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San Diego Student Among 15 Global Finalists At Google Science Fair

Eighth grade San Diego Jewish Academy student Jonah Kohn was recently named one of 15 finalists in the 2012 international Google Science Fair. Jonah's project uses tactile sound to enhance music for individuals with hearing loss through vibrations, and has the potential to enhance millions of lives.

San Diego, CA – June 11, 2012 – San Diego Jewish Academy (SDJA) eighth grade student Jonah Kohn was recently notified that he is one of 5 finalists in his age group out of a total 15 finalists in the 2012 Google Science Fair, which received thousands of entries from over a 100 countries worldwide. Jonah's project, *Good Vibrations: Improving the Music Experience for People with Hearing Loss Using Multi-Frequency Tactile Sound*, has the potential to affect millions of people with hearing loss by enhancing their ability to enjoy music.

Jonah's project was inspired in a loud classroom where he and a friend were playing chords on a guitar, but couldn't hear the music over the noise. After experimenting, they learned they could hear the music clearly by placing their teeth lightly on the head of the guitar's neck. "No matter how loud the classroom was, I could hear the guitar," said Jonah.

When asked to come up with a middle school science project, Jonah connected his inability to hear the guitar to the experience of individuals with hearing loss and hypothesized that his experience hearing it by using his teeth might enable him to find a way for people with hearing loss to have a superior experience of music.

To conduct the experiment, Jonah built a device that converts music to vibrations and delivers them to users' bodies. Jonah's test group consisted of people with normal hearing, cochlear implants and hearing aids. The groups listened to both modern and classical music first with speakers only, and then with speakers in tandem with his device. There was no effect on people with normal hearing, but the majority of subjects with hearing loss experienced a significant increase in their enjoyment. "Cochlear implant users experienced a 93% increase in their enjoyment of the music," stated Jonah.

Jonah's project won first place at the California State Science Fair and placed first at the Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair. Jonah will fly to Google headquarters in Mountain View, California on July 21 to present his project to the Google Science Fair judges and compete for \$100,000 in scholarships and other prizes.

According to the World Health Organization, 278 million people worldwide have moderate to profound hearing loss in both ears, which makes the implications of Jonah's research extraordinarily impactful. "I was surprised to make it to the regional top 90, and amazed to be chosen for the final 15. I feel very honored to be selected by judges who are top scientists from around the world and I'm excited to be a part of this competition."

About SDJA:

Serving infants to high school seniors, San Diego Jewish Academy challenges students to achieve their full academic potential and become individuals of strong moral and ethical character, while inspiring them to make Judaism a vital and relevant aspect of their lives.

For more information on San Diego Jewish Academy, visit www.sdja.com.
For more information on Jonah Kohn's project and the Google Science Fair, [click here](#).

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Photo Caption: Jonah with the guitar he built and that helped inspire his award winning science project.