

Boy tries to talk to aliens with SETI's help

pg 1 of 1

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MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA (KGO) -- A young man has journeyed 3,000 miles to the Bay Area in the hopes of finding friends even further away.

For Kamau Hamilton, communicating with beings in outer space is serious business.

"Say our planet blew up, but we knew aliens we made contact with, and we could fly over there," Hamilton said.

Now the sixth grader from Harlem is getting a chance to share his strategy with the real life alien hunters at SETI - the institute in Mountain View dedicated to the search for extra terrestrial intelligence.

Seth Shostak is senior SETI astronomer and has been an amateur alien collector since the age of 10.

"I think kids are interested in aliens in the same way they are interested in dinosaurs, they're a bit fearsome, they're a bit odd, they're alive, might talk to you," Shostak said.

Hamilton earned his trip to SETI by being named a winner in the national Kids' Science Challenge contest. His project involved recording sounds that might give aliens an understanding of what life is like on Earth.

"My project is on sending sounds to other planets so they might identify it and they'll have the same thing and might know it's us," Hamilton said.

With powerful antennas aimed into deep space, SETI's mission for now is dedicated to listening for life. But researchers believe that projects like Hamilton's may become integral to their work in the future.

"It would be very instructive to us to do a transmitting experiment, because it might give us a whole lot more insight about how to better listen," Shostak said. "After all, if everyone's just sitting around listening, maybe nobody will ever hear anything. Somebody ought to speak up."

So for now, Hamilton is sharing his audio compilation, getting a crash course in space sciences and still dreaming of what contact with aliens might really be like.

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