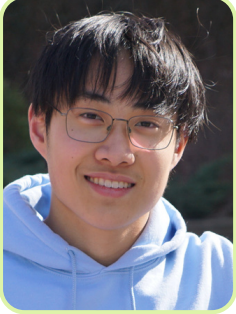


Science Olympiad Founders' Scholarships

2025 Recipients



Daniel Saptari (Lexington, MA) successfully led the **Lexington High School** Science Olympiad Team to their first appearance at the National Tournament in more than two decades. "By leading our large club, coordinating with school administrators, mentoring middle schoolers in Division B, and working under pressure, Science Olympiad gave me the confidence to take advantage of meaningful and impactful opportunities." On top of serving as team captain and build captain, he is an advocate and speaker for pediatric cancer legislation. This fall Daniel will be attending **Georgia Institute of Technology** studying Aerospace Engineering.



Joelle Cheeseman (Irvine, CA) serves as the Vice President of the **Northwood High School** Science Olympiad team and is a dedicated contributor to the broader Science Olympiad community. Joelle shares, "What began as joining a middle school science club unexpectedly blossomed into a fascination with the intricate systems of evolutionary biology and a deep love for Earth's hidden treasures—fossils! Science Olympiad helped me discover my passion for using earth science to promote sustainability and equity, and for blending STEM with community engagement—something I hope to continue in college." This fall, Joelle will be attending **Stanford University**, where she plans to pursue Urban Studies and Earth Systems.



Jos Buffington (Excelsior, MN), a senior at **Minnetonka High School** discovered a deep passion for Earth Science through Science Olympiad. "My experience with Rocks & Minerals in Science Olympiad opened the door for me to become a geology exhibit interpreter at the Science Museum of Minnesota, where I identify rocks for visitors and help manage geological collections," Jos shares. "I'm proud to represent the field of geology as a young student of color, especially for other students who may have never seen someone like themselves in this space." This fall, Jos will attend **MIT** to study Earth Science and Physics and hopes to give back by volunteering at the MIT Science Olympiad Invitational.



Hamza Amara (Naperville, IL), Vice Captain at **Naperville Central High School**, found more than just medals through the competition, he found a community. With standout achievements in events like Botany, Chem Lab, and Materials Science, Hamza also brought heart and humor to his team. "Sure, winning felt like being LeBron scoring 61," he says, "but my biggest accomplishment wasn't a medal—it was finding my people." This fall, Hamza will bring that same passion and curiosity to the **University of California, Davis** as a Biology major, where he plans to pursue research and a future in neurosurgery.



Misha Nasarpuri (Portland, OR) has participated in Science Olympiad for over seven years, taking on leadership roles and creating additional science clubs at **Sunset High School**. "Science Olympiad nurtured my problem-solving, resilience, and teamwork skills, which I now apply to rigorous IB courses and research on gender-specific health challenges. These experiences have solidified my pursuit of a medical career focused on equitable healthcare. Science Olympiad instilled leadership and collaboration skills, preparing me to excel in college and beyond." Misha will be attending **Boston University** this fall studying Human Physiology and Medical Anthropology.