



For Immediate Release
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WILMINGTON TEEN AWARDED \$25,000 SCHOLARSHIP FOR RESEARCH TO PREVENT CHOLERA WATER CONTAMINATION

Isabel Garcia Named 2026 Davidson Fellows Scholarship Winner

WILMINGTON, N.C. — Isabel Garcia, 18, of Wilmington, has been awarded a \$25,000 Davidson Fellows Scholarship for the science project, *Identification of Coral Bacteria as Probiotic Candidates Capable of Inhibiting Vibrio cholerae for Cholera Water Sanitation*. The Davidson Fellows Scholarship is one of the nation's most prestigious honors for students 18 and younger.

"Being a Davidson Fellow means I have support: support for my research, support from a community of brilliant and like-minded individuals and support to continue pursuing my dreams," Garcia said. "I hold immense appreciation for this honor and will use this support to ensure that I continue making positive scientific change."

Inspired by the World Health Organization's 2024 declaration and her grandmother's experiences at the border of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, Garcia began her project to help prevent future cholera outbreaks in communities with poor water sanitation. Garcia identified three strains of coral bacteria as candidates for inhibiting *V. cholerae*, the bacterium that causes cholera. Her findings could contribute to new approaches for addressing *V. cholerae* contamination in environmental water sources and preventing future outbreaks.

Garcia, a first-year student at Duke University and a Robertson Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, plans to study biology and business. Her research has received four Grand and Special Awards at Regeneron ISEF, and she helped launch the National STEM Festival Student Council.

"The Davidson Fellows continue to demonstrate what young people can accomplish when curiosity, determination and innovation come together," said Bob Davidson, founder of the Davidson Institute. "The 2026 Fellows have pursued challenging questions and developed meaningful work with the potential to make a lasting difference in their fields and communities. We are proud to recognize their extraordinary achievements."

The Davidson Fellows Scholarship program offers 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 \$11.4 million in scholarship funds to 490 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 2026 Davidson Fellows, please visit: [DavidsonFellows.org](#).

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