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Written by Chris Boyle, plainview@antonnews.com Friday, 07 February 2014 00:00

Some scientists toil and struggle their entire careers to obtain the singular honor of having their research findings officially published for their peers to read and review; now imagine that you're a college student who has managed to achieve that distinction at a mere 23 years of age.



Sounds like someone has a bright future ahead of them.

Bethpage resident Michael Santalucia's paper on climate change made a mark in the scientific community.

Michael Santalucia, born, raised, and residing in Bethpage, is currently attending **Suffolk Community College** while studying Liberal Arts; he hopes to transfer over to Stony Brook University at the end of this semester, where his goal is to major in geology.

"I've always been interested in science my entire life...I was that kid that got straight A's on the science tests when everyone else was just confused," he said. "Science has always interested me. I always watched the Discovery Channel and Channel 13 as a kid...yeah, I was that kid."

As a child, Santalucia said that after watching a certain blockbuster movie involving modern man re-creating dinosaurs and the ensuing havoc that occurred, the direction he envisioned his life taking was immediately and firmly cemented; while later experiences only served to broaden the scope of his focus, he said his overall commitment to the sciences never wavered.

"I saw that movie Jurassic Park as a kid, and that pretty much sold me on paleontology," he said. "But a lot of the things that have been happening in the world have broadened my focus on geology. Things like earthquakes, volcanoes, our dependence on oil, things like that. There are a whole bunch of fields in geology that I can go into other than paleontology...I've been looking at a whole lot of options."

During his Meteorology 124 class this semester at Suffolk Community College, Santalucia said that his teacher, Scott Mandia, doled out an assignment that would end up having quite an impact upon his blossoming college career.

“What we had to do was go onto a website called ‘Skeptical Science’ and go over a list of climate change myths, from the most prevalent to the most obscure,” he said. “We had to pick one of those topics, do research, and put together a paper either backing our chosen myth or refuting it.”

The paper that he ended up writing, entitled ‘Hurricanes Aren’t Linked To Global Warming,’ deals with the myth that climate change and hurricanes are not related; Santalucia successfully debunked that assertion after a great deal of research and hard work, he said.

“I found that, in accordance with the myth, rising temperatures around the globe are causing warmer oceans, which fuel these hurricanes...so, as the planet warms, we’ll get more hurricanes and they’ll be stronger because of the energy that they pick up from the warmer waters,” he said. “I chose this topic because we just had Superstorm Sandy, right before that we had Tropical Storm Irene, and both of those were pretty bad for Long Island, and knowing about the risk of hurricanes and storm swells can really help us specifically as Long Islanders.”

Santalucia was informed that his paper (as well as those of two of his classmates) was judged to be so good that excerpts from it will be featured in a peer-reviewed article that Madia will be publishing in an upcoming edition of The Journal of Geophysical Research, a nationally-distributed periodical; Santalucia said that having the honor of publication bestowed upon him at such an early age has only re-affirmed his resolve to devote his life to the loftiest of goals — the pursuit of science and the betterment of mankind.

“It’s a pretty big deal to get into this journal,” Santalucia said. “And as someone who’s always been interested in science, having anything I do published in any journal, as small as it may be, is a huge honor...and hopefully it’s not the last one.”

To read Michael Santalucia’s ‘Hurricanes Aren’t Linked to Global Warming’ article, visit: www.skepticalscience.com/Three-perfect-grade-debunkings-climate-misinformation.html.