



## Woodstock Community Unit School District 200

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**Contact:** Kevin Lyons

815.337.3071

### WHS students' app selected for Google Showcase

Two enterprising Woodstock High School students, fueled by last year's project coming up just short, earned a second chance to present their invention in a Google Showcase later this month.

Krishna Patel and Eshaan Virani, both juniors, were selected for the Showcase waitlist last year while two of their classmates were selected to participate. Even though they'd completed Jai Sharma's AP computer science principles class last year, Sharma was happy to facilitate a second try.

"I was impressed about how last year's near miss really motivated them to crush it this year," Sharma said. "This really lit a fire under them."

The efforts paid off. Krishna and Eshaan are scheduled to make their presentation on April 25 in Chicago. The students are participating in a program sponsored by the Illinois Science and Technology Coalition that matches them with a professional mentor. Their app concept, Navigo, was selected from among a few hundred applicants from across the state.

Navigo is an app that helps guide people through any airport in the world. Eshaan said he got the idea after hearing his mother talk about elderly relatives visiting from India who sometimes had difficult times making their way through US airports.

"It's a growing problem worldwide. We thought it would be helpful if there was an app that directed people through airports in their own language to keep them from getting lost," Eshaan said.

Krishna said Navigo helps direct travellers to terminals, through security, checking luggage and finding gates. There are large buttons for easy visual use as well as voice assistance that will offer verbal instructions in multiple languages.

"It goes into the flight database and shows you the exact flight you need," Krishna said. "In the future, we want to make it so it can show you nearby restaurants and things like that."

Krishna and Eshaan said they receive tremendous support from their mentor, Vikas Goyal, a principal solutions architect at Microsoft. With his guidance, they introduced some AI components to their app, which Sharma said likely helped put them over the top.

"After they explained their concept to me, I realized that if they could pull it off, they were going to be shoe-ins for the Showcase this year," Sharma said.