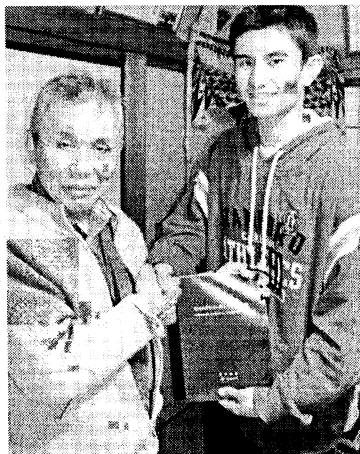


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SEARCH



Courtesy photo

Rikki Kendall, E.J. King student, earns trip to D.C.

by: .

Stripes Japan

published: April 08, 2015

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Rikki Kendall, 16, is an 11th-grader at EJ King High School on Sasebo Naval Base who placed fourth at the regional DODDS Far East Junior Science and Humanities Symposium at Yokota Air Base March 24-25 for his project on the melting time of glaciers. He, along with Paul Lee, Brian Lee and Kylee Fitts (1st, 3rd and 5th places, respectively) from Seoul American High School and Olivia Leavitt (2nd place) from Kadena High School, will now head to the national finals in Huntsville, Md., April 29-May 2. Stripes Japan spoke with Rikki about his success and motivation.

Q. Congratulations on your accomplishments Rikki. What made you decide to participate in JSHS?

A. Thank you so much. After participating last year and coming up short with bad results and instrumental problems, my competitiveness really pushed me to redeem myself this year. Even though JSHS requires you to put in an extensive amount of time and makes school work even harder, the sense of accomplishment after you have finished a 20 page research paper is just phenomenal. Even though tennis and basketball are my focal points in athletics, I believe JSHS has given me an opportunity to show my strengths in academics as well. Conducting research on the topic of your choosing and finding results that were not even close to what you imagined, like that is science. It truly is amazing to think about. I believe I have gotten so much out of JSHS and being able to conduct scientific research and present in front of a panel of judges is really a privilege. I know that one day in college when I do even more intensive research that it will be much easier to conduct and it will get me one step closer to my overall goal in life to help and change the world in some way.

Q. What was the project you did that won 4th in DoDDS Pacific, and how did you come up with the idea?

A. My project was on the Impact of Moraine Composition on the Albedo and Melting Time of Glaciers. I came up with the idea after attending the STEMinar conference at Tsukuba University in the fall of 2014. I was in the electrical engineering group and my professor handed me a spectroscope and told me to analyze different fluorescent lights and what colors you see. From then on I became fascinated in lights and reflectivity and it eventually led to doing a project on the reflectivity of glaciers and how it affects all of us. The whole concept of albedo and reflectivity is what allows the Earth to sustain life.

Q. What do you have planned for the nationals later this month in Maryland?

A. At nationals I hope to compete in the poster contest and get a good look at all of the amazing projects that people from around the US have brought to the symposium. The experience of going to nationals is a first for me and this is truly an opportunity of a lifetime. It will give me a good idea at what I need to prepare for next year's project in order to compete with everyone at nationals.

Q. What's your favorite subject in school and why?

A. My favorite subjects in school are math and science. AP Physics is especially one of my favorite classes even though it is the subject I stress most on. Being able to explain how things interact and figuring out how everything works around us is just mind-blowing.

Q. What are your college/career plans after high school?

A. After high school, I am hoping to receive a mechanical engineering undergrad with a masters degree in business so that I can find a job that will allow me to use my language skills and harness my love for automobiles. I am planning on playing tennis in college whether it will be at a military academy or at a university in California such as Stanford, Cal Poly or UCLA.

Q. Any thoughts or advice about science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) you'd like to share with other students?

A. STEM subjects are the greatest subjects there are! Without these subjects we could not have achieved the feats and advancements that we take for granted every single day. Everyone should take part in doing something for the STEM world if it is to do research or to find resources to help our world. Pretty much everything has to do with STEM and we must all contribute to the cause!

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