fellows Scholarship recipients continue to find new and innovative ways to pursue their educational and research journeys while striving to solve some of the world's most vexing problems," said Bob Davidson, founder of the Davidson Institute. "These students have not just overcome the challenges of doing significant work during a pandemic; our Fellows have embraced the new opportunities that have come from creative, outside-the-box thinking to use technology to expand their networks of mentors and access new sources of information and data, resulting in a very diverse portfolio of projects."

The 2022 Davidson Fellows will be honored during a reception at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and with a virtual project presentation ceremony in September 2022.

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 $9 million in scholarship funds to 407 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, 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 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 2022 Davidson Fellows, please visit: DavidsonFellows.org.

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*High-resolution photos are available at*
*DavidsonFellows.org*

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