

THE MORNING JOURNAL

Monday, March 28, 2016

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morningjournal.com



COURTESY OF THE HORIZON SCIENCE ACADEMY

Jalia Smalley, 17, of Lorain, won first place at the Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair on March 17, 2016.

Lorain student wins big at science and engineering fair

By Keith Reynolds

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Jalia Smalley, a 17-year-old junior at the Horizon Science Academy, 760 Tower Blvd. in Lorain, won first place out of 554 contenders for her project at the Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair on March 17.

“I was flabbergasted that I won out of all these students,” Jalia said. “I’ve competed several times, and this is the first year I’ve won. Last year, I came in second place.”

Jalia took home the grand prize and will move on to compete at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. She also received first in the Engineering category, as well as recognition from the American Association of Blacks in Energy Northeast Ohio Chapter, American Society of Mechanical Engineers - Cleveland Section, Case Western University Women Faculty of the School of Medicine, Institute of Electrical Electronics Engineers - Cleveland Section and Parker Hannifin Corporation.

“I’m very proud; I don’t know if I

could be more proud,” said Alicia Smalley, Jalia’s mother. “It’s very huge and I didn’t really realize how huge it was until I was sitting at the Science Fair.”

Despite Jalia’s success in her scientific endeavors, she said she isn’t in a rush to get through her last year of high school. But that doesn’t stop her from planning for her future.

“I plan to go into computer engineering,” she said. “I want to go to Carnegie Mellon or the University of Akron.”

Jalia’s hard work also has earned

the pride of the Horizon Science Academy community.

“We are extremely proud of the hard work and dedication that she’s put forth,” said Jayson Bendick, Horizon’s community outreach coordinator. “She’s done a fabulous job. We’re very proud of her. She’s an inspiration to a lot of the kids here.”

Horizon sent 18 students to Science and Engineering Fair. All of the youngsters fared well in the competition netting four honorable mentions, 10 bronze medals, two silver medals and one gold medal.