Bainbridge student is presidential scholar

Alyssa Bryan of Bainbridge has spent the last four years working in Case Western Reserve University’s Center for Global Health and Diseases and studying the effects of malaria on fetal and neonatal health.

This important work generally is reserved for medical doctors and graduate fellows, but Aly began her research when she was just 14 years old. Now a senior at Hathaway Brown, the daughter of Edward and Fawn Bryan is considered to be an outstanding student who is described by teachers as hardworking and tenacious.

They also can call her a 2013 U.S. presidential scholar, one of the most prestigious honors for American 12th-graders. All of this year’s scholars, along with the teachers they say have most influenced them, have been invited to Washington for a gala celebration June 15-16. Aly selected William Adler, her math teacher the last four years, to join her and receive a special teacher recognition award.

“Not only has Mr. Adler taught me everything from trigonometry to advanced multivariable calculus, but he has also taught me to seek help in academic situations when needed and to always give 110 percent effort in all of my work,” she said. “My best memories from high school all have Mr. Adler in them.”

For his part, Mr. Adler said he’s humbled that Aly calls him her most influential teacher. “She’s always doing something amazing. It has truly been a privilege watching Aly grow as a student of mathematics. It is clear that she really enjoys the challenge of a difficult math problem and the joy she gets when she figures it out.”

Alyssa Bryan

Aly is one of only four Ohio students selected as a presidential scholar based on her academic record and “promise of greatness.” From nearly 1 million graduating high school seniors, approximately 3,900 students were identified as candidates, with 550 semifinalists selected. The names of this year’s 141 presidential scholars were released Monday by the U.S. Department of Education.

In addition to her work at CWRU through Hathaway Brown’s Science Research & Engineering Program, Aly is captain of HB’s speech and debate team and lead mentor for the TRUST (Transforming Relations to Unite Students Together) program organized by the school’s Center for Multicultural Affairs.

She works closely with the admission office to welcome new students to the Upper School as Cold Key co-president. She traveled to Germany and France during her time at HB and is preparing a thesis addressing policy recommendations for Guantanamo Bay during President Obama’s second term.

In 2012, she earned a perfect score on the ACT, was a Siemens competition semifinalist and recently was inducted into the HB chapter of the Cum Laude Society.

Aly will attend Davidson College in North Carolina, where she has been named a John Montgomery Bell Scholar in recognition of her intellectual curiosity and commitment to local and global communities. When it comes to career paths, she doesn’t want to limit her options, so she’s planning to major in political science, minor in French and take classes on the school’s pre-med track.

There won’t be much time for Aly to bask in the glow of celebration in the nation’s capital next month. Immediately following the U.S. Presidential Scholars Awards ceremony, she’ll board a plane and head to Birmingham, Ala., where she and her teammates will take part in the National Forensic League High School National Speech & Debate Tournament.