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Kearsarge Regional School District

Superintendent Winfried Feneberg

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, April 27, 2020

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Kearsarge High School Junior Wins First Place in New Hampshire Science and Engineering Expo



Kearsarge High School junior Chris Brahan presented the findings from his year-long research project on milfoil at this year's New Hampshire Science and Engineering Expo. (Photo courtesy of Kearsarge Regional School District)

NEW LONDON, New Hampshire -- Superintendent Winfried Feneberg is pleased to announce Kearsarge High School junior Chris Brahan won first place for the Environmental Science category at this year's New Hampshire Science and Engineering Expo (NHSEE) for his research on an invasive aquatic plant.

NHSEE is an annual event that showcases science or engineering-based projects completed by high school students throughout the state.

Brahan's project was one of 47 from around the state presented at the expo, which was held remotely on March 19. The expo was originally set to be held at the New Hampshire Technical Institute in Concord, but the in-person event was cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the last year, Brahan collected milfoil specimens from lakes in the Kearsarge area and grew what he collected in a large tank separated in different containers at Keasarge Regional High School. His goal was to determine which substrates, or conditions like silt and fine organic material, are necessary for the plant to thrive and grow.

Last May, Brahan was awarded \$5,000 from the Marjot Foundation to fund his research, including purchases of necessary equipment such as a remote camera and

gps for his kayak.

Brahan was helped by Erik Anderson and Emily Anderson, two science teachers at Kearsarge Regional High School, with his research.

"It's an incredible honor to receive this award and recognition from NHSEE," Brahan said. "This project really helped to build my research skills and I'm glad to be able to provide some more insight into this invasive plant that may seem harmless, but can have huge impacts on local ecosystems."

Brahan was also awarded Office of Naval Research Award at the Expo. This award is given to students to support their work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) initiatives and programs.

"Chris's research and work was exceptional," Superintendent Feneberg said. "His work is a shining example of the incredible ways Kearsarge students can use what they learn to benefit the Kearsarge community and beyond. I'm incredibly proud of him and congratulate him on receiving this well-deserved honor."

Moving forward, Brahan plans to continue his research by mapping out more lakes in the region and collecting more lab data this upcoming fall. Brahan said he plans to submit his findings to be considered for publication

Winners were announced on Monday, April 20. A full list of all the winners and their projects can be found here.

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