



# PRESS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Westview High School Freshman Kara Fan, 14, Declared “America’s Top Young Scientist 2019” by 3M**

**ST. PAUL, MN** – At just 14 years old, a Poway Unified School District freshman was nationally recognized for a microbiology project that might be one answer to the global problem of antibiotics overuse.

Kara Fan, who attends Westview High School in Torrey Highlands, was named “America’s Top Young Scientist” on October 29 in the 3M Young Scientist Challenge. Fan’s project – a sprayable nano particle liquid bandage – beat out nine other finalists in the competition. The national event encourages students ages fifth to eighth grade to invent projects that tackle global issues in areas such as medicine, the environment, and communication technology.

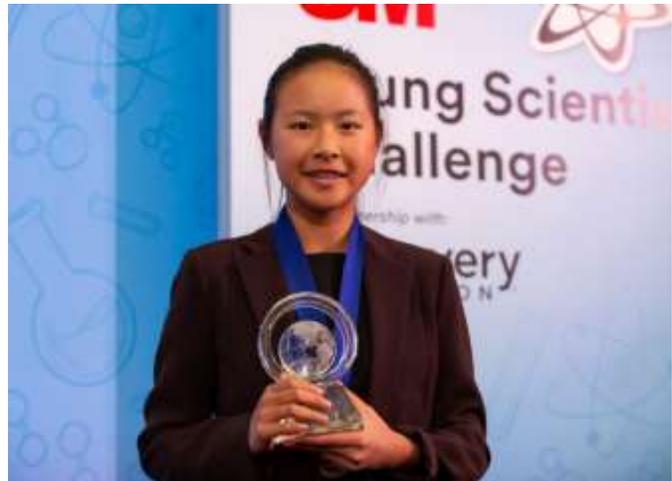


Photo Courtesy: 3M

“The moment before they called my name, I was really nervous because like the other finalists... their presentations are really good and I thought like they would win,” Fan told a national media outlet. “When they announced my name, I was really surprised actually.”

Fan developed her enzyme-catalyzed liquid bandage in April 2019, while still an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Mesa Verde Middle School. She used lemon leaf, a water-soluble polymer, and silver nitrate. The latter ingredient proved to be the key factor in the sprayable liquid, which creates a thin layer to protect the wounded area while killing harmful bacteria. Fan told 3M she hopes to reduce the number of incidents related to drug-resistant infections, and encourages others to be aware of the global antibiotics crisis. She told

judges she was inspired to start researching antibiotics when her grandmother was diagnosed with a bacterial infection and needed to take antibiotics to clear up the infection.

Before final presentations in front of Discovery Education and 3M executives at the end of the three-day competition, finalists collaborated on experiments with world-renowned scientists and toured the 3M Innovation Center. In this center, students also had the opportunity to use technology developed by adult scientists.

“Our communities want science to solve the world’s toughest challenges... This year’s finalists have truly inspired us with their ingenious efforts to think innovatively and solve real-world problems,” said **Denise Rutherford, senior vice president of corporate affairs at 3M**. “As a company that remains deeply committed to STEM education and advancement, we wish this next generation of science leaders the best on their continued journey. Congratulations to this year’s winner, Kara Fan, and all our Young Scientist Challenge finalists.”

In addition to being crowned “America’s Top Young Scientist,” Fan also received the \$25,000 grand prize. She will continue to pursue her passion of microbiology at Westview High School, and has dreams of attending Stanford University.

#### **About the Organization/Event/etc**

The 3M Company is an American multinational corporation with stakes in industry, worker safety, health care, and consumer goods. The company applies science in collaborative ways to improve the daily lives of people, according to the 3M website. It is based in Maplewood, Minnesota.

The 3M Young Scientist Challenge has paired hundreds of students with world-renowned scientists, with some going on to meet the President of the United States, give TEDTalks, be featured in Forbes’ “30 Under 30” List, and speak in front of Congress.

To learn more about the 3M Young Scientist Challenge, click here:

<https://www.youngscientistlab.com/challenge>

To learn more about the Poway Unified School District, click here: [www.powayusd.com](http://www.powayusd.com)

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