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Contact: Nicole Green, Animalearn

Phone: 1-800-729-2287

Email: ngreen@animalearn.org

California 7th Grader Recognized as Humane Student of the Year



Pictured: Indigo with her dog, Vincent.

JENKINTOWN, PA (December 2019)—Indigo Prasad, a 7th grader from Mark Day School in San Rafael, California, has been selected as Animalearn’s Humane Student of the Year. The award is given annually to students with an outstanding commitment to furthering humane science education, and this year, recognizes Indigo's actions motivated by her compassion for frogs used in education.

Indigo, 12, with aspirations of becoming a doctor, decided to use her science fair project to persuade her peers that dissection is unnecessary to a quality science education and to opt out of their upcoming dissection assignment.

With her school’s science fair theme of sustainability, Indigo started her project with two goals in mind: to inform students that traditional frog dissection is cruel and unsustainable, and to show that technological alternatives have replaced the need for traditional dissection.

“Our school’s mission statement includes, ‘strive to teach, learn and live in a sustainable way,’ and ‘integrate technology for learning,’ and two of our school’s Pillars of Character are caring and respect,” writes Indigo. “This was the perfect opportunity to follow my school’s mission and pillars of character while doing my science fair project on frog dissection alternatives.”

Indigo hopes to not only enlighten her classmates about the problems with dissection, but also to qualify for the state science fair to share her findings with teachers and students from other schools.

“I was horrified at what I found out in my research. I never realized that thousands of frogs are killed this way for classrooms all over the country,” Indigo recalls. “...[dissection] also teaches students that it is okay to kill and throw out animals when you’re done with them. That is not caring or respectful.”

Animalearn works with students like Indigo, who do not want to dissect animals in science labs, by providing guidance and humane non-animal resources that can be used to replace specimen dissection.

“We are proud to call Indigo our Humane Student of the Year. Her passion and dedication to animals shines bright and I hope that she continues to use her voice to advocate for animals used in science education,” said Director of Animalearn, Nicole Green.

In thanks for the Humane Student award Indigo stated “The award has inspired me to continue my work on frog conservation beyond this science project, with the hopes that I can encourage schools—not only my school, but schools throughout California—to replace traditional frog dissection with a more humane option.”

As our Humane Student awardee, Indigo will receive \$1,000 towards dissection alternatives for her school.

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Animalearn, a division of the American Anti -Vivisection Society, works with educators, students, policy makers and others to achieve quality humane science education without the harmful use of animals. Animalearn’s free loan program, The Science Bank, is the largest lending program in the U.S. and offers humane science products that enable educators to teach and students to learn anatomy, physiology, and psychology lessons without harming animals. For more information visit Animalearn.org.