

Shihan Kanungo

10th grade | Henry M Gunn High School | Palo Alto, CA

Hobbies: I enjoy math, physics, history, literature, and reading – both fiction and non-fiction. I also love music – playing, composing, or even just listening to music.

Clubs: I am part of my school's math, physics, and programming clubs. I have competed on my school's science and math teams.

Honors and Achievements: ● US Physics Team 2024 ● Spirit of Ramanujan Fellowship, 2023 ● MIT PRIMES-USA, math research track. 2023, 2024. ● USAMO qualifier 2022 ● USAMTS Gold medal, 2023 ● Math Kangaroo, Level 12, US rank 4 (took it when I was 12 years old) ● AIME qualifier (×5) ● AMC12 DHR (×2)

Autobiography:

Mathematics is and has always been my primary interest, but since last summer, it has faced stiff competition from Physics. It started with the book *A Flying Circus of Physics*, which my dad and I used to read at bedtime. Having enjoyed it immensely, we were looking for other books of that nature when my dad discovered *Physics for Entertainment* by Ya. Perelman. It was just as fascinating as *Circus*. By this time I was properly hooked. I went on to read Richard Feynman's autobiography followed by *A Brief History of Time*. That was when I was sure I wanted to learn physics in earnest. I learnt a lot of physics that summer and continued exploring it on my own. This year I took the $F = ma$ exam and then the USAPhO. I am deeply honored and feel incredibly fortunate to be invited to be part of the US Physics team for 2024. While there, I hope to further my interest in Physics and to develop my intuition in the subject.

I have several other interests that complement my academic pursuits and help me both relax and experience beauty of a different nature. I have a profound resonance with music. I enjoy music in many forms – listening, performing, composing; and of many genres – classical, jazz, pop, rock, hip-hop, African, French, gypsy and so on. I have studied classical violin and classical piano. I have also taught myself many other instruments – saxophone, harmonica, electric and acoustic guitar, clarinet etc. In the past few summers, I have been attending Stanford Jazz Workshop, a summer camp at Stanford aimed mostly at developing jazz improvisation. I enjoy composing music, mostly jazz. I also love sports – I play tennis, soccer, and badminton, and also enjoy skateboarding, soccer juggling, and carrom. I run daily. I love to read, especially fantasy and adventure stories, dystopian science-fiction and graphic novels. Some of my all time favorite books are *Lord of the Rings*, *Lord of the Flies* and the Manga series *Blue Giant*. I also enjoy reading *Asterix*, *Tintin*, and *Calvin & Hobbes* and am proud to possess the entire collection of each. Fun fact: I have read *Tintin* in both English and French. On the weekends and holidays I like to bake. My favorite is chocolate cake but my proudest achievement is making chocolate eclairs after being inspired by “The Great British Baking Show”. My family prefers me to make pizza or huevos rancheros instead of desserts, since they are not big fans of sugar. From time to time I oblige. Recently I cooked a Moroccan dinner with five different dishes on the menu. That was a big hit!

For the future, I dream of developing my interests well enough to someday make significant contributions to the betterment of mankind. I believe that with love and continued attention one can achieve great things and solve many problems.