New Canaan, CT (April 12, 2019). NCHS junior Pablo Villa won First Place in the national drone video competition sponsored by PCS Edventures!, Inc. entitled: “How Would You Drone? Drones for Good Video Contest.” Villa’s winning entry includes aerial drone footage he took himself as well as interviews with the Milford Police Department, Castle Hill Farms in Newtown, and a New Canaan real estate agent.

“After doing research, I found out that the Milford Police Department has a drone squad,” said Villa. “In the video, I interviewed Chief Jim O’Keefe, who helped me out a lot. He told me how they use drones to keep the public safe, and he gave me video footage from a drone used on a closed case. At Castle Hill Farms, I interviewed one of the farmers who explained how they use drones for the good of the farm. Finally, I interviewed a real estate agent, Elizabeth Rowley, who told me how much they use drones in the real estate market, and how they help to sell houses. Then, I stitched everything together and added a voice over with my friend Emily Wasser.”

While putting the video together, Villa consulted with NCHS TV Broadcasting teacher Roman Cebulski. “Pablo was a student in my ‘Intro to Television’ class last year,” said Mr. Cebulski. “He approached me for my thoughts and some guidance. I knew this would be the perfect project for him, because he really knows the drone, he’s got a creative eye, and he’s dedicated.”

A total of 64 student videos - 60-90 seconds in length - were submitted. After an initial round of public voting with 14,096 ballots cast, the top 15 contestants moved into a final round, where a panel of STEM and drone experts judged each entry on originality, solution, creativity, and quality.

As part of his 1st prize award, Villa will receive the Discover Drones Club Pack valued at $4046, which includes: two RubiQ modular drone kits, two FrSky QX 7 radio controllers, two Fat Shark Recon FPV goggles, and a KODAK PIXPRO ORBIT 360 Satellite Pack.

Villa’s interest in drones evolved from his affinity to model air planes. “I mostly learned to fly drones and planes on my own,” said Villa. “Planes led me to find out more about drones, as they became more advanced and available.”

The NCHS junior has a drone license with the FAA for commercial drone usage, which means he can legally get paid for video work he does with drones. He is building a model plane for independent study at NCHS and hopes to major in aerospace when he attends college. “I know that I’m very persistent,” he said. “That’s probably the most accurate word I would use to describe myself, and it's one of the reasons a lot of the stuff I do actually ends up working out”. “

MEDIA CONTACT: Michael Horyczun
Director of Communications, New Canaan Public Schools
mike.horyczun@ncps-k12.org; office: (203) 594-4783, cell: (203) 970-2133.

# # # #