

The Intelligencer

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From left, Jennifer Raymond, scholarship and recruitment manager of the Philadelphia Outward Bound School; Jonathan Sim; his father Chhal Sim; and Elizabeth Higgins-Beard, CEO of Award USA. COURTESY OF AWARD USA

CB South senior lauded with Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

Staff reports

Central Bucks High School South senior Jonathan Sim, of Chalfont, was recently recognized with an Infinite Potential Commendation from the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award program.

Sim was one of only five candidates selected out of more than 1,000 U.S. program participants. Winners were selected for demonstrating perseverance, creativity and a high level of achievement while working on awards.

Sim was a bronze award holder in the program. He's currently working toward the silver award with the Philadelphia Outward Bound School.

Sims began with Outward Bound as a seventh grader through their Get Out and Lead program to pursue his interest in leadership.

For the required skills section of the award, Sims learned web design and coding. He volunteers with Free Library of Philadelphia and is an online English tutor for a student in Venezuela through the youth-led nonprofit, SynYouth.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a global, personalized youth development program for 14- to 24-year-olds that complements formal classroom learning and focuses on setting progressive goals that build essential life skills. Founded in 1956, it oper-

ates in more than 130 countries and territories with more than 1 million global participants.

There are three progressive award levels — bronze, silver and gold. The award program challenges young people to develop new skills, get physically active, cultivate a sense of adventure outdoors, volunteer in communities and get outside comfort zones.

"We are inspired by their efforts and celebrate the impact of their work for themselves and their communities," said Buffy Higgins-Beard, CEO of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award USA. "We are honored to hear their stories of achievement and celebrate their persistence, resilience, personal development and community involvement."

Sims said his work on the award broadened his perspective on himself, others and his community, "I now recognize the importance of health and wellbeing while balancing academics, extracurriculars and everything else significant in my life.

"This experience has helped me to recognize the quality of life throughout other parts of the world, which has opened my mind to the work that needs to be done to improve the world for all. Without the award, I would not have learned and acknowledged the critical values I now know today."