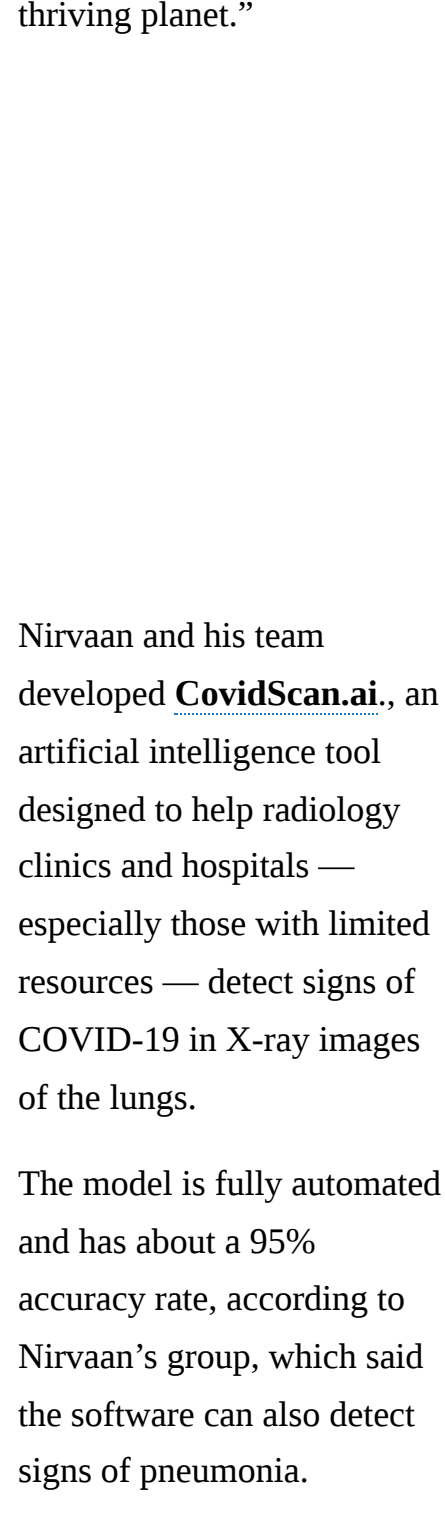


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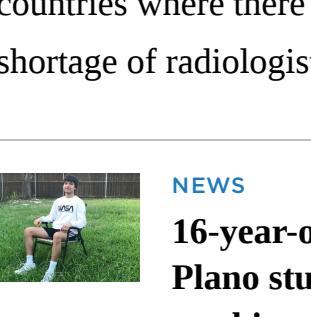
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# Plano teen working on COVID-19 diagnosis software earns honor from National Geographic

Moksh Nirvaan, 17, and his team developed a platform for using artificial intelligence to quickly detect signs of COVID-19 in X-ray images of patients' lungs.



Moksh Nirvaan, 17, and his team developed a platform for using artificial intelligence to quickly detect signs of COVID-19 in X-ray images of patients' lungs. (Photo provided by Moksh Nirvaan)



Moksh Nirvaan, the 17-year-old Plano student who helped develop software that could speed up the diagnosis of COVID-19 in patients, has been recognized with a \$10,000 grant from the National Geographic Society.

He is among a group of 23 other 17- to 25-year-olds from around the world who were honored through National Geographic's 2020 [Young Explorers](#) program.

National Geographic describes the program as "a global community of young people with empathy, tenacity, passion and an insatiable drive to seek solutions to build a sustainable future and thriving planet."

Nirvaan and his team developed [CovidScan.ai](#), an artificial intelligence tool designed to help radiology clinics and hospitals — especially those with limited resources — detect signs of COVID-19 in X-ray images of the lungs.

The model is fully automated and has about a 95% accuracy rate, according to Nirvaan's group, which said the software can also detect signs of pneumonia.

Nirvaan said in a phone interview that using such artificial intelligence programs can address inequities in health care around the world. The young researchers hope their program will be used to resolve backlogs of X-rays, particularly in rural areas and countries where there is a shortage of radiologists.



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BY TERI WEBSTER ·

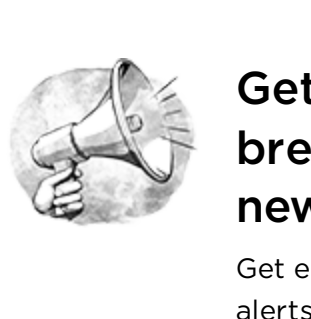
Since *The Dallas Morning News* [first reported on Nirvaan's work](#) last summer, he and his team have updated the program so it runs more smoothly.

He said he was pleasantly surprised by the recognition from National Geographic.

"I am always improving myself and learned about the opportunity and wanted to maximize the impact," Nirvaan said. "So, I submitted the project and thankfully, it's working."

In addition to the National Geographic award, Nirvaan received a \$2,000 award at the Facebook Developers Circle Community Challenge for a YouTube [tutorial](#) on the CovidScan.ai software.

A former Clark High School student, Nirvaan attends the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science (TAMS) at the University of North Texas. The program for gifted high school-age students has them withdraw from high school and take courses full-time at UNT.



**Teri Webster**, Special Contributor. Teri Webster is a freelancer covering Plano for The Dallas Morning News. She has worked as a staff writer and freelancer for several area news outlets and is a regular contributor to Fort Worth Weekly. Email story tips to [writerteriw@gmail.com](mailto:writerteriw@gmail.com).

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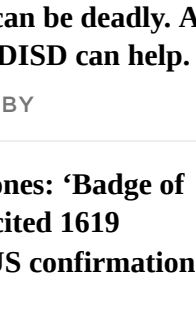
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