



**2021 Recipient ~ Harrison Du
Rye Neck High School, Class of 2021**

I have a mission to repress the nicotine epidemic and to serve as an advocate for the youth. Before I committed to action, I started doing research on the statistics and effects of vaping in my school's ILP. In SADD, I voiced the vaping problem in front of hundreds of students. I further expanded on awareness of the issue in a video posted by Governor Cuomo, where I urged action to address the lack of quitting resources and the dangers of addiction. I advanced cessation efforts by speaking directly to Senator Mayer, suggesting for more youth cessation workshops. Over the past year, I worked 3-4 hours a week for Students Against Nicotine as the Quitting Director to provide cessation resources. To this end, I reserved a spot for a Safe to Quit program at Mamaroneck United Methodist Church, which was cancelled due to COVID.

Then I turned to legislative advocacy by writing testimonies to raise tobacco taxes (researched to increase abstinence) in a budget forum, which were announced to several senators, and in the past such budgets have passed under my organization. As a website moderator I enticed more students to join my efforts. I also helped to create several educational videos. To educate a statewide audience of over 50 active participants, I worked as a Co-Moderator and technical support in conjunction with the AHA, Reality Check, WestMed, and others to bring an interactive educational forum on tobacco products, debunking myths, and ridding stigmas that pair vaping and shame together in order for peers to be supported by friends and families. This isn't the end of my commitment: for as long as the nicotine issue continues, I will continue to make great efforts in education and legislative advocacy to better the health of my community.