iSchool Student Selected to Attend Clinton Global Initiative University Conference

School of Information Studies (iSchool) sophomore Jezrel Sabaduquia and his project team have been invited to attend the Clinton Global Initiative University Conference (CGIU) at the University of California, Berkeley, in April.

Jezrel Sabaduquia

The annual conference brings together over 1,000 students from around the world to discuss pressing global issues. Students have the opportunity to network, learn and acquire funding for their commitments. Each team presents a detailed business proposal for a global initiative that targets pressing societal issues in education, human rights, climate change, poverty alleviation or public health.

Sabaduquia is co-founder and president of Project S.C.I. (Sustainability, Creativity and Innovation). The project is an environmental and educational initiative that seeks to improve waste management on campus and help the local community of elementary school students.

At the CGIU conference, Sabaduquia's team will pitch an idea regarding environmental protection and climate change to a panel of judges they hope will qualify them for the Resolution Project, a global initiative that will fund students' commitments up to $5,000.
“As the president of the initiative, my plan is to be as interactive as possible during the conference,” Sabaduquia says. “We are on track to film a short promotional video to show what the initiative is about. I believe that relying on visual communication complemented by good public speaking skills can result in an effective and eloquent pitch.”

Sabaduquia says the original idea to initiate Project S.C.I. was born out of the team’s passion for aviation and environmental education.

“My team and I, who are my best friends since freshmen year in high school, all graduated from Aviation High School in New York City in 2014. That is a specialized high school that trains students to become certified aircraft technicians. We have always been passionate about airplanes and wanted to pursue this passion in college,” he says. “One night, while we were sitting on my friend's bed, we saw a half-empty water bottle. It looked like an aircraft fuselage. We then asked ourselves, 'what can we do that involves water bottles that will address a pressing global issue in one of the five categories?' After lengthy brainstorming, we came up with the idea of Project S.C.I. (pronounced ‘Sky’).”

The team is working on a project to improve waste management on campus by encouraging students to recycle their bottles and cans. Sabaduquia says, "colleges, especially Syracuse University, are known to produce tons of waste and these include thousands of discarded bottles and cans each year. We plan to collect these bottles and cans, sterilize them and bring them to a local elementary school and teach local students how to make model airplanes. We learned how to make these when we were in high school, so the idea is near and dear to our hearts. At the same time, we will introduce the kids to the idea of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) at an elementary level and share our passion for aviation and the STEM field with them."

The invention aims to inspire local students to follow their passions and interests and, of course, strive to stay in school. In the next phase, the team will sell these model airplanes on campus and at art shows with the profits donated back to the elementary schools. Not only will waste management at Syracuse University improve but also local elementary school students will learn and have fun.

“iSchool professor Jeff Rubin gave me a lot of feedback and positive reinforcement about the initiative that really helped us push through it,” Sabaduquia says. "For his class I had to do a project that involved creating a business plan that emphasized the technologies and concepts we learned in class. I actually did mine on Project S.C.I. and that really opened tons of ideas in implementing technology into Project S.C.I. The University is paying for my team's flights to attend the CGIU conference. They appreciated our initiative to go beyond the traditional realms of a classroom to learn and experience new things, while at the same time giving back to the community."
Going forward, Sabaduquia and his team are fully committed to Project S.C.I. The CGIU conference is an annual event that they plan on attending for the remainder of their college careers. The team will also constantly update the initiative and implement new ideas to keep it fresh and relevant. Project S.C.I. plans to expand to other colleges and universities across the country in the hopes of making the initiative a global contribution.