2018 Goddard Keynote Scholarship Finalists

The National Space Club & Foundation is pleased to share the six finalists for the 2018 Goddard Keynote Scholarship. The leadership was both impressed and inspired by these excellent candidates - we consider them all a part of the Space Club family. If you are interested in contacting the candidates below for academic or employment opportunities, please reach out to lmaysonet@spaceclub.org.

Winner: Samantha O'Sullivan

Samantha O'Sullivan has won the National Space Club & Foundation Keynote Scholarship, securing her role as the keynote speaker during the Club's 61st Annual Robert H. Goddard Memorial Dinner on Friday, March 16, 2018 at the Washington Hilton.

Ms. O'Sullivan is a senior at School Without Walls, an outstanding public magnet high school established in 1971, in Washington, D.C. She aspires to study Astrophysics after graduation. Ms. O'Sullivan's passion for space education and volunteer work with underserved minority students through STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) outreach set her apart. Her impressive list of honors and accomplishments include working as a research intern and educator at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, being named a National Merit Commended Scholar, and serving as Class President from 2015 to 2017. Ms. O'Sullivan hopes to eventually fulfill her dream of becoming an astronaut working on the International Space Station.

Finalist: Adam Boro

Adam Boro is a sophomore aerospace engineering student at the University of Maryland. He's extremely involved on and off campus. For the 2017-2018 school year, he has been one of two Norris Space View Interns at the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics national headquarters. On top of that, he is a full-time student in the Aerospace Honors and Science, Discovery, and Universe Scholars programs on campus. Mr. Boro has been recognized for his career and academic achievements in Aerospace America Magazine's December Edition in a featured article. He is also the Media Team Leader and on the Controls Team for the world record-breaking manned solar-powered helicopter team, Gamera-S. When he's not working, he loves to use videography and photography to share stories on the website he created, www.adamboro.co. Mr. Boro plans to continue his education after his undergraduate degree and to pursue his dream of becoming an astronaut. He also aspires to work at NASA, being a part of a team making manned space missions possible. His goal in life is to inspire others to have the same curiosity and love for the Universe that he has.

Finalist: Julia Di

Julia Di is a student studying at Columbia University. She will graduate with a B.S in Electrical Engineering and a minor in Computer Science in May 2018. She is best known at Columbia for starting a popular engineering organization, the Columbia Space Initiative (CSI). Under her vision, CSI has launched high-altitude balloons, fired off rockets, and won numerous NASA design challenges. After graduation, she will pursue a Ph.D in space robotics, and later on hopes to start her own lab at NASA JPL

Finalist: Annika Vargas

Annika Vargas is a 2018 senior at Kettle Run High School. She is the Co-Captain of her schools model rocket team that competes in the Team America Rocketry Challenge, and an active member of a FIRST Robotics Competition robotics team for all four years. She has been flying model rockets with her father since she was six years old. Every summer for the past ten years, she has attended Space Camp in Huntsville Alabama. In 2017 she participated in the Virginia Aerospace Science Technology Scholars summer program. Not only does she enjoy STEM activities but she enjoys more artistic activities such as jewelry making, playing the ukulele, and writing. She is a Girl Scout and has earned the Silver Award and her writing has been recognized in the Scholastic Art and Writing Award competition with a Silver Key. She is also a first-degree black belt and loves to help others learn new skills and overcome challenges. In the future she hopes to inspire young girls to pursue a career in the STEM field, and continue to speak and inspire others at programs such as Girls in Technology, an event that she has been invited to speak at three times. She plans to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering or computer science and to never stop reaching for new knowledge and always look to inspire others to challenge their own abilities and reach for the stars.

Finalist: Alexis Williams

Alexis D. Williams is currently a senior attending Elizabeth Seton High School in Bladensburg, MD. At Seton she is taking the Leaning, Engineering And Design (LEAD) course of study. This fall, she will be a freshman at the University of Maryland's Clark School of Engineering, where she will be studying aerospace engineering. At, Seton, Alexis is the Founder and President of the Science Club, Captain of the Cyber Patriots Club, Vice President of Girls Who Code, and Co-founder and Co-President of the Historian's Club. She is also a very active member of several other Seton organizations including the National Honor Society. Ms. Williams was the recipient of the Women in Technology's "Ms. Inspiration Award" at their Leadership Award's banquet, last year. At the University of Maryland, Alexis hopes that her study of aerospace engineering will enable her to fulfill her dreams of developing a propulsion system that will efficiently carry us beyond cislunar space.

Finalist: Sam Zorek

Samuel Zorek is a junior at Rice University pursuing dual degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Policy Studies. At Rice, he serves as the president of Rice Eclipse, a student rocket team comprised of over 70 members that develops hybrid rocket engines and flies solid motor launch vehicles. He has previously interned for Lockheed Martin on the Orion Landing and Recovery Systems team, conducted space policy work for the Commercial Spaceflight Federation, and researched in the Space Systems and Cyber Warfare laboratories at the Naval Postgraduate School. Upon graduation in 2019, he hopes to enter the space industry and contribute to the exciting projects that will facilitate a more prosperous, multi-planetary future for humanity.