2024 Founders' Scholarship Recipients

Ishanvi Kommula (Cupertino, CA) was at the forefront of a post-pandemic rebuilding effort that resulted in **Monta Vista High School** qualifying for its first Science Olympiad National Tournament in 2024. As team president, she grew SciOly to the largest STEM competition club and co-founded “Science in a Bag,” a nonprofit that received funding from the UN Foundation to bring STEM activities to youth at Boys & Girls Clubs and local shelters. “Science Olympiad nourished my drive as a boundary-smashing engineer,” said Ishanvi, who competed in Scrambler, Forensics and Fossils, and will study Green Computing at **MIT** this fall, launching a future at the intersection of technology and the environment.

Ahmed Eldeeb (Ormond Beach, FL) This **Spruce Creek High School** senior says, “Participating in Science Olympiad, especially in the Green Generation and Remote Sensing events, steered me towards Earth and planetary sciences, profoundly impacting my college and career choices.” Ahmed served as a NOAA Ocean Guardian Youth Ambassador, worked on ICESat-2 climate research through a NASA Internship, and authored Laila's Toolbox, a book that provides children with tools to fight the climate crisis. Ahmed gives back to his local Science Olympiad community by teaching Dynamic Planet at his local SOSSI summer camp, and next fall he will attend **Harvard University**, studying Earth and Policy & Astrophysics.

Emily Won (Hoffman Estates, IL) found that Science Olympiad opened doors to new experiences. “Science Olympiad did more than nurture me as a learner; I learned to build a community.” This **Barrington High School** senior spent the past year as the President of the Illinois Science Olympiad Youth Advisory Committee & President of the Illinois State Board of Education Career & Technical Student Org (CTSO) Student Board. “My ability to unite student voices, policymakers and educators helped shape a mosaic of perspective that I believe is fundamental for educational equity.” Emily plans on continuing her advocacy for greater student participation in STEM and CTE education as she attends **Vanderbilt University** this fall.

Shaunak Sharma (Monmouth Junction, NJ) is a Science Olympiad team captain at **South Brunswick High School** who excelled in events like Green Generation and Forestry. “Science Olympiad lit a fire in me. I want to conduct scientific discovery with purpose.” Through Science Olympiad, Shaunak was inspired to connect with environment causes: planting trees, conducting heat island research at NASA’s Goddard Institute, interning at Planet Labs. Because of this dedication, he was selected as one of fifteen LEES Scholars for the United States Earth Science Organization. Next fall, Shaunak will study Materials Science & Engineering at the **University of Michigan**.

Hannah Tang (Lincoln, NE) This Science Olympiad state champion in Cell Bio and Chem Lab helped expand her team at **Lincoln East High School** by showing peers that STEM can be fun and social. In addition to her duties as team captain, she published a peer-reviewed journal article about her work on a University of Nebraska-Lincoln research project developing a 3D artificial intelligence tool designed to detect pancreatic tumors. “Science Olympiad inspired me to expand on the wealth of experimental knowledge; I want to fuse my interest in scientific mechanisms with authentic conversation.” Next fall, she’ll study Public Health before joining the 8-year Program in Liberal Medical Education at **Brown University**.