SAILESH DAHAL AWARDED THE PRINCETON PRIZE IN RACE RELATIONS

Denver, CO – Sailesh Dahal, junior at Eaglecrest is awarded the Princeton Prize in Race Relations by Princeton University. James Mann, Princeton University alumni residing in Denver, presented Dahal with his prize at an award ceremony coordinated by ECDC African Community Center in Denver, a refugee resettlement agency that resettles more than 500 refugees each year.

Dahal and his family resettled as refugees in Denver, CO through ECDC African Community Center in 2008. While learning how to speak English, navigate U.S. school systems, becoming accustomed to the American Culture, Dahal also learned how to give back to his community.

A Princeton representative states “The Princeton Prize in Race Relations was created to identify and commend young people who are working to increase understanding and mutual respect among all races. Through this effort, we hope to inspire others to join in these or similar efforts, and to undertake initiatives of their own.” Princeton is strongly committed to advancing the cause of race relations on its campus. Among other efforts, in recent years, Princeton has:

- Increased the diversity of its faculty, staff, and student body
- Launched the Center for African American Studies to serve as a model for teaching and research on race in America
- Adopted the most progressive undergraduate financial aid program in the country
- Dedicated the Carl A. Fields Center for Equality and Cultural Understanding
- Launched a program of "sustained dialogue" on the subject of race relations among students, faculty, and staff.

With the Princeton Prize in Race Relations, the University intends to reach beyond its own campus to recognize the efforts of America's next generation of leaders. Dahal embodied all of the criteria. Dahal received his award in Denver and traveled to Princeton University for the Princeton Prize in Race Relations Symposium April 29-30, 2016.

In his winning essay, Dahal states, “When I first came to the United States, I spoke little to zero English, only words I had picked up in our cultural orientation in Nepal. My family and I immediately faced language barriers and cultural shocks. However, whenever I visited African Community Center, the organization that helped us resettle in America... I felt as I was closer to home, as there were people who shared the same life story as my family. This was a place our family would visit frequently. As I got older and when my English started to improve, I started volunteering at the agency. My father had started working there and would always come home
with stories of families not only from Nepal, but also Ethiopia, Ghana, Iran, and etc, who were facing the same problems we once had. Knowing how difficult starting a new life in a new country can be, and coupled with my past personal experiences, I knew I could help them in some way. Ever since, I have been volunteering whenever I have the time. My volunteer service at the African Community Center consists of working as a receptionist at the front desk, translator for some clients, as well as auditing files, entering data into the database, or whatever else the staff assign me to do."

To learn more about ECDC African Community Center, please visit www.acc-den.org. To learn more about the Princeton Prize in Race Relations, please visit http://www.princeton.edu/pprize.