



Aarnav Garg, a 16-year-old Vernon Hills High School student, created an AI-powered app that can help lead to early detection of ovarian cancer. He was inspired by his mother's battle with the disease. **JOHN STARKS/DAILY HERALD**

Vernon Hills teen develops AI tool to look for ovarian cancer

By **Harris Horowitz**
DAILY HERALD CORRESPONDENT

Aarnav Garg is putting artificial intelligence to use to help solve a human problem with a personal connection.

The Vernon Hills High School junior's mother was diagnosed with Stage IV ovarian cancer when he was 10 years old. She is now cancer-free, and Aarnav, 16, has channeled his family's experience into creating an AI-powered early detection tool

designed to support ovarian cancer diagnoses.

Garg trained his algorithm, which he calls OvaScan, on a public repository of ultrasound imaging. His prototype can identify tumors from a scan and provide insight into the tumor's specific characteristics, including whether it is benign or malignant.

OvaScan currently exists as a mobile app, which Garg views as a jumping-off point to his larger vision of translating the prototype

into a web application that can be directly integrated into an ultrasound machine.

In September, Garg was among about 40 high school students from across the country recognized as a Fellow by the Davidson Institute, which awards scholarships to "high-achieving students" who have completed a "significant piece of work," according to the institute's website.

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Daniel Smrokowski, a United Airlines Special Olympics service ambassador, laughs with a traveler as he helps him print a boarding pass in Terminal 1 at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago Oct. 19. **JOHN STARKS/DAILY HERALD PHOTOS**

Israel continues West Bank offensive

By **Melanie Lidman**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEL AVIV, Israel — The Israeli military pressed ahead Sunday with a massive military operation in the occupied West Bank that has displaced hundreds of Palestinians and placed major restrictions on movement in response to a gun attack last week that killed two Israeli soldiers and wounded three others.

The operation, focused on the city of Hebron, the site of Friday's attack, came as Israel enters the final days before a tense election, which is largely seen as a referendum on current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's leadership and security policies during the past three years of war.

In new measures, the army said that most Palestinian workers with permits will not be allowed to enter Israeli West Bank settlements on Sunday and Monday, and crossings into Israel will remain closed until after Israel's elections on Tuesday.

The military said it operated in more than 400 locations over the weekend and arrested 40 Palestinians it claimed were affiliated with the Hamas or Islamic Jihad militant groups. No militant group has taken responsibility for the attack.

The Hebron municipality said the operation displaced more than 2,600 people.

The military said troops were conducting searches in the area where the gunmen operated and warned residents to evacuate Deir Bahha, the suspected gunmen's neighborhood. After Friday's attack, Israel's military said it found weapons in the gunmen's car and that they were likely planning to attack Israeli civilians before being stopped at the checkpoint where the shootout erupted.

All entrances and exits to the city remained sealed, with the operation focused in Deir Bahha and another part of the city called Al-Jalda, according to Hebron Mayor Yousef Zuhair Al-Jabari.

"People cannot reach or enter the city, and they cannot leave it. The blockade has affected every aspect of life," Al-Jabari said. He added that the blockade is forcing businesses to close and has also shuttered a mosque.

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Service with a smile

United's Special Olympics ambassadors help travelers navigate O'Hare with care



Marni Pyke
THE SUBURBS IN TRANSIT

It's 11 a.m. Oct. 19, and a family of four spills off the escalator at O'Hare's Terminal 1, maneuvering a caravan of suitcases.

Two parents whip out phones, survey a small army of kiosks, and pause with a "what's next?" look on their faces as their kids watch expectantly.

"Can I help you?" intervenes Daniel Smrokowski, a Special Olympics service ambassador for United Airlines.

Within seconds, he's assisting with scanning IDs, printing up luggage tags and manhandling

suitcases to the conveyor belt.

"It feels really good to be able to show some love, and show that we really care for people," Smrokowski explained. "That makes them want to come back."

Nearby, fellow ambassador Zinyra "Z" Ross acts as a human compass issuing directions to a steady stream of passengers.

"Do you know where the Ubers and Lyfts are?" one asks. "You just have to walk outside to Terminal 2," Ross says.

"Where is the baggage claim?" another traveler wants to know. "You need to take the escalator down," she answers.

Smrokowski calms a passenger who walks up and blurts out, "I missed my flight on United, and I don't know what to do."

"Go to the pink section," where additional services are



Zinyra Ross, a United Airlines Special Olympics service ambassador, helps a traveler find his way in Terminal 1 while working at O'Hare International Airport Oct. 19.

located, he says.

October marks National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the seventh year Ross and Smrokowski have worked as paid, part-time employees for United.

The airline debuted the

program in 2019 at O'Hare and chose Ross, Smrokowski and two other Special Olympics athletes, Lauren Miller and Kyle Tuckey, to be the first ambassadors.

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Hain's absence looms over Kane County sheriff's race

By **Susan Sarkauskas**
DAILY HERALD

Ron Hain is stepping down as Kane County sheriff, but lingering questions over his monthslong absence are hovering over the race to elect his replacement.

Republican Rob Russell has criticized Democrat Amy Johnson, Hain's longtime second-in-command, for not publicly addressing the sheriff's status when he took leave in the spring.



Johnson



Russell

"When you become a public official, part of your life, part of your private life, now is, you know, not as private as it used to be," Russell,

of Hampshire, said during an interview with the Daily Herald.

But Johnson, the undersheriff since 2022, said she was honoring Hain's family's desire to keep the matter private, as well as acting on the advice of Kane County State's Attorney Jamie Mosser.

"Yes, you're an alleged public official," Johnson said. "But you have the same rights, the same privacy as any other person."

Johnson told sheriff's office employees in an April email that

Hain was on medical leave. She said county board members also were informed at the time.

But there was no public announcement and Johnson and other county leaders declined to explain Hain's status for months.

Russell said he agrees that Hain has a right to keep medical details private, but that the public deserved to know if and why the person it had elected was not working.

"It was disrespectful to the

people," Russell said of the lack of public disclosure.

Hain's status became known to the greater public when Russell posted about it on Facebook. The email from Johnson to staff was released only after reporters filed Freedom of Information Act requests about the matter.

Russell also criticized Johnson for going along with what the state's attorney advice

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