



# 2018 SENIA Student Award Winner *Maya Nicolai*

**Congratulations to Maya Nicolai, a senior student at Shanghai American School (Pudong), for winning the 2018 SENIA Student Award.** This award honours a student with a disability who excels and advocates for the aspirations of children and youth with disabilities in Asia.

Self-advocacy is an important aspect for Maya as she considers this a vital part of her success in her journey as a dyslexic. As she has become more comfortable with herself as a learner, she developed the skills to not only advocate for herself but also for her peers. She uses her dyslexia to show her creativity and ability to think in new and different ways.

Maya is also a talented athlete participating on a variety of sports teams and a member of the National Honour Society at her school. However, she attributes the advocacy skills she learned to be a leader and team captain of her volleyball team. This has helped her to identify, support and advocate for other students with dyslexia at her school who are struggling to find their voice and advocate for themselves.

Maya is a true inspiration at her school and many will miss her as she graduates this year. Her diagnosis of dyslexia has changed her life and made her more intuitive and empathetic. But in her own words, it has made her “one of a kind.” **Hear more about Maya’s journey at EARCOS/SENIA 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand. Congratulations Maya!**