MED-EL USA Announces Winner of International Ideas4Ears Hearing Loss Invention Contest for Children

Grand Prize will Send 8-year-old Girl from Englewood, Colorado, to MED-EL’s International Headquarters in Austria to meet other Child Inventors & Makers of Her Cochlear Implant

March 1, 2019 – (DURHAM, NC) – MED-EL USA announced that Jaylin Macerinskas, 8, from Englewood, Colo., was named the U.S. winner of the 2018-19 Ideas4Ears invention competition. A Grand Prize winner, Jaylin won a trip for two to MED-EL's international headquarters in Innsbruck, Austria, in June. The contest challenged children from around the world aged 6-12 years old to create an invention to improve the quality of life for people living with hearing loss.

"Jaylin and I are elated and feel so honored to be chosen for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Heather Macerinskas, Jaylin’s mother who will accompany her to Austria in June. "We are beside ourselves with excitement that we are being given the chance to travel to another country, experience a new culture, and be able to share our story. Jaylin has such a vibrant personality that has never been dulled by her hearing loss. I am beyond proud of Jaylin and the ideas she created through this contest. I know this opportunity will build her confidence, and hopefully that of many other kids with hearing loss."

During the trip to MED-EL’s headquarters, the winners will have the opportunity to meet other Grand Prize winners and young inventors from around the world, and will meet engineers and scientists behind MED-EL’s many life-changing inventions. A total of 341 children participated in the contest from 19 different countries, and of these 341 children, the top 9 worldwide invention ideas were chosen to win the trip. In addition to the U.S., this year’s winners hail from Chile, Belarus, India, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Spain.

"As an inventor myself, you are never too young to start inventing. The ideas from the children showed not only their vivid imagination, but a real concern for the practical and daily life aspects people with hearing loss and deafness often face," said Geoffrey Ball, inventor of the VIBRANT SOUNDBRIDGE. "I look forward to meeting the young inventors soon."

Competition entries came in the form of video presentations, detailed drawings, colorful paintings and even real-life prototypes, all aiming to improve the lives of people with hearing loss. Invention ideas included a special bed where people sleep overnight to get a laser treatment to restore the hair cells in the cochlea, an all in one submersible implant system and even a voice translating device for travelling that converts other people’s speech into the desired language.
About Hearing Loss in America
About 20 percent of Americans, or 48 million people, report some degree of hearing loss. According to the Hearing Loss Association of America, hearing loss has been shown to negatively impact nearly every dimension of the human experience, including physical health, emotional and mental health, perceptions of mental acuity, social skills, family relationships, and self-esteem, as well as work and school performance.\(^1\) The World Health Organization recommends a range of interventions to improve communication once hearing loss has occurred, including hearing implants.\(^2\)

About MED-EL
MED-EL Medical Electronics, a leader in implantable hearing solutions, is driven by a mission to overcome hearing loss as a barrier to communication. The Austrian-based, privately owned business was co-founded by industry pioneers Ingeborg and Erwin Hochmair, whose groundbreaking research led to the development of the world’s first micro-electronic multi-channel cochlear implant (CI), which was successfully implanted in 1977 and was the basis for what is known as the modern CI today. This laid the foundation for the successful growth of the company in 1990, when they hired their first employees. To date, MED-EL has grown to more than 2,000 employees and 33 subsidiaries worldwide.

The company offers the widest range of implantable and non-implantable solutions to treat all types of hearing loss, enabling people in 123 countries to enjoy the gift of hearing with the help of a MED-EL device. MED-EL’s global portfolio of hearing solutions includes cochlear and middle ear implant systems, a combined Electric Acoustic Stimulation hearing implant system as well as bone conduction devices. [www.medel.com](http://www.medel.com)

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