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Media Release

Glencoe's Ashwin Datta Wins First Place at Intel International Science Fair

Win marks the highest achievement ever earned by a Hillsboro student in the District's 11 years of participation

May 15, 2015, Hillsboro, OR – Earlier today, Glencoe High School sophomore Ashwin Datta won 1st Place in Mechanical Engineering at the 2015 Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for his research project that produced a novel way to protect sensors and optics on the NASA Curiosity Mars rover from the damaging effects of Martian dust and other contaminants.

Ashwin's interest in the NASA Curiosity rover developed from a tour of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory with Glencoe physics teacher John Gibbs. His adult sponsor at ISEF, teacher Susan Weidkamp, reports that NASA engineers have approached Ashwin to work with them as soon as possible.

One of the problems Ashwin was encountering was electrical arcing in the low pressure environment of Mars. NASA engineers reported that they had actually started to do research in this area about the same time he did, but Ashwin actually discovered a way of overcoming this problem and was told by the NASA engineers he should patent his idea.

Ashwin was interviewed by Oregon Public Broadcasting prior to winning:

<http://www.opb.org/radio/programs/thinkoutloud/segment/oregon-students-vie-for-intel-isef-prize/>

In addition to the pride of winning, MIT's Lincoln Lab will name asteroids after the 1st and 2nd place winners!

Hillsboro School District is extremely proud of Ashwin and appreciative of the support he has received from staff, his family, and the broader community as he has diligently worked to realize this amazing achievement.

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About ISEF: The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair honors the world's most promising student scientists, inventors, and engineers. Finalists are selected annually from hundreds of affiliated fairs, including the Beaverton-Hillsboro Science Expo. Their projects are then evaluated onsite by approximately 1,000 judges from nearly every scientific discipline, each with a Ph.D. or the equivalent of six years of related professional experience in one of the scientific disciplines.

A full listing of finalists is available in the [event program](#). The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair 2015 is funded jointly by Intel and the Intel Foundation, with additional awards and support from dozens of corporate, academic, governmental, and science-focused organization. This year, approximately \$4 million was awarded.

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