



Davidson Institute
Fellows Scholarship

For Immediate Release
August 25, 2022

Contact: Megan Bedera
775-997-5690
Megan@AmplifyRelations.com

BELLMORE TEEN AWARDED \$25,000 SCHOLARSHIP FOR DEVELOPING RELIABLE AND LOW-COST PAPER BIOSENSOR TO DETECT COVID-19 IN SALIVA

Christopher Prainito Named A 2022 Davidson Fellows Scholarship Winner

Bellmore, N.Y. – The Davidson Fellows Scholarship Program has announced the 2022 scholarship winners. Among the honorees is 18-year-old Christopher Prainito of Bellmore. Prainito won a \$25,000 scholarship for his project, *Development of a Polydiacetylene-Based Paper Biosensor for Naked-Eye Detection of COVID-19 in Saliva*. He is one of only 21 students across the country to be recognized as a 2022 scholarship winner.

“I am incredibly honored to have been selected as a Davidson Fellow and recognized for my engineering project,” said Prainito. “Furthermore, I am grateful for the support that the Davidson Institute has provided to pursue my education and continue scientific research in college and beyond. This distinction has not only united me with a group of highly gifted scholars, but it will also help to inspire future generations of innovators to identify and explore novel solutions to the world’s ever-evolving challenges.”

For his project, Prainito designed and fabricated a paper-based sensor to detect the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein in a saliva sample. This inexpensive and user-friendly sensor can be used at home or in developing regions to rapidly test a large number of patients.

Prainito will be a first-year student at Harvard in the fall where he plans to study mechanical engineering with the eventual goal of becoming an aerospace engineer developing the next generation of space-travel technology. In his free time, Prainito enjoys long-distance running, model rocketry, and playing his oboe. He is also founder and president of Students Giving Trees, Inc., a nonprofit organization that plants trees in his local community through student volunteerism.

“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.

Cont.

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 4,07 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](#).

###

High-resolution photos are available at
[DavidsonFellows.org](#)