



Press Release: *Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities* gives award to exceptional student

(For immediate release)

January 10, 2023

The awards committee for the *Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities* announced today that the 2023 Shriver-Kennedy Student Achievement Award will be given to Jiya Rai. Ms. Rai is a 14-year old international open water para swimmer from India and a world record holder in open water swimming. She is currently working toward becoming the first and youngest individual with autism to swim seven oceans. She has been selected for her exemplary achievement in sports including noteworthy speed, distance, and her remarkable success in difficult open water conditions. According to her nominator and father, Mr. Madan Rai, Ms. Rai has won numerous awards for her remarkable swimming achievements. This includes, among others, receipt of the 2022 Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Purashkar in the sports category, presented by the Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Ms. Rai uses her achievements to increase autism awareness and break down barriers for individuals with disabilities.

This prestigious award is presented by *The Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD)*, a special interest association within the *Council for Exceptional Children*, the largest international professional organization in the world dedicated to supporting the needs of students with disabilities. Originating in 1963, DADD is a leading voice in the field of education for students with autism, intellectual disability, and other developmental disabilities through research dissemination, active participation in the creation of nationally-recognized professional practice standards, and robust professional networking. The award ceremony will take place at DADD's annual conference in Clearwater, Florida on January 19, 2023.

For more information, contact: Dr. Jordan Shurr, DADD Awards Chair:
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Information on the Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities:

<http://www.daddcec.com/>

Information on Jiya Rai's accomplishments from the Official Indian Navy Facebook

page: <https://www.facebook.com/IndianNavy/posts/ms-jiya-rai-an-eleven-year-old-daughter-of-madan-rai-master-chief-at-arms-ii-cre/1136140753407450/>