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Winning QLI Proposal Promotes Safety in Numbers

NEW YORK, NY- The New York Community Trust capped off the 17th Annual Quality of Life INNOVATIONS (QLI) Reception and Awards Ceremony by presenting this year's top three teams with scholarships in front of nearly 200 guests attending the prestigious event at Microsoft. Judges saw eight presentations earlier in the day for the final round of competition, with one team coming out on top as Ryan Ramphal, Jia Li Wang, and Gregory Zajac, all of Benjamin N. Cardozo High School in Queens, N.Y., claimed the first place trophy for their proposal "Find it Fast: Redefining Home Addresses Could Save Your Life."

The winning team tackled the critical issue of emergency responders being delayed or unable to locate residences due to addresses that are missing, difficult to see or read. Their research proved that consumers are not aware of the law that requires an address to be plainly discernable from the public street, in Arabic numerical or alphabet letters that are a minimum of four inches in height. Their proposed solutions include running a "Check Your Address" campaign alongside an existing "Change Your Smoke Alarm Battery Days" effort, and recruiting home improvement stores to display signage reminding customers about New York City Address code requirements,

"Solutions to the problem we addressed can save lives." said team member Gregory Zajac.

Second place winners Sumaira Mian and Nayab Shahid of Sheepshead Bay High School in Brooklyn, N.Y. had an impressive proposal entitled "Keeping New York City Coasts Clean by Going Green." Their solutions to tackle the growing problem of pollution at local beaches due to storm runoff include awareness campaigns, green rooftops, and rain gardens.

Rounding out the top three was Allisha Parvez, also of Sheepshead Bay High School, who looked for an answer to contaminated water supplies in her proposal "H2O Just Say No! The Prevalence of Pharmaceuticals in New York City Drinking Water." Ms. Parvez recommends installing an activated charcoal filtration system and promoting the TakeAway Environmental Return system at post offices among other possible solutions.

"All proposals in the QLI competition have been outstanding and each one has the potential to make a significant difference in New York City's quality of life." said w!se President and CEO Phyllis Frankfort.

About Quality of Life INNOVATIONS

QLI is a youth development and college readiness program of Working in Support of Education (w!se), that invites high school students to become social entrepreneurs by using applied research to solve a real-world problem. Students identify an important social issue, undertake scholarly research, develop feasible solutions and have the opportunity to submit their proposal for change to the QLI Scholarship Competition.

About w!se

Working In Support of Education (w!se) is an educational 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to developing financial literacy, college and workplace readiness.

For more information about QLI and other w!se programs, please visit www.wise-ny.org

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