

Campo alum invents Torch Sensors – an outdoor smoke detector for use against wildfires



An example of a Torch Sensor doing its job. Photos provided

By Vera Kochan

It wasn't all that long ago when Campolindo High School alum, Vasya Tremsin (23), was busy winning accolades for his science projects. The 2018 graduate, whose classmates might remember him as Vasily, went on to attend the University of California at Berkeley, and later graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2022, with degrees in computer science and economics.

While a student at Campo, Tremsin was disturbed by the havoc of the 2017 blazes in Napa and wondered why there were smoke detectors for the inside of homes, but nothing on the market to alert residents to a fire outdoors. And so, an idea was born.

According to his former science teacher, Roxanna Jackman, Tremsin was initially a quiet student, but began to blossom into a helpful classmate, always willing to assist others with their lessons. "Vasya's projects always showed that he was thinking of how to help others," recalled Jackman. "He made a bicycle helmet that could detect different sounds approaching to assist the hearing impaired. He made a device to detect if one's sunscreen was still effective, or if it was time to reapply. He developed the prototype for the Torch Sensor during his senior year and won many awards at the international level. One of the awards was money for his high school, which he requested be used to encourage more students to do science fair projects." With that, Campo's Science Fair Club was created.

Tremsin's Torch Sensors project was based on the indoor smoke detector concept, and in a wildfire-weary California, began to take top prizes on several competition levels starting with county, then state, and eventually winning the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair five years ago.



Vasya Tremsin (right) with partner Michael Buckwald at Silicon Valley Latam Capital Summit 2023

Save the date for Moraga Community Service Day, Oct. 6-8

Volunteers will be needed for Moraga's Community Service Day, the weekend of Oct. 6-8. Organized by several Moraga community groups as a way for residents and families to come together and help those in need within and outside of our town, benefit local schools, and beautify Moraga.

For more information contact: mmmcluer@aol.com. - V. Kochan



owners, government agencies, businesses, and vineyards."

John Cornell, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the Lafayette Police Department stated, "By only reviewing the website specifications, I can say that the idea of having pieces of technology throughout a neighborhood that could help determine if there is an actual fire, and how large of one, is always helpful. I am a huge proponent of any product

that could give first responders a better idea of the incident, no matter what it is, and technology advances are only going to improve the preparedness level of local agencies."

Cornell added that "the idea is fantastic," and that he's aware of other companies working on various types of remote heat sensors that operate in a similar detection fashion.

According to Tremsin,

"Torch Sensors will be available at the end of this year or the first quarter of 2024. We have pre-orders available now at a cost per unit of \$299, which will cover 10 acres. We don't charge an order until the product is delivered."

For more information visit: torchsensors.com or email: vtremsin@torchsensors.com.

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