

Patch Whiz Kid of the Week: Elana Bengualid

Can a jack-of-all trades become a master at one? In Elana Bengualid's case, we're sure she can.

By [Kirstin Fawcett](#)

**Elana Bengualid, 17, Scarsdale
12th Grader at Westchester Hebrew High School, Young Israel of
Scarsdale Member**



Whiz Kid's Accomplishment:

Although she's only 17, Elana Bengualid's schedule is as busy as a CEO's, and her resume as jam-packed as someone twice her age – except how many adults speak four languages (Hebrew, French, Spanish and English) and serve as the co-head of Westchester's undefeated girls' volleyball team, their school newspaper and a Jewish Action Committee that provides aid to needy Israelites?

Before you take a minute to gasp for breath, let's mention that Elana rounds out her extracurricular activities with Mock Trial team *and* assists podiatrist Dr. Bryan Kagan with a research project examining foot and hand dominance and footprints in criminal investigation. Now you can keel over.

Key to Awesomeness

An aspiring doctor, Elana has already pursued her future vocation through participating in medical clubs, research programs and conferences. She volunteers with Gilda's Club, an organization that offers free services to cancer patients, and she spent last summer performing biomedical research at the University of Pennsylvania.

Elana's desire to become a physician was solidified when she attended a medical ethics conference at Yeshiva University entitled "A Jewish Approach to a Beautiful Mind."

"I heard first-hand from doctors specializing in eating disorders, depression, addictions and mental health diseases that are prevalent amongst teenagers and young adults," Elana said. "This truly confirmed my desire to be a doctor as I heard these medical cases and how the doctors were able to help them."

Several weeks after the conference, Dr. Nancy Block, the dean of students at WHHS, asked Elana to research Orthodox Jewish beliefs about organ donation and publish her findings in the school newspaper. Elana studied halachic and medical views towards organ donation, and went so far as to contact Robby Berman, president of the Halachic Organ Donor Society, to speak at her school.

"I asked him to speak at my school because it would educate the students and force them to cogitate the significance of whether or not to check oneself off as an organ donor upon receiving their drivers' permits and licenses," Elana said.

Although Elana's future career choices seem endless, she is set in her goal of becoming a doctor.

“I am determined to pursue a career in medicine based on my love of science and desire to help others,” Elana said.

Can a jack-of-all trades become a master at one? In Elana’s case, we’re sure she can.