



City of Pittsburgh

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Text File

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Committee: City Council

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WHEREAS, Aria Rosalee Eppinger, a student at the Winchester Thurston School in Shadyside and a resident of Squirrel Hill, decided last year to research gut bacteria after learning that they may be connected to traumatic head injuries; and,

WHEREAS, established in 1887, the Winchester Thurston School is a nationally recognized independent school devoted to providing each student challenging and inspiring education, driven by real world learning in classes such as RAPID Lab, where middle-schoolers such as Aria are encouraged to tackle research problems through rigorous experimentation; and,

WHEREAS, over the course of her eighth-grade year, Aria conducted experiments to determine the effect that Roundup, a popular herbicide, can have on the diverse populations of bacteria in the digestive system. She discovered that Roundup slows the growth of beneficial bacteria more than it does detrimental bacteria, throwing off the delicate balance that is necessary for the proper functioning of the human body; and,

WHEREAS, in April 2016, Aria entered her science fair project, "Roundup's Effect on Human Gut Bacteria," in the Covestro Pittsburgh Regional Science & Engineering Fair competition and won first place in the medicine, health, and microbiology category, intermediate division, as well as a Carnegie Science Award; and,

WHEREAS, Aria then advanced to the Broadcom MASTERS competition and was selected as one of 30 finalists out of 100,000 entrants to present her project in Washington, D.C.; and,

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2016, judges at the Broadcom MASTERS competition selected Aria to receive the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Award for Health Advancement for the middle school student showing the most promise in health-related fields, a prize of \$20,000 and one of only four top honors in the entire nationwide competition; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby commend Aria Eppinger for the motivation, creativity, and hard work that led her to receive some of the highest honors available to a young scientist and wishes her continued success in future endeavors; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare December 20, 2016 to be "Aria Eppinger Day" in the City of Pittsburgh.