2009 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

NATIONAL RECOGNITION WEEK

June 20 – June 24, 2009

National Recognition Week and the 2009 Yearbook are Sponsored by:

GMAC Financial Services

1964-2009

45 YEARS OF PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

The United States Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by Executive Order of the President, to recognize and celebrate some of our Nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. Each year, up to 141 American students from across the country and around the world are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the Nation's highest honors for high school students. By presenting these young people with the Presidential Scholars' Medallion, the President of the United States symbolically honors all graduating high school seniors of high potential.

For forty-five years, from President Lyndon Baines Johnson to President Barack Obama, the Presidential Scholars Program has placed more than 6,000 outstanding young achievers in the national spotlight. Initiated by President Johnson, the Presidential Scholars Program annually selects one male and one female student from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Americans living abroad, 15 at-large students, and up to 20 students in the arts on the basis of outstanding scholarship, service, leadership and creativity through a rigorous selection process administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

President Johnson opened the first meeting of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars by stating that the Program was not just a reward for excellence, but a means of nourishing excellence. The Program was intended to stimulate achievement in a way that could be "revolutionary."

During the first National Recognition Week in 1964, the Scholars participated in seminars with Secretary of State Dan Rusk, Astronaut Alan B. Sheppard, and Chief Justice Earl Warren. President Johnson challenged the Scholars to give their talents and time "in our land and in all lands to cleaning away the blight, to sweeping away the shoddiness, to wiping away the injustices and inequities of the past so that all men may live together in a great world community of decency and excellence."

Over the next decade, several changes occurred in the Presidential Scholars Program. In 1969, the medallion design became the Great Seal of the Nation. In 1972, the National Teacher of the Year was invited to become a Commissioner. Alumni Scholars were invited to serve as Advisors to the program. A booklet of Scholars' essays on issues facing the nation was issued by the Joint Commission on Arrangements for the Bicentennial in 1976.

In 1979, President Carter expanded the program to honor up to 20 students selected by the Commission through an artistic competition. In 1980, a compendium of Scholars' essays, poems, and musical compositions was published, following a performance by the Scholars in the National Academy of Sciences' auditorium.

The selection process was refined in the 1980s to emphasize leadership and community service. The U.S. Department of Education produced a collection of Scholar essays on ways to improve the Nation's education system.

In 1981, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts was created and its Arts Recognition and Talent Search program began to conduct the annual artistic competition. In 1983, the Distinguished Teacher awards were created, and the twentieth year celebration of the program included an Alumni reunion and a performance by the Scholars at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The year 1994 saw the publication of a working paper by the American Association for Gifted Children, entitled "The Presidential Scholars: A Portrait of Talent and its Development." This study indicated that the support of parents and family members, and the encouragement of teachers were important factors in cultivating the gifts of the Presidential Scholars, and that the Scholars approached their experiences and challenges in ways that served to strengthen rather than impede the development of their abilities.

In 1998, the Distinguished Teacher award was renamed the Presidential Scholars Program Teacher Recognition Award to serve as a means for rewarding good teachers for knowledge, skill, and performance. The award marks the progress that schools, communities, educators and families are making as they work with their states and the U.S. Department of Education to improve teaching and learning, and applauds the successes of highly qualified teachers and counselors.

Upholding the values represented by the medallion they received, each class of Presidential Scholars has gone on to fulfill the bright promise they showed so early in life. Their ranks now boast attorneys and judges; leaders of business, industry and finance; senior military officers; writers of fiction, nonfiction and poetry; diplomats; members of the clergy; educators; scientists and researchers in every field; federal, state and local government officials; computer specialists; engineers; choir directors; dancers and choreographers; costume designers; physicians in diverse branches of medicine; actors, novelists; technical advisors; musicians and composers; architects and designers; visual artists; non-profit managers, fundraisers, singers, entrepreneurs, and foreign service officers. They are also family members, spouses and parents, and in their personal and professional lives are helping to instill in new generations their commitment to excellence, their high ideals, and their devotion to service. Individually, they are shining lights in their respective communities and fields of endeavor, and together they are a singular constellation of purpose, dedication, and achievement.

CONGRATULATIONS

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 2009

I send my warmest greetings to the 2009 Presidential Scholars and your families. As you celebrate this award, you should be proud of your hard work and dedication to learning.

President Johnson began honoring the achievements of graduating high school seniors in 1964, and I am glad to continue this tradition. This marks the 45th year the Presidential Scholars program has encouraged America's next generation of leaders. I hope that each of you will continue to dream big dreams and remember that service and active participation in your community—no matter how small—can have a profound effect on the world.

Your generation will be tested by the challenges of this new century. As you face them, be reminded of those generations of Americans that have come before you and faced similar fears and uncertainties in their own time. I am confident that you will build an America that is more purposeful and united—an America that is not just about each of us, but all of us. If we are willing to shoulder each other's burdens, take risks, and persevere through trial, America will continue its journey towards mutual understanding and shared success.

I offer my congratulations and best wishes to you as you go out into a world that is counting on you to build a better tomorrow for us all.

THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

May 4, 2009

Dear Presidential Scholars:

Congratulations! I am pleased to welcome you to the Presidential Scholars Class of 2009.

As President Obama said in his inaugural address, "What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility – a recognition on the part of every American that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world; duties that we do not grudgingly accept, but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character than giving our all to a difficult task." One such task is ensuring that our children learn and reach their full potential.

As Presidential Scholars, you represent the vast reserve of intellectual curiosity, ability to exceed expectations, power of invention and deep concern for others that resides in every child. Our recognition of the immense potential of our youth – a potential yet to be fully unleashed – instills a great sense of urgency in this Administration.

The President and I believe that providing a quality education to all children is both a moral obligation and the foundation upon which our future success will rest. It is the civil rights issue of our generation, and we ask you to join us in this effort as tutors and mentors, to help others learn and succeed as you are doing.

Many thanks to your families, schools and neighborhoods for helping to instill in you such high standards of scholarship and citizenship, and for helping you to believe and prove that you can do extraordinary things.

I wish you great success in the years ahead. You have an important role to play in shaping our nation's future – and the world's – for the better.

Sincerely,

Arne Duncan

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE COMMISSION ON PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

May 1, 2009

Dear 2009 Class of Presidential Scholars,

For 45 years, the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars has fulfilled an important charge from the President of the United States: to identify and recognize students who demonstrate outstanding scholarship in academics and the arts. The purposes of this honor are to celebrate your accomplishments and to enhance your potential after graduation. Perhaps most importantly, your successes will be a source of inspiration to countless other students across the Nation.

You have applied and disciplined yourselves to excel in a wide range of academic, artistic, athletic, civic and volunteer pursuits. Your determination and resilience - combined with strong character, demonstrated leadership, and a genuine concern for your communities - set you apart as role models. This unique award brings with it great responsibility, as you now proudly bear on your medallions the Seal of the Office of the President of the United States and the image of the White House – the American People's House – along with the title of "Presidential Scholar." We hope this demonstration of our faith in your abilities will encourage you as you continue forging careers of distinction, innovation, and service, to the benefit of our Nation.

As a Presidential Scholar, you are now a member of a special family over 6000 strong. The first Presidential Scholars were named under President Lyndon Johnson in 1964, and your achievements will be a rich addition to this long-standing community. May your time celebrating with your peers during National Recognition Week help to propel you into new realms of possibility and a new appreciation of the depth, diversity and potential of this family. Last year, a 2008 Presidential Scholar reported, "I have come away with a whole new outlook on my future." May you all have as meaningful an experience, and may your selection as a Presidential Scholar – and a member of the first class to be so honored by President Obama – help to fuel and focus your future successes.

The Commission on Presidential Scholars is proud of you. We will continue to watch with support and admiration as you shape meaningful lives and blaze new trails.

Sincerely,

Stanley E. Taylor
Chairman

400 MARYLAND AVE. S.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-3500
www.ed.gov/programs/psp/index.html

Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation.

GMAC Financial Services

March 27, 2009

To the 2009 Presidential Scholars:

We at GMAC extend our sincere congratulations to all of you for achieving the distinction of being named Presidential Scholars. As a longstanding sponsor of the Presidential Scholars Program, GMAC is proud to partner with President Obama and the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars to honor your commitment to excellence in academics and the arts. Your pursuit of worthy aims, and your achievements, are an inspiration to your generation and a point of pride for all Americans. We look confidently to you as stewards of a bright future for our nation.

As leaders in your families, schools, workplaces, and communities, you are already demonstrating the competence and commitment necessary to help lead continued change, growth and prosperity in America. Having earned the title of Presidential Scholar, it is clear that you are each equipped to play a unique and significant role in charting a positive course for our country and the world. We trust that you will continue on your chosen path of excellence and integrity, and that you will utilize your skills and talents to help our nation and our neighbors fulfill our potential.

As you enjoy the festivities and celebrate your wonderful accomplishments thus far, remember those who have invested and believed in you along the way, as well as those who, though less fortunate, can also achieve greatness if given the benefit of an encouraging smile and a helping hand. As you embark on the next chapter of your life, I hope you will also resolve to serve by teaching, mentoring, and empowering others. I urge you to continue setting a positive example in your communities by the wise choices that you make, and by sharing your talent and initiative with those around you.

Well done, Presidential Scholars. All of your friends at GMAC applaud you!

Sincerely,

Alvaro G. de Molina
Chief Executive Officer,
GMAC Financial Services

WHAT THE PRESIDENTS HAVE SAID:

"You are exceptional members of an exceptional generation. What you accomplish as individuals - what all of us accomplish as a nation - depends upon the goals and the values by which we challenge ourselves. The average and the adequate are too low as goals... Our aim must be higher; our reach must be farther; our pace must be faster. Our society and its members must aim for, and reach toward, the goals and values of excellence. I honor you for what I know you, and your generation, will achieve in the years to come."

President Johnson

"Through [this program] we recognize and honor not only the young men and women of uncommon ability and dedication who [are this year's] Presidential Scholars, but the tens of thousands of brilliant young Americans whom these Scholars represent and upon whose skill and vision the American future rests... The recognition you receive is more important than a prize of material value. It is something that money cannot buy. ... It is something also that you will carry with you the rest of your lives, I hope very proudly..."

President Nixon

"Your leadership, your intelligence could play a very vital role in writing the agenda for America's third century. I trust that you will contribute, through your scholarship and your practical experience, new thought and new insights into our national wisdom. In this way you will strengthen the American democracy which all of us cherish. You have got to think big, be big, act big, dream big, and above all, accomplish big."

President Ford

"I'm very grateful to have a chance to first of all congratulate you, and secondly to call on you for continued help. You've been chosen in an intensely competitive way, based on merit alone. But of course, with ... opportunity ... comes commensurate responsibility. And since [as a Presidential Scholar] you are at least a temporary public servant... I hope when you do go back home that you'll be both incisive, questioning, ... and ... constructive."

President Carter

"You are America's future and symbolize her greatest hopes. ... Your country has made an enormous investment in you, and we're relying on your energies and abilities to carry us into the next century - free and strong and prosperous. Let this award be both a recognition of past accomplishments and a challenge to excel in the years ahead. ... We're counting on you to understand and shape a better world..."

President Reagan

"This marks the highest Scholastic honor a President can bestow, and I am honored to bestow it. For while already you have done much, I know you will do more, and not for yourselves alone but for nation and neighbor - learning, caring, helping education lead the way. ... [In] America the definition of a successful life must include serving others. Well, that goes double for America's best. Many have labored to share their knowledge with you, and you can give them no greater gift than to share your knowledge with others. ... Honor them by the lives you lead. And as you do... make ours a better, richer, more decent world."

President George H.W. Bush

"America depends on... you to master the lessons we have recorded in the past and to accept the challenges that will confront us in the future. ...Our quality of life during the next century will depend on the creative reasoning and the firm dedication of you and your contemporaries. ... I don't see how anybody could be concerned about the future of this great country, looking at you, reading your records, knowing what you have achieved."

President Clinton

"I want to thank you for the contribution you make to our Nation today, and urge you on, because the contributions you'll make tomorrow will be just as important. As we face the challenges of a new era, we must encourage all young people to develop their knowledge and skills, so that they will have the necessary foundation to thrive in a changing world. As Presidential Scholars you are role models for other young people throughout our country. I encourage you to build on your successes and continue to expand your knowledge. By using your talents to serve your communities, you help ensure a bright future for our country. "

President George W. Bush

The Commission on Presidential Scholars and the Presidential Scholars Foundation gratefully acknowledge the funding provided by:

2009 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS BENEFACTORS

SPONSORS

President: Gifts of $75,000 or more

GMAC Financial Services

National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts

U.S. Department of Education

PATRONS

Scholar: Gifts of $5,000 to $9,999

The Allinder-Anestis Family Charity

The Chubb Corporation

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BENEFACTORS

Mentor: Gifts of $1,000 to $4,999

Mr. Richard Brown in honor of Shauna Brown (1995)

Mr. James E. Farmer

Ms. Susan Ganz

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Goodman (1995)

Dr. and Mrs. John Knox (1983)

Lion Brothers, Inc.

Mr. Aris Melissaratos

Friend: Gifts of $500 to $999

Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Anestis (1991)

Mr. and Mrs. Nikolaos Apostolides

Commissioner and Mrs. Manuel Lujan, Jr.

Commissioner Jack Mueller

Mr. Mark Pallansch (1972)

Colleague: Gifts of $250 to $499

Commissioner Michael Galiazzo

Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Olson

Associate: Gifts of up to $249

The Family of Kirsti Campbell (2008)

Mr. Brian Gongol (1997)

Dr. Caryn Grimstead

Ms. Barbara Knapp (1979)

Mr. Steven McCornack (1976)

Ms. Victoria Henrion Weir (1997)

The Family of Craig Western (2007)

With special appreciation to the following institutions for their partnership:

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

The Smithsonian American Art Museum

We thank all of the program's supporters for their generosity.

2009 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

Presidential Scholars represent excellence in education and the arts, and the promise of greatness in young people. The medallion they receive symbolizes the hope of an ever-brighter future that this Nation entrusts to each new generation. For 45 years, this unique program has honored over 6,000 young people for their scholarship, leadership, character and civic values. Each class holds unfathomable depths of potential, creativity, and dedication to high ideals. Each year yields future Rhodes or Marshall Scholars; notable scientists, researchers, inventors and physicians; authors, journalists and artists in every medium; teachers and professors devoted to advancing world thought and fostering the talents of youth; and a myriad of attorneys, business and non-profit leaders, public servants, politicians, entrepreneurs and community pillars who will touch the world in ways barely imaginable. Alumni range from a Pulitzer Prize winner to a Tony Award nominee; from a MacArthur "genius grant" recipient to a National Poet Laureate; from the Governor of Indiana to pioneers in climate science, energy policy and Internet technology.

The members of the Class of 2009 represent diverse backgrounds, experiences, and interests, and yet they are united by many common qualities. They are devoted to family and heritage; radiate a boundless energy and thirst for learning; selflessly share their spirit, strength and character with their communities, schools, civic groups, and places of worship; champion the rights of others; and set in bold motion their hopes of bettering the world. Some have survived life-threatening illness or daunting disability; risen above abuse, neglect, economic hardship, prejudice or persecution; or led their families through trials and emergencies. With characters tested in the fire of great adversity, they offer inspiring proof of the power and resilience of the human spirit.

At age 18 (and as young as 14!), these exceptional young people have already disproved long-held scientific theories on self-built equipment, performed at Carnegie Hall, launched award-winning companies, presented papers at scholarly conventions, mastered multiple languages, and conducted research at the Fermi National Accelerator Lab and the NASA Langley Center. Academic, volunteer, and extracurricular interests have led them across the country and around the globe, as far away as Taiwan and Turkey. They have applied for patents for medical technology with the potential to revolutionize medical screening; stepped forward to serve as officer candidates in the U.S. Armed Forces; won countless competitions; raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for charity; and gained entry to the finest universities.

They are National Merit Scholars and AP Scholars with Distinction; class officers, student body presidents and state legislative pages; Eagle and Girl Scouts; active church, synagogue, mosque and temple members; foreign language interpreters; family ranchers; nuclear reactor interns; national pageant winners, accredited culinary arts specialists, hip-hop dance instructors, Special Olympics staffers and therapeutic riding aides; homecoming kings and queens; Red Cross volunteers and Habitat for Humanity homebuilders; animal shelter workers; youth County Commissioners; Big Brothers and Sisters; Key Club International District Governors; team captains and star athletes in sports from football to field hockey; Governors' and Mayors' honorees; martial arts experts; coaches and mentors in nearly every academic, athletic and artistic discipline; Youth Symphony section leaders; masters of dance forms from ballet to tap to Irish Step; newspaper editors and journalists; SADD or anti-drug advocates; and world citizens with roots or residencies in Nigeria, Belgium, China, Honduras, the Czech Republic, and Jamaica. From robotics to orchid cultivation, cross-country to chess, they pursue their passions and convictions with joy, precision, and breathtaking results.

In honoring these Scholars, the President of the United States highlights the value to this Nation of our greatest "natural resource": our youth. By annually turning a national spotlight on 141 exemplary students and leaders, this program aims to encourage all American students to dare, strive, innovate, and excel; confirm a deep commitment to securing a world-class education for all U.S. youth; and affirm education's power to open doors, unlock potential, and realize dreams.

2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Priscilla Aleman

Miami, FL, Design and Architecture Senior High

College Plans: The Cooper Union

I like dissecting the human mind and thought process, anything that involves research and critical thinking; expanding and exploring the endless possibilities of everyday life and applying that to my art. It is one thing to be a "successful" artist, but another to question the process and continue practicing the true essence of art and the mind. My ultimate goal is to use my artistic ability to bring awareness to social conflicts locally and worldwide. It is an injustice to sit and watch strife, starvation, and genocides happening in other countries and not see that it is relevant to us or feel a need to take action. As stated by Martin Luther King Jr. in the Letter from Birmingham Jail, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly..."

V. Kenji Alexander

Nashville, TN, Ensworth High School

College Plans: Duke University

I am always looking for new people to meet and new ways to have fun. Schoolwork comes first, most of the time, but I try to be pretty well-rounded. I definitely enjoy sports; I've played most of them, and I can tell you much more than you want to know about my beloved Tennessee Volunteers. Photography has also become a recent interest of mine, and the Natchez Trace Parkway, which begins (or, I guess, ends) close to my house, provides a great opportunity for beautiful snapshots and contemplation. Finally, no description of me would be complete without mentioning my love of music. I am not someone who wins awards for my musical skills, or plays piano for hours every day, but I do enjoy playing popular songs on the guitar. I have everything on my iPod from the Beatles to Lil' Wayne. Nashville is Music City, after all.

Aparna Ananthasubramaniam

Troy, MI, The Roeper School

College Plans: Stanford University

There once was a girl
Who dreamed, in this world,
She'd be a professor and help others too

Linguistics, the brain
Not studied in vain
To model with math, pathways and molecules

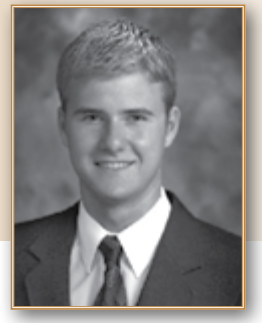
Then maybe one day
She'll go far away
Teach others less fortunate in their own homes

And then after that
She will bring some back
To study what they could not otherwise do

How she loves to dance
Build robots, perchance
To research in science, and read all day long

Service, singing, the flute
Five languages (plus two?)
Three R's, running distance, and also much more

A learner at heart
Loves teaching and art
But clearly she is not a poet at all



Thomas Ankenbauer

Portage, MI, Hackett Catholic Central High School

College Plans: United States Military Academy

I am a motivated, hard-working American who is fascinated by science, math, and history. In addition to being a dedicated scholar, I am an entrepreneur, a musician, an artist, and a leader. I am also committed to improving my physical fitness by participating in competitive Cross Country and swimming. Through hard-work and perseverance, I created an extensive yard work business that became very successful. I place great value in community service, and have worked for many organizations, ranging from Habitat for Humanity to my local parish. My commitment to service and my appreciation for our God-given freedoms has led me to pursue a career as an officer in the United States Army.

Bonnie Antosh

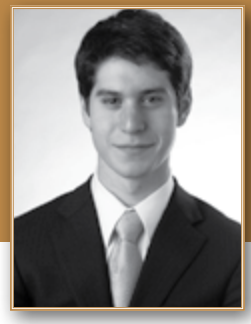
Spartanburg, SC, Spartanburg High School

College Plans: Yale University

Bonnie Antosh, at one time or another, has been a fairy godmother, a flying boy, a flapper, and a dancing cat. Over the past four years, she has juggled her dual loves of academia and art, directing and acting in numerous productions. She also studies vocal performance and plans to pursue a major in Music. Off stage, Bonnie serves as the Editor-in-Chief of her school's newspaper and the President of the Spartanburg Youth Theatre's Junior Advisory Board. She also volunteers with women's and children's organizations throughout her community. In the future, Bonnie hopes to travel extensively, perform Shakespeare, and live every day as a beautiful adventure.

Priscilla S. Aleman
Bride Not to Be
plaster, denim, fabric
36” x 65” x 24”

2009 PRESIDENTIAL

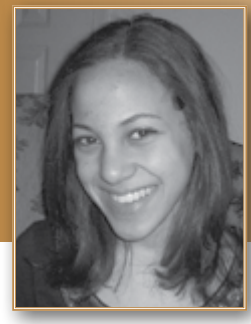


Joshua Arthur Arky

Brooklyn, NY, Saint Ann's School

College Plans: Columbia University

Josh began singing about two or three years ago. At school, he sings under the direction of Peter Clark, to whom he owes many thanks. But it is his private teacher, Fredrick Martell, who has guided him to where he is now. Mr. Martell, over the past years, has provided Josh with the most incredible component of his life, and for this, Fred deserves the highest honor, praise, and thanks. Josh participates annually in solo voice concerts, a chamber group, and his school's chorus. He has also been selected as a finalist for the Classical Singer high school competition to be held in May 2009. Apart from singing, Josh loves to cook for his family and friends, hoping to tantalize all palettes. In school, he writes science articles for the newspaper and conducts independent science research.



Mary Awadallah

Syosset, NY, Syosset High School

College Plans: Yale University

I am ebullient, savoring the bustle of academics, extracurricular activities, service, and church involvement, pursuing everything wholeheartedly. The several academic awards I have received, including Salutatorian of my graduating class, reflect my passion for learning. I enjoy leadership and service. I am President of my school's chapter of the National Art Honor Society, Executive Board member of our chapter of the National Honor Society, and have held leadership roles in church. Engaged in my community, I have served at a hospital, elementary school, and library, and in a tutoring program. Yet with all this, my church involvement has been the most important aspect of my life. From my enthusiastic service in the children's summer camp and tutoring programs, to membership in the youth group, I have cherished every minute spent in the company of my church family. I am also an avid artist and knitter.

Matthew Baglini

Cumberland, RI, Cumberland High School

College Plans: United States Naval Academy

I am a youth activist and top student from Cumberland High School. I have starred in several shows put on by the local Drama Club, am on the varsity Debate team, and play intramurals obsessively. I am currently serving as a Commissioner on the Cumberland Youth Commission, a youth advocacy initiative, through which I have helped start and run a heating-oil voucher distribution program. After college, I hope to become a pilot for the US Navy, and make a career in the Navy. In the future, I hope to enter politics and become a national leader.

Jacob Bailey

Independence, KY, Simon Kenton High School

College Plans: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

My main goals in life have always been these three things: To learn as much as possible, to apply that knowledge for the betterment of the world, and to have fun doing it. Though to most of the people who know me I'm simply 'that smart guy,' there are many things that make me who I am. I make short films with my friends, I play the drums professionally, I'm a trivia junkie, and I'm a dedicated big brother. My dream is to someday make a contribution toward making nuclear fusion a viable energy source, providing cheap, clean energy to the world. In this way I hope to make the world a better place – of course a Nobel Prize wouldn't be too bad either.

Ernest Baker II

Opa Locka, FL, Miami Carol City Senior High School

College Plans: Eugene Lang College-New School for Liberal Arts

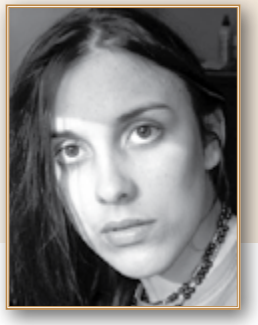
"Our work is never over," Ernest Felton Baker II once said. His glorifying hard work and devotion to the Arts has lured an intense drive for his divined present and far most, his future. He started with Martial Arts receiving a black belt in both Jujitsu and Go Ju Ru. He then began to entertain audiences from around the globe and help less fortunate communities. As for the many endeavors and accomplishments Ernest obtained, his hometown Opa Locka, Florida granted him with a Proclamation and bestowed January 23rd in his honor as 'Ernest Felton Baker II Day'. Practicing for a karate tournament, sketching proposed designs for his portfolio, or rehearsing for a performance are daily tasks for Ernest. Either way it goes, effort is definitely an unequivocal thought in Ernest's mind. For Ernest, dance isn't just something he does for happiness; it's something he can't imagine himself living without.

Jane A. Ball

Metarie, LA, St. Martin's Episcopal School

College Plans: Tulane University

People look up to me…but, it's okay. I'm 6'3"; 6-6 in heels. I stand tall and have set the bar high for myself in academics, athletics and community activities. Sure, I have many hard-earned school, scientific, and sports competition awards and honors, and am very proud of all those achievements. Yet, as a ninth-generation Creole New Orleanian, I'm no slouch at rebuilding my own and others' lives since Hurricane Katrina. Aside from refurbishing homes, I am constructing better opportunities for children and teens through tutoring, sports activities, and peer mentoring. Volunteering changes you forever; for the better. My dream is to shoot one-on-one with the President and bring back my autographed basketball to use an "Inspirational Rock" for the success of all the physically, mentally, and economically children that I work with. My plan is to become a sports medicine/orthopedic surgeon, and I'm height you can believe in.



Celia Dovell Bell

Baltimore, MD, The Bryn Mawr School

College Plans: Columbia University

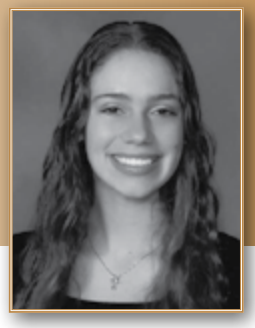
I grew up in a house full of writers, and from an early age (before I had considered that maybe, having a poet for a mother and a novelist for a father, I should become an engineer in the interest of rebellion), it was clear that I was one of them. My first published essay appeared in the *New York Times* Magazine when I was seventeen, and since then I've had work appear in *Five Points Magazine*, and been selected as a Portfolio Gold Medalist in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, and a finalist for the youngARTS program run by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.

Alyssa Bilinski

Easton, CT, Joel Barlow High School

College Plans: Yale University

I have always loved to argue, and throughout high school, this affinity has served me well. As three-year captain of my school's debate team, I have earned 40 debate awards, including two Connecticut Debate Association State Championships and two Yale Osterweis Tournaments. And the skills I cultivated in debate also served me in other activities: giving closing statements in mock trial, fighting for the rights of Ugandans through Invisible Children, and performing in the improvisational comedy group, Troupe du Jour, raising money for Hurricane Katrina victims. Due to all of the debates in my life, I have also learned to appreciate the peaceful argument-free moments. Giggling over dinner with friends, enjoying a movie with the debate team after a tournament, or jogging around my murderously hilly neighborhood is the perfect way to rejuvenate for the next cause.



Kristina Bohl

San Diego, CA, Francis Parker High School

College Plans: Stanford University

Kristina is a Renaissance woman of the twenty-first century. Her passions are academic, artistic and athletic, and she throws herself whole-heartedly into everything she does. When she's not rehearsing classical guitar, you may find her sailing alongside sea lions in Monterey Bay, solving multivariate integrals, or speaking Swedish with her cousins in Västerås. Kristina is the proud Varsity Captain of Parker's undefeated Academic League team, as well as the president of the Science Olympiad Club and the French Honor Society. Kristina is a National Merit Scholarship winner and a recipient of the 2009-2010 Kyoto Scholarship. At Stanford, Kristina plans to study Materials Engineering while pursuing her interests in economics and languages. Kristina enjoys working as a sailing instructor and volunteering in her community. In her free time, Kristina loves to read, travel, and ski.

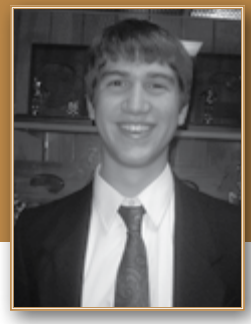
Holden Brown

Mandeville, LA, Fontainebleau High School

College Plans: Maryland Institute College of Art

Holden attends the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA) for Media Arts, as a Level III student. He works primarily in video, creating short, narrative films, and has won numerous awards for his work in the cinematic arts, including 1st place in the student division of the Louisiana Film Festival, 1st place at the Nunez Film Festival, and Best Student Filmmaker at the Ozone Film Festival, for his short film, *The Starmaker*. He was also named a youngARTS gold award winner 2009. Holden has taken part in the Talented Art and Talented Drama programs at his school, both of which have played an important role in his work as a filmmaker.

2009 PRESIDENTIAL

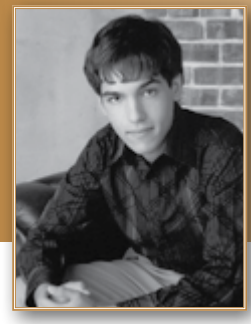


Alexander Bruce

Weston, MA, Weston High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Ever since I was a young child, I loved explaining things to others. As I grew older I never lost this love of teaching, and over the years this has become one of my defining traits. Some of my most rewarding experiences include tutoring students at the Boys and Girls Club, and volunteering at the Cape Cod National Seashore where I helped rangers present information about the vibrant seashore. At my school I am captain of the math team and the science team. In addition I am a writer and editor for the school newspaper. The school newspaper is a fairly serious publication, but I have always had an irreverent side that I try to express whenever I can. To this end I founded a humor magazine which publishes satirical articles written by students. I am looking forward to continuing teaching and learning in the years ahead.

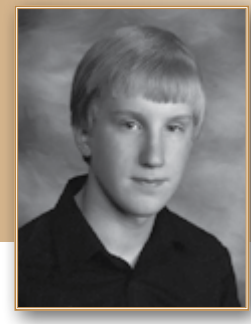


Andrew Carmedelle

Saint Augustine, FL , Saint Joseph Academy

College Plans: Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering

Since age six, I have been active in Boy Scouts, which led to my love for the outdoors. The same year I achieved the rank of Eagle, I hiked nearly 200 miles and was a crew leader at Philmont Scout Ranch in the New Mexico mountains. My dream is to hike the entire Appalachian Trail. These last four years were incredibly busy with varsity sports, academics, scouts, community service, clubs, music (bass guitar) and relaxing with friends while playing Rock Band. Two of my favorite high school experiences were mission trips to Jamaica. Despite their poverty, the joy of these people and their love for life affected me deeply. It has inspired me to pursue future work to benefit people in developing nations. My life has been blessed with a loving family, great schools (public, private and parochial), good friendships and, most importantly, a strong religious faith.



Andrew Chael

Albuquerque, NM, Manzano High School

College Plans: Carleton College

I am a dedicated learner who aspires to know as much about the world as possible; one of my favorite pursuits is scouring Wikipedia to pick up interesting bits of trivia. I am passionate about multiple academic disciplines, a fact that makes choosing a college major daunting. I love delving into history, especially that of the R.M.S *Titanic*, the Islamic Caliphate, and the era of disco fever. In the analytic sphere, I am a state champion in the MESA program and the inaugural president of Math Nerds Anonymous, a club dedicated to the celebration of the common nerd. I also rock out on the French Horn in my school band and city youth orchestra, sing in my school choir, hike up and ski down tall mountains, read a lot of cheap paperbacks, and watch CNN excessively. I give back to the community by tutoring local elementary school students in after-school programs.

Grace Chao

Woodside, NY, St. Mary's High School

College Plans: Washington University in St. Louis, University Scholars Program in Medicine

At age five I declared I would be "The Pretender" when I grew up. If there was a need for a firefighter, pilot, lawyer or any other hero in a situation, the Pretender effortlessly became just that. Although I unfortunately came to realize I could not be everything at once, I have always kept that fire, that hunger to explore the variety in the world, seeking knowledge and truly living life. I am a mentor for inner-city youth and a future doctor, the scientist who is fascinated by European history, the classical violinist who enjoys her friend's hip-hop mixes, and the extrovert who loves to read novels on rainy days. This year I was accepted to three medical schools, a feat for the daughter of a pastor and teacher. My secret? A supportive family and belief in myself because "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Kevin Chaung

Kokomo, IN, Kokomo High School

College Plans: Indiana University

Kevin is a student who actively seeks out new experiences both inside and outside of school. He is a member of the Environmental Club, which helps clean up the Wildcat Creek every year; the Diversity Group, which aims to bring attention to minorities; and the Mayor's Youth Advisory Board, which allows students to observe and participate in local government. He is also the treasurer of the Boys Legion, a group that is involved in many school functions, including prom and fundraisers. As captain of the Math and Science Academic Teams, he seeks to learn as much as he can and guide others who wish to do the same. He also makes sure to give some of his time to the community: he has volunteered at St. Joseph Hospital as an ER receptionist and currently tutors 3rd graders at Boulevard Elementary.

Holden M. Brown
Still from *The Starmaker*

2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Brian Chen

Morgantown, WV, University High School

College Plans: Princeton University

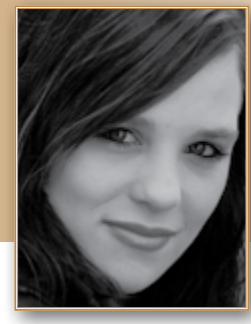
My name is Brian Chen. I was born and raised in Morgantown, West Virginia, home of the WVU Mountaineers. I am an avid swimmer and captain of my high school swim team. I also enjoy playing varsity tennis and partaking in various outdoor activities. At school, I participate in Math Club, National Honor Society, Science Bowl, Geography Bowl, Student Council and Model UN. I am continually engaged in community service programs through my church, such as playing violin in the orchestra and assisting young children at Vacation Bible School. Next year, I hope to continue these passions, even as I discover new interests at Princeton University.

Sally Chu

Lynnwood, WA, Edmonds-Woodway High School

College Plans: University of Pennsylvania

Sally is an avid reader who often multitasks and enjoys helping others. Ever since she was a child, she devoured books endlessly – even going so far to read through textbooks during her summer break so that she was able to take college level mathematics as a sophomore in high school. Through her pursuit of knowledge and the International Baccalaureate Program, she discovered her passion for the medical field and decided to become a surgeon because it would allow her to help put people back together. In addition to being a student, she is a musician, a scientist, a leader, and a servant of the community. She has played in the Chamber Orchestra for four years, and been chosen as Student of the Year four times. She is president of Math Club, Book and Movie Club, and Model United Nations, and treasurer for National Honor Society. In two years, she has dedicated over 766 hours of service to her community. Now she volunteers on a patient floor at Stevens Hospital and helps people fight cancer.



Rachel Clausen

Moorhead, MN, Moorhead High School

College Plans: Muhlenberg College

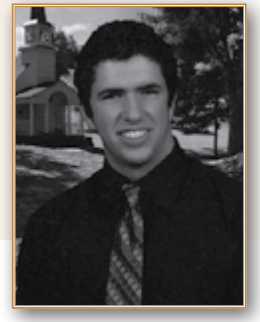
Rachel was born into a family of artists. A conducting father, musical mother, composing brother, and writing sister provided the prime kind of kin for an actress. She started out young in musical theater, and went with it all the way to the AHST Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland the summer of her Junior year. Rachel is also a member of the National Forensic League, for which she has had the honor of advancing to the State tournament all four years of her high school speech career. She was also awarded second place in humorous interpretation at the NFL tournament the past two years, thus placing her in the top 24 humorous speakers in the nation. Her creativity is cultivated daily by her love of painting, sculpture, reading, and frankly any other art she can get her hands on.

Julian Cook

Chicago, IL, Jones College Preparatory High school

College Plans: Houghton College

Julian Armand Cook was born in Chicago, Illinois. He resides on the south side of Chicago with his mother Kimberly and his sister Nina. Julian attends Jones College Preparatory High School, where he is Student Council President, Concert Choir President, a member of the Christian Club, and a private voice student of Mrs. Gaye Klopack. Julian has competed and won in a plethora of competitions, including the prestigious Classical Singer Chicago competition and National Association for Teachers of Singing competition. He was also recognized as a Level I Winner at NFAA YoungARTS week 2009. Julian plans to pursue a collegiate education in pastoral ministry/theology, and musical performance. In his spare time, Julian enjoys being involved in his faith community, spending time with friends, reading, studying the bible, listening to various Christian music artist, and cooking. Julian is extremely thankful for those to which he owes his success: his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, mother Kimberly Cook, private voice teacher Gaye Klopack, and very supportive family and friends.



Chris Copeland

Wilmington, DE, Sanford School

College Plans: Stanford University

Chris has had an interest in science and computers from a young age. His father bought the family a now not-so-aptly-named PowerMac G3 in 1995, and Chris never looked back. During the summer, Chris works as a software developer for EM Photonics, Inc. in Newark, DE, a small business born out of University of Delaware's electrical engineering department. There he has contributed to projects including an advanced long-range image processing application for NASA and an automated software-testing framework for use within the company. This year, he volunteered his web development expertise to improve and create more content for a Delaware anti-bullying advocacy group's website. His school activities include: writing for, organizing, and publishing his school's newspaper and competing on the math league, academic bowl, science olympiad, and varsity tennis teams. At Stanford, he plans to study electrical engineering and German language, hopefully studying abroad in Berlin.

Benjamin D. Crosby

Carol Stream, IL, Glenbard North High School

College Plans: Yale University

About half-way through a stack of old photos, a picture catches my attention: a grinning, bespectacled, eight-year-old me, bedecked with a blue reproduction kepi and flanked by two bearded Civil War re-enactors. This photograph seems somehow emblematic to me of the insatiable intellectual curiosity which has so defined my life, resulting in countless library fines and late-night philosophical discussions, and even a summer spent studying human rights at Cornell University. Beyond learning for its own sake, I have sought to apply my passion in service to others, whether through leading a world hunger awareness event with my church youth group or spending hours on the phone explaining a math problem or history concept. In my free time, it's not uncommon to see me making music, whether improvising on the piano or singing in the choir, tossing a Frisbee around with friends, or just curling up with a good book.

Kate Davis

West Linn, OR, West Linn High School

College Plans: Manhattan School of Music

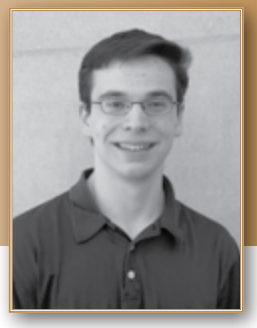
Growing up as a classical violinist, Kate has been involved with a variety of musical styles since the age of five. However, when relocated to the Pacific Northwest eight years ago, she developed two new passions, coffee and jazz. From then on, the upright bass became her primary musical outlet. Nurtured by the supportive music community in Portland OR, she was able to satisfy her hunger to learn and perform. Over the past few years, Kate has gained some acclaim with her jazz bass and vocals. She was named a "youngARTS" silver winner, Downbeat Student Award winner, and was selected to participate in the Brubeck Summer Jazz Colony, and the Grammy Jazz Ensemble. Besides music, Kate enjoys other forms of the arts, reading, espresso, shopping, and spending time with friends.

Sameer Kirtikumar Deshpande

Carrollton, TX, Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science

College Plans: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

From an early age, I have been fascinated with numbers and mathematics. In recent years, I have been participating in such contests as the United States of America Mathematics Olympiad and American Regional Mathematics League, and lately, pursuing research in biostatistics. Although a good deal of my time is now devoted to my school studies and work, I still love to watch movies and T.V., listen to music, or go out and play. I swim, play Ultimate Frisbee, and have recently picked up racquetball. At school, I am the president of our Mu Alpha Theta chapter and am involved with the Junior Engineering Technical Society chapter. I tutor local high school and middle school students in mathematics.



Joseph P. Dexter

Chester, VT, Green Mountain Union High School

College Plans: Princeton University

Joseph relishes intellectual diversity and prides himself on tackling multifaceted issues. Inspired by a burgeoning interest in Classical literature, he began studying Latin in the seventh grade and Attic Greek the following summer. Living close to Dartmouth College proved helpful to Joseph's study of the Classics, and his initial encounters with the second declension have led to wide study in the field, from Plautus to Plato to Phanocles. Eager to merge his diverse interests, Joseph has prepared original translations of Euler's Latin mathematical papers. His scientific research has focused on microfluidics, a fantastically multidisciplinary field that seeks to apply engineering and materials science to solving fundamental problems in the life sciences. His microfluidics research led to his designation as a Research Science Institute Scholar and a Semifinalist in the Intel Science Talent Search. Joseph plans to pursue a Ph.D. in the physical sciences and a career in academic research.

Carolyn Douglas

Derry, NH, Pinkerton Academy

College Plans: Wellesley College

Carolyn is captain of the math team, treasurer of the German club, and secretary of the Asian Explorations Club. Learning new languages is one of her passions, and in addition to German and Japanese, she hopes to dabble in Latin and Russian in college. She plans to pursue premedical studies in addition to majoring in German, but these plans are not set in stone whatsoever. In her free time, she reads fantasy novels, listens to foreign pop music, and donates blood.

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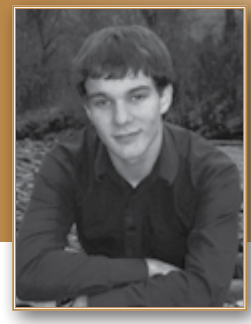
Edmund "Ned" Downie

Washington, D.C., St. Albans School.

College Plans: Yale University

I enjoy learning about math and logic, ethics and European history, but I especially like historical linguistics. This semester, I worked with my teacher Mr. Wallace Ragan on an Independent Study in Romance Linguistics. Outside of school, I read widely; among my favorite books are *Ideas* by Peter Watson and Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time*. I like to stay on top of current events, especially foreign affairs. And, whenever I have the chance, you'll find me outdoors. I'm a committed environmentalist; one summer, I dug trenches and cleared trails in the C&O Canal National Historic Park. One of my greatest loves is soccer. I played striker for my school's varsity team, and I follow the European leagues closely. I saved for four years to earn money to travel to Germany for the 2006 World Cup. Because of that trip, I want to travel the globe and explore its cultures and languages.



Kyle Doyle

Missoula, MT, Loyola Sacred Heart High School

College Plans: University of Montana

I love to learn new things, a trait which has served me well over the years. This love of thinking has led me to discover many different fields that I enjoy studying. However, I love learning about computers in particular—the field I want to enter—and many is the time I've looked up a new type of technology, not because I plan on using it, but just to know about it. In my free time, I play music and do a great deal of volunteer work as part of my 4-H club and various other organizations. I am an avid reader, singer, trumpet player, gamer, and pretty much anything else you can think of.

Shelby Dvorak

Dickinson, ND, Dickinson High School

College Plans: University of North Dakota

I consider myself to be a hardworking person who loves keeping busy. In my high school, I serve as the treasurer of the Friends of Rachel Club, the president of the Spanish Club, the vice president of Medical Explorers, and the vice president of National Honor Society. I am also a member of Close Up. During my high school years, I have volunteered at St. Joseph's Hospital and Health Center and with the Best Friends Mentoring Program. I have also spent time volunteering on two Students Today Leaders Forever Pay It Forward Tours. In my free time I enjoy playing piano, shopping, reading, biking, and cooking. In college, I plan to major in dietetics and Spanish with a pre-medicine focus. After college, I plan to attend medical school to become a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. Following my medical school residency, I would love to volunteer abroad with World Medical Mission, an organization that provides medical care to people in places where medical services are unavailable.

Leia M. Dwyer

Providence, RI, Classical High School

College Plans: Undecided

My parents, sister and I once spent an entire summer camping across the nation in a cramped pop-up tent trailer. We visited National Parks and museums, all while experiencing the diverse faces of America. Facets of this invaluable trip are seen in most everything I do. I have a deep love of the outdoors and physical activity; I frequently camp, hike, and canoe and have been an avid Irish dancer for 12 years. My family and I are extremely close and I always enjoy spending time with them. I have a natural curiosity which has lent itself to success in academics as I seek to learn all that I can. The beauty of nature has inspired me as an artist, fulfilling an innate need for creativity. Lastly, I strive to give back to others in service as a Girl Scout, having seen the vast spectrum of people's circumstances in America.

Lauren Faraino

Vestavia Hills, AL, Vestavia Hills High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Lauren's definition of a perfect day might surprise you. Most of her time is devoted to academic endeavors, extracurricular pursuits, and volunteer activities, all of which provide the foundation for her outward successes. However, nothing brings a smile to her face like a quiet weekend that provides the opportunity for her to express herself on a canvas. When painting, Lauren abandons the analytical eye that usually dictates her thoughts and simply allows imagination to lead her. Lauren plans to practice law someday, and she will do so with passion and dedication. But her legal career will not define her. To truly know Lauren, you need only to study the products of her most creative moments: her paintings.

Peter Ferguson

Fairfield, PA, Delone Catholic High School

College Plans: Maryland Institute College of Art

I have been fortunate to have lived in a variety of places where art and artists were almost non-existent. Growing up in these surroundings has shaped me into a person who feels almost obligated to insert creativity and purpose into everything he encounters. As I have grown artistically, mentally, and physically, I have had many opportunities to share my artistic insight on life with those around me, which has led to many amazing experiences and memorable moments. I have sacrificed a lot to get to the point where I am artistically, but when I observe the abilities I have acquired from hard work and determination, I would have chosen no other way to live my life. I constantly remind myself that my abilities are not only for personal gain, but to help others. I look forward to seeing what I am capable of accomplishing, not only for myself, but for the world.

Linyi Gao

Moscow, ID, Moscow High School

College Plans: Princeton University or Stanford University

Living on the Idaho Palouse has been a blessing. On the Palouse, nature harmonizes with community. When I look at the smooth curve that separates the cloudless blue sky and the verdant rolling wheat hills, I see an abundant poetic beauty – not because one plant is particularly tall or vigorous but because of the richness of life of the entire wheat field. In this spirit of the Palouse, I applied for two MathMovesU grants to found a school math club, which has helped contribute to an atmosphere of learning and enthusiasm in our school. I also volunteer regularly at our local hospital, tutor elementary school students, captain my school's Knowledge/Science Bowl teams and actively participate in Future Problem Solving. In my spare time, I like fishing, distance running, table tennis, personal writing, piano, browsing scientific journals, and attending church activities regularly.

Emmett Gilles

West Hartford, CT, Conard High School

College Plans: University of North Carolina

I believe that what I have done is little compared to what I will do – that I am small compared to who I will be. I have done a great deal of doing and growing to be where I am, and I am comfortable with my accomplishments to the present. But I not satisfied that these achievements are the measure of my mettle. It seems that every time one learns something, it only makes him aware of a thousand other things to learn before he truly understands. Every time one makes a positive difference, it only makes him aware of how much more needs to be done before the world changes for the better. I want to become wise enough to bring new life into this world with the help of someone wiser than me, to teach our children to be even better than we have been.

Michael Girouard

Lewiston, ME, St. Dominic Regional High School

College Plans: Williams College

Michael's primary focus has been on his family, schoolwork, and community for the past four years of his high school career. He is the eldest of three and enjoys spending time with his family and acting as a role model for his younger brother and sister. Both in and outside of school, Michael is truly an academic. He enjoys almost all of his classes, and has taken chemistry and French courses at the local university and at Bates College, respectively. Last summer, he spent five weeks in Paris for a study abroad program, improving his French skills. He enjoys being the cantor at school masses, participating in math team, dancing, and acting. Michael is an active volunteer for EqualityMaine, a political activist group that ensures the rights of LGBT citizens. He plans to obtain a degree in biology and continue on to medical school or a Ph.D. program.

Nikhil Goel

Huntsville, AL, Virgil I. Grissom High School

College Plans: Vanderbilt University

Nikhil is a scholar who is both well-rounded and has no shortage of things to do. He excels not only as a student, but also as a musician, an entrepreneur, an athlete, an innovative scientist, a writer, and a leader in his community. As a musician, he plays both the piano and the guitar, and as an entrepreneur, he has started two successful businesses in academic tutoring and website design. Additionally, he is a Director of the Rocket City Math League, a member of his school's Track & Cross Country teams, and an award-winning sports writer for the school newspaper. He naturally fills his leadership roles as a captain of his school's Math Team, Science Bowl Team, Science Olympiad Team, and the All-City Academic Team leading him to an engineering internship at NASA last summer. He is also Co-President of Politos, his school's premier political organization, and in his free time, he is an active volunteer with the Junior Civitan Society, the Red Cross Youth Committee, and the Hindu Cultural Center of North Alabama.

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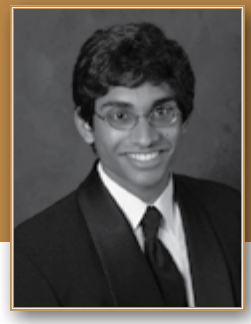


Abhinav Golla

Austin, TX, Westlake High School

College Plans: Stanford University

The common thread uniting my diverse interests is my love of a challenge. As an enthusiastic outdoorsman, I challenge myself through whitewater rafting and hiking. I credit my interest in the outdoors, as well as my leadership abilities, to my time spent in Boy Scouts, an integral part of my life that culminated in my Eagle Scout Award. I love music, and for seven years, I have played the viola in orchestra. Last summer, I spent several weeks researching the total synthesis of natural products in organic chemistry with the Welch Summer Scholar Research Program. I also enjoy studying as well as tutoring students in Latin, and I have won Summa Cum Laude and gold medals at Regional, State and National Latin conventions. My greatest, most satisfying challenges have come from helping my community as president of Austin's Medical Explorer Post and as a hospital volunteer, experiences that have led to my decision to pursue a career in medicine.

Allen Granzberg

Brooklyn, NY, Stuyvesant High School

College Plans: Yale University

Allen loves music, the arts, international politics, business, and law. He currently attends Stuyvesant High School in New York City. Allen is Club/Pub Director in the student government, Blood Drive Coordinator, and a Varsity member of the Lincoln Douglas Debate Team. Allen currently interns at the Securities and Exchange Commission and truly enjoys learning about economics and the United States's financial system. In his free time, he does ballroom dance and competes professionally in competitions around the nation. He finds it extremely relaxing and it is definitely something he wants to continue to do in college. Allen has loved challenging himself and has always enjoyed giving back to his community. Allen would like to thank his family, friends, teachers, and everyone else that has allowed for him to get this far. He hopes to study economics and international studies in college.

Suvai Gunasekaran

Madison, WI, James Madison Memorial High School

College Plans: Harvard College

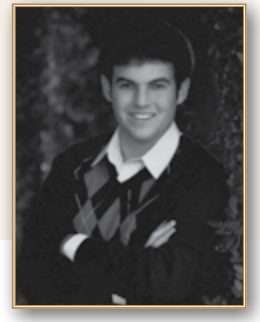
I like to be busy. I am very active in several school clubs and community organizations. I am President of Spartan Youth Service, Editor-in-Chief of our school paper, Captain of Science Olympiad, and President of Spanish club. I also played varsity tennis for three years. I have served as a Director of the International JOOI Board and a Member of National Youth Advisory Committee of DoSomething.Org. I am an Intel Science Talent Search Finalist, National AP Scholar, and Siemens Scholar for Science and Math. I enjoy spending time with my friends and going to movies. I love cooking, doing wheel pottery, and riding roller coasters – the scarier the better. Pizza is still my favorite food and Prison Break, my favorite TV show. I believe that the world will be a better place if each of us gives back something to improve the lives of others around us.

Elise Gurney

Albuquerque, NM, Albuquerque High School

College Plans: Carleton College

New Mexico is a strange sort of place – barren and beautiful – and my hometown Albuquerque has a unique culture somewhere between backwater hippy and laidback quirky. It is this exceptional environment that has allowed me to engage in the breadth of activities I have undertaken. I have played soccer and tennis, volunteered for the Animal Humane Association and the Adaptive Ski Program, and taken art classes since I was young. At school, I am intrigued with science as a way to better understand the world, but my academic interests range from history to English. My appreciation for the interdisciplinary aspects of education has led me to Carleton College, where I intend to take advantage of the liberal arts curriculum it offers. In college I plan to become involved in the newspaper, as I was in high school, and to study abroad for at least one trimester. My career plans are still uncertain, but I hope to travel extensively and to someday open my own bakery.



Charles Gyer

Houma, LA, Vandebilt Catholic High School

College Plans: Yale University

As a student from south Louisiana, I have had the opportunity to be surrounded by the greatest people on earth throughout my life. Living in such a culturally, artistically, and aesthetically rich and beautiful part of the world has caused me to take interest in activities ranging from student council to theater to sailing and journalism. My concern for my home inspired me to start a website examining the geopolitical and socioeconomic impacts and implications of energy policy in Louisiana and around the world. Most importantly, I cherish the people whom I know and love and anticipate meeting new people from whom I might learn every day. I consider time a gift, and my tendencies to act a little crazy and somewhat silly are only aimed at living life to the fullest. I also enjoy fulfilling one hundred fifty word writing assignments one word short of the word limit.

Peter C. Ferguson
Efficient Machine #3
oil, pastel, wood, brushes, masonite
43.5” x 17”

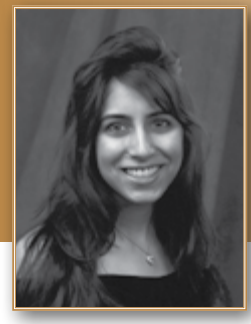
2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Booyeon Han

Phoenix, AZ, Desert Vista High School

College Plans: Princeton University

The most important lesson I have learned until now: take advantage of new opportunities because they can always open doors to unexpected experiences. As a young violinist, I never knew that I would become a part of the most talented orchestras in the nation. The highlights of my music career include the performance as concertmaster with Van Cliburn, and the trip to Paris and Nice, France to perform in different venues, including the gothic cathedrals. At school, I have served as president of the science club and orchestra council and played on the varsity tennis team. I have also volunteered at the hospital, tutored students in math, and performed in nursing homes. When I am not involved in music or the community, I love to watch movies, listen to music, and make pazookie (half-baked cookie with ice cream!).

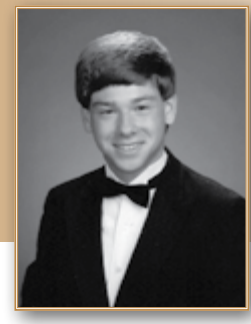


Sejal Hathi

Fremont, CA, Notre Dame High School

College Plans: Harvard, Stanford, or Yale University

I am passionate, vibrant, yet sometimes insecure—an intricate arabesque of interests and ideas, dreams and disappointments that is still seeking its unique color. As a person of eclectic leanings, I love to express myself through writing, to embody music with dance, to discover new worlds on Wikipedia, to create sustainable social change, to challenge science's frontiers. In recent years, among other endeavors, I have focused particularly on growing the international nonprofit I founded to empower girls; writing my second book; performing intense scientific research on the immunology of mast cells; and building a website on peace. I have aspired to everything from a policymaker to a neurosurgeon, but hope withal, in whatever I do, to transform the world.



Andrew Henderson

Spartanburg, SC, Spartanburg High School

College Plans: Yale University

Since my earliest years, I have loved opportunities to observe and study others – their personalities, motivations, and behaviors. I plan to continue this interest by studying economics in college and also by taking many opportunities to study abroad and travel throughout the world. Outside of academics, I have participated in student government, model congressional debate, and the youth group at my synagogue throughout high school, and I look forward to enjoying these activities in college as well. I have always loved the outdoors and worked the past summer at an environmental education camp in North Carolina. Therefore, I am incredibly excited about immersing myself in the New England outdoors next year, and one day, I dream of hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Garnet Henderson

Jackson, WY, Jackson Hole High School

College Plans: Columbia University

Garnet is a student who strives to balance her many extracurricular passions with academic success. She has been dancing since she was three years old, and is the president of the Dancers' Workshop Junior Repertory Company. Garnet is also an intern in the offices of Dancers' Workshop and teaches dance classes to students ranging in age from nine to seventy years old. She has presented original choreography in student concerts and choreographed commercially. Garnet has a passion for writing, frequently writes poetry and prose, and was awarded the Wellesley College Book Award in 2008. She attended the Wyoming High School State Drama Festival in 2006 and 2007, earning an all-state award for her performance of a dramatic monologue and an honorable mention for her performance in a group piece. Garnet enjoys outdoor activities in beautiful Jackson Hole, but is looking forward to moving to New York City in the fall.

Stephen Henrich

Mason City, IA, Newman Catholic High School

College Plans: Simpson College

Stephen enjoys challenging himself to be as versatile as possible. He lives for intellectual pursuits while thriving in extracurricular activities as well. His parents often poke fun at his undying desire to be involved in everything. Stephen plays the trumpet and violin and participates in varsity athletics in cross country, baseball, track, and tennis. He serves in many leadership roles such as class president, Math Club vice president, and team captain of the cross country team. He also takes advantage of opportunities to serve his community through Youth Ministry, National Honor Society, and voluntary tutoring. Although most people consider his academic successes to be his most significant, he also takes pride in his masterful ping pong skills and his exceptional abilities in Guitar Hero. In the future, Stephen intends to double major in biology and mathematics while completing much undergraduate research, and later plans to attend a school of medicine.

Bailey Hoar

South Burlington, VT, Middlesex School

College Plans: Dartmouth College

Bailey, a Vermont native, has studied in Concord, MA, for the past four years. She is a senior proctor, a head tour guide, a choral officer, and the Managing Editor for the school newspaper. A performer since a very young age, Bailey performs classical music and is a soprano soloist with her school's Small Chorus; this spring, she is playing the role of "Johanna" in "Sweeney Todd." Bailey is a member of the varsity ski team and is coaching the school's JV Girls' Lacrosse Team. Bailey spends the majority of her free time near a piano, singing with others or writing songs of her own; she hopes to record a CD of these original songs this spring. She is happy to return back to the Northeast next year, where she will be closer to home and better skiing; Bailey will study the humanities and continue to sing, act, and write.

Adam Horn

Versailles, KY, Woodford County High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Adam is above all a reader and writer. His passions have led him into various curricular and extremely extracurricular activities from writing for the Composition and Future Problem Solving areas of his Academic Team to doing a short piece for the Lexington Herald-Leader to writing screenplays for his Film Club troupe. He has tried his hand at coaching most anything he has enjoyed himself – UpWard Basketball and Future Problem Solving in particular – with varied levels of success. In a surprising twist, Adam was also the Right Tackle on the Varsity Football Team for three years, earning the honor of Team Captain as a senior. Adam would describe his career aspirations as markedly subdued, though he hopes one day to publish works of either fantasy or theology. G.K. Chesterton published both, and Adam joins Hemingway's Nick Adams in proposing that Chesterton "must be about the best guy there [was]."

Emily Leahy Howell

Missoula, MT, Hellgate High School

College Plans: Harvard College

I've lived in the same house for over 18 years. Luckily, the house is in Missoula, Montana , one of the best towns in the country, and luckily my family is about as good as they get. My little brother, Sam, cracks me up more than I would've thought possible, my dog is ridiculously good looking, and my parents are extremely, wonderfully reasonable – a rare trait among parents. But I want to spend the next years of my life traveling as much as I can. After college, I'm planning on joining the Peace Corps. Then, I'd like to work in international public health, fighting diseases and improving the quality of life in other countries – and traveling, of course, as part of the job. Once I've accomplished whatever I end up doing, I'd like to head back home to Missoula, become an old woman, and float the Blackfoot.

Lily Hsiang

Oak Hill, VA, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology

College Plans: Harvard College

Lily has never been one to keep to a single school of thought, field of study, or group of people. This childhood curiosity to explore a breadth of people and places has led her to be a painter, violinist, figure skater, and writer, in addition to a mathematician, biochemistry researcher, and computer programmer. Last summer, Lily attended the Research Science Institute, where she explored the depths of scientific research by studying the chemistry of histone proteins, which also won her recognition as an Intel STS semifinalist. As co-captain of her school's Lincoln-Douglas debate team, Lily is deeply involved with debate and greatly enjoys its verbal melee and intellectual stimulation. She also enjoys model student judiciary and won 2nd place respondent in the National High School Moot Court Competition. In her free time, Lily loves traveling with family and friends.

Sandy H. Huang

Ames, IA, Ames High School

College Plans: Stanford University

My unquenchable desires for learning and exploration have exposed me to a diverse and rich blend of academic and extracurricular experiences throughout my school years. It helps that I have rarely let lack of time deter me from pursuing my interests. Currently, I am president of Math Club, concert chair Bb clarinet in Band, News Editor of the school newspaper, co-Editor of the school literary magazine, a dedicated volunteer and tutor, a member of the Varsity Girls Tennis team, and a member of Science Olympiad. Among these activities, I find time to squeeze in late-night studying for exams and carefree chatting with friends at coffee shops. I have participated in several research internships, including a memorable one at the Research Science Institute last summer. Through these experiences, I discovered my true passion lies in research. I hope to pursue that passion, as well as my other interests, in the future.

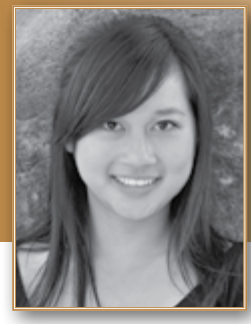
2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Jessica Hwang

Columbia, MO, Hickman High School

College Plans: Harvard College, Princeton University, or Yale University

During her years in high school, Jessica has cultivated diverse interests in languages, math, music, and the law. A two-time participant in the Scripps National Spelling Bee, Jessica has received numerous national awards for her studies in Spanish and French. She has served as the captain of her school's math team, and she provides math tutoring to local middle schools and junior high schools as an active member of Mu Alpha Theta. Jessica is also a classical pianist and violinist and has achieved recognition for both solo and concerto performance at local, state, and national levels. Jessica has served as Attorney General and Supreme Court Justice of Missouri Youth in Government, and her mock trial team has won both the Missouri High School Mock Trial Competition and the American Mock Trial Invitational. In her free time, Jessica enjoys reading sci-fi and solving jigsaw puzzles.



Tiffany Hwang

Wichita, KS, Wichita High School East

College Plans: University of Pennsylvania

I live my life with a simple satisfaction that doesn't leave me complacent, and I'm always looking to challenge myself. I've performed my violin as concertmaster in a number of city-wide orchestras and received first place awards at state-level piano competitions. In addition, I am active in both my school and community, leading a number of school clubs and regularly volunteering at the hospital, Wichita Chinese School, symphony concerts, and local middle school. While I love where I am in life, my contentment never prevents me from moving forward to the next stage of my life.

Irene Jacqz

Newburyport, MA, Newburyport High School

College Plans: Columbia University

I love the things I do, and so I define myself as more than just a hardworking student: I am a photographer and a cross-country runner. Recently, I have been involved with my school's Environmental Club, working to get Styrofoam trays out of the cafeteria. I participate in Model United Nations and Newburyport High School's student-run art gallery. I edit the literary magazine, and give tours of Boston's Museum of Fine Arts to middle school students. For a national engineering competition, the Real World Design Challenge, my team designed and presented an energy-efficient airplane wing. I'm a writer and a political junkie, a sailor, older sister, volunteer, and math tutor. I love to snowboard and travel, and I'm thrilled to be attending school in New York City next fall.

Andrea Jarrett

Saline, MI, Saline High School

College Plans: The Juilliard School

Andrea has been playing the violin since the early age of three, and attends the Music Institute of Chicago's Academy program for pre-college musicians, where she studies with Almita Vamos. Andrea was the Grand Prize Winner of the 2008 Michigan ASTA Solo Competition, Junior Division. She is a member of Quartet Polaris, Gold Medal Winners of the 2008 Fischoff Chamber Music Competition, Junior Division. Andrea has performed as a soloist with the Toledo, Dearborn, Birmingham-Bloomfield and Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestras, as the first-place winner of their concerto competitions. In April 2009, she performed at Carnegie Hall as a member of the YouTube Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas. This summer, she will attend the Astona International Summer Music Academy in Geneva, Switzerland. Andrea's ultimate goal playing the violin has always been to inspire audiences with her passionate performances.

Meagan Jenigen

Richmond, VA, Appomattox Regional Governor's School

College Plans: Maryland Institute College of Arts

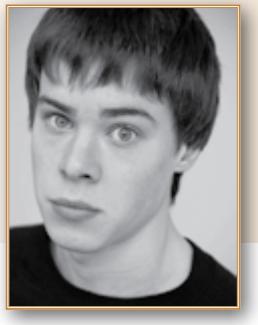
Meagan has won many awards including a Silver Medal Portfolio in the national level of Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, a Silver Portfolio for NFAA's YoungARTS Program, and First Place in the Virginia State Fair's Fine Arts Scholarship. She is the first high school student to receive a fellowship from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Additionally, Meagan won a 'Shirt of the Day' Award resulting in her design being printed and sold by Design By Humans. Since 2006, Meagan has had five solo shows, participated in nine group shows and has an Art-o-Mat series in the Whitney Museum. In addition, she has used her talents to help beautify the world around her by volunteering her time to help fix up homes in poverty areas, decorate nursing homes, and introduce children to the world of Art. Meagan uses her art to explore the human as an animal, and identifies strongly with the vulnerabilities of being human. She is a self-proclaimed addict to "clutter, noise, static and discord."

Leif Johnson

Wasilla, AK, Wasilla High School

College Plans: Dartmouth College

I have endeavored to be a balanced person, rather than pursuing virtuosity in one area to the exclusion of other experiences. Academically, my interests are in biology, astronomy, computer science, geography, history, and even political science. I have had the privilege of representing the State of Alaska five times in national competitions (the National Geographic Bee, Academic World Quest, and three times in Science Olympiad). I am involved in my community as an Eagle Scout, an Associate Judge at Youth Court, through ministry in my church, and as a volunteer with the local theatre. Though, or perhaps because, I am not a natural athlete, I relish the challenge of developing what ability I have as a runner, a cross-country skier, and a sprinter. Of all my achievements, my Varsity letters have given me the most satisfaction. In my free time, I bike, play frisbee and airsoft, and read science fiction.

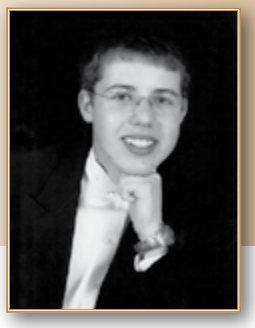


Steven Johnson

Rockford, IL, Interlochen Arts Academy

College Plans: University of Minnesota Guthrie BFA Actor Training Program

Steven has been acting since the ripe old age of eight. He has performed in large equity theatres, tiny community stages, and everything in between. He has braved harsh winters in northern Michigan, where he attends boarding school for theatre. In the summers, he works as a counselor at a free day camp in his hometown of Rockford, Illinois. Steven also keeps busy by serving on his school's Student Senate Committee, serving as a Student Ambassador, performing in many plays and musicals, writing plays, running, reading, and studying. He would like to thank his family, friends, and teachers for all of their support and guidance.

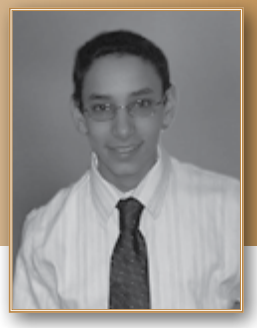


Fedja Kadribasic

Boca Raton, FL, West Boca Raton High School

College Plans: Stanford University

Originally, I am a war refugee from Bosnia who came to the U.S. ten years ago after living in Germany for 5 years. Moving around the world has endowed me with a cosmopolitan sense and fluency in Bosnian, English, Spanish and German. I love to travel with my family, play chess, solve math problems, read, and sing; I have been active in multiple honors societies, School Advisory Council, FJAS/AJAS, Swim and Track team, engaged as the Science Club president and awarded in chorus; yet, my deepest passion since early childhood is for natural sciences. In recent years, I did research at two state universities and received multiple awards at regional, state, national, and international levels. My goal is to become a research physicist and a professor. Perhaps, if my dream of becoming a Nobel-Prize Laureate does not come true, I will inspire one of my students enough to achieve it.



Peter I. Kamel

Ellicott City, MD, Centennial High School

College Plans: Rice University

As a child, Peter was one who sat silently and watched the world, contemplating the complexities around him. He has since grown to be a diverse young man, passionate about knowledge and serving the community. As captain of the Debate Team, Math Team, and Science Olympiad Team, Peter works diligently to shine in all his endeavors, motivated by a drive to use his skills to benefit society. In his free time, Peter volunteers at nursing homes, tutors, and manages an organization that sends tutors to inner city students. He is currently working on patenting heat-sensitive, artificial tissue that he helped design in a mentorship at Johns Hopkins. Peter plans to attend the Rice/Baylor Medical Scholars Program in the fall and hopes to become a doctor to epitomize his dream of serving the community.

Julia Ann Kellman

Pacific Palisades, CA, Marlborough School

College Plans: Washington University in St. Louis

Julie is a California Art Scholar and recipient of the Governor's Medallion for the Arts. She was a Grand Prize Finalist in the 2008 Music Center Spotlight Awards Photography Competition and has exhibited work at the Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena, the Marguiles Collection in Miami, and Affirmation Arts in New York. Julie's portfolio received a Gold Key in the Los Angeles regional Scholastic Art Awards of 2009. A National Merit Commended Scholar, Julie studied at the California Summer School for the Arts InnerSpark program, Otis School of Art and Design, and UCLA Design Media Arts Summer Institute. Besides her artistic endeavors, Julie serves as Youth Representative on the Pacific Palisades Community Council, participates in the YMCA Youth & Government Program, has led her school's chapter of Amnesty International, and is an avid volleyball player. Next fall, Julie hopes to study Digital Media and Philosophy.

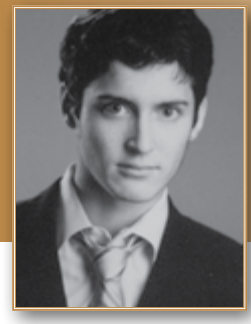
2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Lee Kennedy-Shaffer

Mechanicsburg, PA, Mechanicsburg Area Senior High School

College Plans: Yale University

I was born in Brooklyn and remain a proud fan of the New York Mets. In addition to rooting for the Mets, I participate in a number of extracurricular activities. I am captain of the high school debate, math, and academic quiz bowl teams. I also serve as the student coach of the MathCounts team at the middle school. I am in the Model United Nations club and on the varsity tennis team. In my free time, I enjoy playing soccer and ultimate Frisbee, watching TV sitcoms (especially The Simpsons, The Office, and Red Dwarf), and listening to Bruce Springsteen, The Clash, The Beatles, and Billy Joel. In addition, I am politically active and have enjoyed volunteering for Howard Dean, John Kerry, and Barack Obama, and participating in gay rights, pro-choice, and anti-war demonstrations.

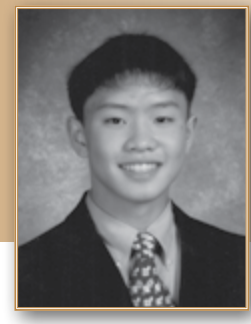


John Kenney

Fargo, ND, Shanley High School

College Plans: Columbia University

"To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the gift." John has taken Steve Prefontaine's words to heart, devoting himself to everything he does. His devotion to athletics is evident; as captain of his soccer team, which won the state championship for the first time in his school's history, John was named 1st Team All-State. His academic passion in high school is debate; he is the first four-time state champion in Open Policy debate in state history, and this February qualified to the national tournament for the third time. He has a passion for music, most notably seen through his leading performances in school musicals. John has sought to do his best in everything he does, never satisfying for less than success. Most importantly, John is grateful that he has a wonderful family, and knows that his parents deserve a large share of the credit for his success.

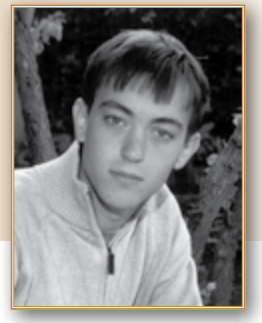


Daniel Kim

Cupertino, CA, The Harker School

College Plans: Harvard College

Daniel Kim packs big ambitions into a small frame. While maintaining a rigorous academic curriculum, Daniel volunteers with the American Red Cross, trains for judo, plays the viola, and raises awareness about Hepatitis B among Asian Americans. Through the synergy of intellectual curiosity and humanitarian passion, Daniel dreams of becoming a medical doctor – translating scientific theory into practical application, providing hope to those in need. During his free time, Daniel enjoys playing with his pet cat, writing blog entries, listening to Chinese music, fooling around with Photoshop, watching Korean dramas, and formulating – apparently with little success – half-baked theories about female logic. Daniel is also a self-proclaimed poet! An excerpt: "Alone in his room, he took a look around: / Old binders, books, and clothes in a mound. / He sighed and realized that there was still much work: / 'I should clean up my room,' he said with a smirk."



Benjamin Kotopka

Lincoln, NE, Pius X High School

College Plans: Princeton University or Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Growing up in Nebraska, the oldest of seven kids, has been an ideal starting point from which to learn the importance of leadership and achievement, two qualities I've pursued all my life. I love to compete, whether in the field of math and quiz bowls, or literally on the field, running cross-country. My passion for writing led me to work for my school's newspaper, most recently earning a trip to D.C. with the Institute of Peace based on an essay dealing with current genocide. On a lighter note, I've had a blast on the musical stage with roles ranging from lisping Winthrop in the Music Man to love struck Ching Ho in Thoroughly Modern Millie. The summer after my junior year, I was able to conduct research with aphid populations and mathematical modeling. I'm looking forward to pursuing a career in biomedical research at either Princeton or MIT this fall.

Carmen Lai

Las Vegas, NV, Ed W. Clark High School

College Plans: Duke University

I am a firm believer of the phrase "work hard, play hard." Throughout high school, I strove to be my personal best, but at the same time achieve balance between work and fun. In addition to maintaining my grades, I also participated in activities such as founding my high school's Piano Club, which holds annual benefit recitals for charity and provides piano tutoring sessions for the students by the students. In the summer of 2008, I discovered my interest in research during my research internship in microbial genetics at the local university. I have also won various math competitions, ran on my school's cross country team, played in chamber orchestra, and volunteered at the local hospital. In the future, whether I am performing a benefit piano recital for leisure, conducting scientific research at a university, or saving lives and learning everyday as a physician--my goal in life is to pursue what I love, help build towards a better society, and live life to the fullest.

Jeffrey Lerman

Deerfield, IL, Deerfield High School

College Plans: Harvard College

I am busy, intelligent, self directed, disciplined and a voracious reader. As the third of five children, I am a superb negotiator and my life is never boring. I am extremely close with my family who has provided great strength and inspiration to me. I like eating, good music, films and Chicago sports teams. My favorite author is William Faulkner; my favorite movie is *The Usual Suspects*; and my favorite Chicago Cub is Ernie Banks. I have had an incredible high school experience which included a summer studying Spanish and doing community service in Nicaragua, managing my school newspaper, captaining my Scholastic bowl team, playing volleyball and baseball, and participating in Model UN. I can't wait to begin college where I hope to study economics.

Helena Liu

Little Rock, AR, Central High School

College Plans: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

I am no longer the broomstick-toting wizard wannabe romping through the woods in search of unexplainable phenomena, plants to use in magic potions, and bugs. Science has since supplanted magic, and I've reluctantly relinquished my broomstick for the sake of civility. Now, you're more likely to find me brewing thermite ingredients, sifting through code, or volunteering as a witch at a Halloween fundraiser. In spite of how time has redirected my activities, my sense of adventure and wonder about the world still dominates my motives, leading me to anything from tutoring disadvantaged students to running cross country. I've held plenty of leadership positions and participated in innumerable contests and orchestral exploits, yet I'm here wishing I could experience time nonlinearly. Then, I could explore even more possibilities and better yet, help others gain a similar admiration for the world and its inner workings.

Henry Liu

Westerville, OH, Thomas Worthington High School

College Plans: Princeton University

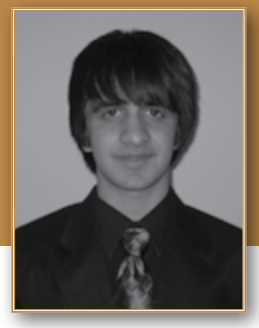
When I was younger, I loved storytelling. My grandfather bought me cassette tapes every week and I would listen to them over and over again. When I came to the United States at the age of six, I didn't know any English, but that didn't stop me from reciting the stories to my teachers and classmates! In the future, I hope to become a software engineer or computer programmer, or maybe even an animator. I've always had a competitive spirit, participating in programs such as Science Olympiad or the Ohio Math League. On the athletic side, I enjoy playing soccer and ultimate Frisbee with my friends, though I must say my favorite outdoor activity is capture-the-flag. I also enjoy camping and climbing trees, and I absolutely love the rain!

Kevin Luo

Yorktown, Virginia, York High School

College Plans: Princeton University or Stanford University

Kevin is a continuously inquisitive person. Learning something new and interesting has helped prompt many of his activities and accomplishments. As such, he has come to conduct numerous science projects in the field of computer science (even working at a NASA internship this past summer), to excel as a classical pianist winning several awards, and to enjoy competing in tennis and scholastic bowl (state-qualifying team), and sometimes chess. In addition to his many varied interests, he values service, devoting much of his time to volunteering at the local nursing center, and also serving with the local 2006-2007 Youth Commission as Vice Chair of the Student Relations Committee. Since September of 2007, he has faced the challenge and hardship of his mother being diagnosed with, and then slowly recovering from, cancer, through which he has gained a deeper understanding, appreciation, and compassion for life.



Vishal Maini

Tempe, AZ, Corona del Sol High School

College Plans: Yale University

Perhaps the most effective means by which I can convey the essence of my Self is by describing a small child in a forest searching for a delicious fruit. This fruit cannot be described in words – indeed, it may not even exist – yet the appeal of the concept of this fruit, its metaphysical form itself, is so divinely sumptuous that the child seeks it with an undying fervor. In his epic Pursuit of the Fruit, the child encounters many distractions and false paths along the way, which occasionally lead to unpleasant bogs and hostile woods, but far more frequently result in the discovery of wondrous and mysteriously beautiful places – glittering streams and serene ponds, sunny clearings and enchanting gardens. One day, he finds a deep well mirroring the heavens above. He gazes into the well, fascinated, when suddenly, miraculously, he disappears. Where is he? Who knows?

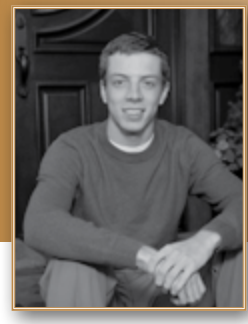
2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Christopher Maze

Ranchester, WY, Tongue River High School

College Plans: University of Idaho

I am a Catholic Ninja/All-State Euphonium Player/Toeshoe-wearing Broseph. I kick butt/torch crème brulee/mountain bike but I don't hit straight drives to the greens/pray the rosary every day/feed the beta fish. I enjoy easing on down/kayaking/listening to the road (on a bike)/whitewater rapids/Jalan Crossland, The National Fingerpicking Banjo Champion. I try to find contemplative silence/soft cotton shirts/spare time during my day to help me cope with stress. I am a man of many passions, striving to become a balanced individual. Last summer I had the opportunity to travel to Ecuador with the Experiment in International Living for five weeks. I work as a groundskeeper and lifeguard, to make money for gas and personal expenses through the school year. I mentor several students both in and out of school to help them find wholesome activities.

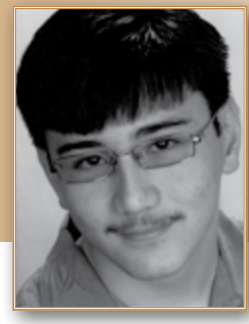


John Nathan McDaniel

Jonesboro, AR, Jonesboro High School

College Plans: Vanderbilt University

John was born on January 16th, 1991 in Jonesboro, Arkansas to parents James McDaniel and Connie Meeks. He attended Blessed Sacrament Elementary School, Douglas MacArthur Junior High, and Jonesboro High School. As a high school student, he was determined to seize every opportunity that crossed his path. He excelled not only in the realm of academia, but also in the fields of athletics, performing arts, and leadership. John participated in track and field as a competitive runner in the 800 meter run and 3200 meter relay. As a junior he played on the marching band drumline, and as a senior he was selected for the honorable position of drum major. As drum major, John led the band to many competition victories while he himself earned many awards for his leadership. In addition to his leadership as drum major, John eagerly participated in JHS student government and was elected president of the student council in his senior year. John appreciates most academic pursuits, but his true passions include travel, linguistics, history, business, and biology.



Aaron Mead

Tea, SD, Roosevelt High School

College Plans: University of Oklahoma

I'm probably one of the oddest people that you will ever meet. I am entirely eccentric, yet alarmingly methodical. I don't mind a moderately messy environment, but I need to be able to walk; pacing is a frequent pastime of mine. I relish mischief on occasion. I strive for perfection, as I see any product imbued with less than the creator's greatest efforts to be worthless. I will circumvent guidelines that inhibit my intentions. I will achieve whatever I set my mind to, and hate being told that I cannot accomplish something. My greatest fears include failure and disappointing those depending on me. I spent the last few years exploring healthcare careers and biology. Somehow surviving the deluge of homework a second consecutive year of 5 AP classes brings, I serve as the Chair of the Teenage Republicans.

Maggie Millner

Cherry Valley, NY, Cherry Valley-Springfield Central School

College Plans: Brown University

Maggie has been writing since the age of three. Her poetry has been published in eight literary magazines, including Syracuse University's *Stone Canoe*. Maggie's writing has won many awards, including first place in the international Bennington College Young Writer's Competition, an NCTE Achievement Award, a YoungARTS Silver Award and a Scholastic National Gold Award. Maggie has attended nine literary conferences nationwide, and is the editor-in-chief of her school's literary magazine. She is also active in various choral, band, and jazz groups, participating in All-County and Area All-State groups annually. She has played lead roles in her school's theatrical productions and played four years of varsity soccer and track. Maggie will major in Literary Arts at Brown University.

Erin Mills

Brewer, ME, Brewer High School

College Plans: Princeton University

Erin is a hardworking girl who loves a challenge in any area. While her biggest accomplishments are in the field of academics, she also enjoys her musical, athletic, dramatic, service, and other extracurricular pursuits. As the valedictorian of her class of 200, she loves being able to encourage and instruct her classmates, and has tutored several students throughout high school. She enjoys performing with the local theatre group and being a part of the Brewer High School swim team, but the highlight of her life is her summer job. Her volunteer position as Barn Staff at Living Waters Bible Conference allows her to combine two of her greatest passions: horses and teaching. Whether leading trail rides or teaching horsemanship lessons, Erin's enthusiasm is what stands out the most. Her goal in life is to "do everything as unto the Lord," and that means with a smile.

Julia A. Kellman
God Travels by Train...
digital image, archival inkjet print
19” x 13”

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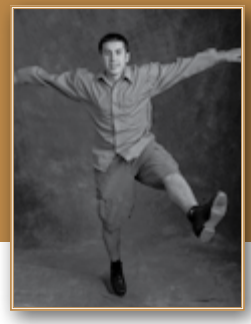
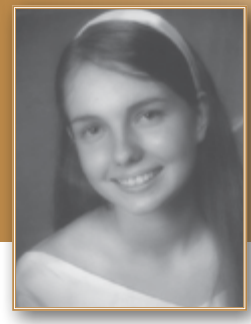


Daniel Mitra

Woodstock Valley, CT, Woodstock Academy

College Plans: City College of New York or Columbia University

Daniel Mitra, 17, is a native of Woodstock Valley, CT and is a senior at Woodstock Academy. Dan primarily is a tap dancer but is accomplished in hip-hop as well. Dan is a member of the TapCity Youth Ensemble of New York City and 4mula1, a Boston based hip-hop crew. He has won the American Tap Dance Foundation's Tap Future Award, Outstanding Youth Tapper Award from the Borough of Brooklyn, Best Dancer Award from Central Connecticut State University, and Silver Award from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Art's youngARTS competition. Dan has been featured in the press such as Dance Teacher Magazine. He was a soloist at Amateur Night at the Apollo, and was a member of the Legacy Dance Company from Lexington, MA. Dan will be attending either the City College of New York or the School of General Studies at Columbia, which will allow him to pursue a professional career in dance while attaining a degree.

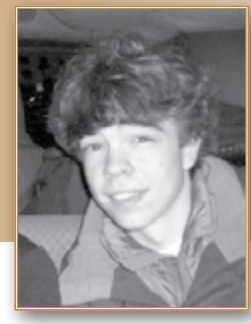


Lucia Mocz

Mililani, HI, Mililani High School

College Plans: Harvard College

I have always had a passion for learning. My academic curiosity extends to any subject, but my special interest lies in mathematics, computer science, and music. At my school, I am the president of the math team and captain of the science bowl team. I participated in several national and international math and science competitions, including the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair and the Siemens Competition for Math, Science, and Technology, and won numerous awards. Additionally, I have taken several Advanced Placement and college courses in math and science. I am also a violinist in Hawaii's highest level youth symphony and the concertmaster of my school's string ensemble and symphony orchestra. In university I plan to pursue these subjects and hope to one day become a math professor or computer scientist. While contributing to the advancement of mathematical sciences, my goal is also to teach a future generation of students.



Jared Moffat

Jackson, MS, Jackson Preparatory School

College Plans: Brown University

Philosophy, my passion, is both an art and a science. Rigorous are the tests of logic, but beautiful are the metaphors. Rather than being mere academic interests, introspection and wisdom, the wrestling and constant struggle with the most preeminent questions of human existence, compose the substance of my present and future. I like to think of my life as both an act of artistic creation and careful calculation, a balancing act between spontaneity and responsible planning. Every artist needs training, and every scientist needs creativity. An overwhelming desire to effect positive change in the world underlies both themes of my personality. I want, most of all, to be the catalyst of a chain reaction in which human empathy and enlightenment spreads out from concentrated sources and pervades the entire zeitgeist. Philosophy should not be delegated to "experts." Philosophy needs to be democratized.

Evanne Montoya

Louisville, CO, Monarch High School

College Plans: Whitworth University

Evanne was co-Editor in Chief of her high school newspaper, and is excited to pursue a career in journalism. Evanne's other interests include writing poetry and dancing. She does many forms of dance but will always be a ballerina at heart, mostly because she feels ridiculous when attempting hip-hop. She is very involved with her church, and has been on mission trips to Montana, Juarez and Ensenada, Mexico and Mandeville, Jamaica, where she acquired skills such as stuccoing, participating in concrete bucket lines, and entertaining small children. She also was a part of her church's high school choir, Salt and Light, which puts on benefit concerts and goes on service and music orientated tours. Though she is sad to be leaving her lifelong home of Colorado, she's ready to see where this new chapter of her life takes her.

Jesse Nee-Vogelman

Santa Rosa, CA, Elsie Allen High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Jesse's motto has always been "You've gotta throw both cheeks in the ring, baby," and it is in that spirit that he has pursued everything in his life. Always a promoter of a healthy body, Jesse has been active in wrestling, baseball, and, of course, the harrowing sport of table tennis. Jesse also has a passion for music, and has played piano for several years. He also can almost play the guitar and has said that "with a gun to his head he could probably play a few songs on a trumpet." Despite doing all this, Jesse also finds time to pursue his passion for theater, having written several one act scripts including the award winning "Land Of Sunshine and Bananas." Jesse hopes in the future to "be an actor or something, or maybe some sort of sciencey dude." Jesse feels that the biggest problem with the world is that people take life WAY too seriously.

Emily Ngan

Morgantown, WV, Trinity Christian School

College Plans: Duke University

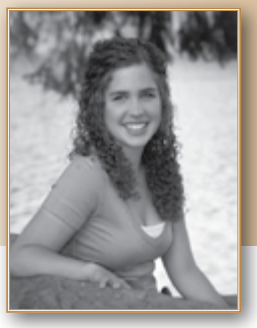
Throughout my academic career, I have remained steadfast to a singular motto: Participate in all areas of life, may it be art, athletics, or academics, but in everything, pursue nothing less than excellence. I have developed this motto because I firmly believe in being a well-rounded individual who contributes a 'dime' rather than a 'penny.' I have avidly participated in academic competitions, student council, community service, orchestra, dance, varsity volleyball, and studio art, and have prided myself in receiving many accolades and awards. From being nominated an All-state volleyball player to being valedictorian of my graduating class, I am convinced that it is possible to bridge the gap between 'jock' and 'nerd.' Through my participation in a wealth of activities, I am able to do what I enjoy while developing my character as a well-rounded individual and a contributor to society.

Elan Nguyen

Bradenton, FL, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School

College Plans: Harvard College

I am the oddball in my family. Physically, it is clear why. Only my Dad surpasses me in height. My mom and even my two sisters, who are 7 and 13 years older than me, have to look up to talk to me. Also unlike the rest of my family, I love sports. I used to play football with the neighborhood kids, watch SportsCenter 24/7, and collect baseball cards. These days, I devote my energy towards just one sport – basketball – and hope to play competitively in college. But what's most puzzling to my family is that I do not obsess over movies like they do. In spite of our differences, however, my family and I get along just fine. In fact, they made me who I am, and I owe my accomplishments to their unconditional love and support over all those years.



Stephanie Nicholson

Camas, WA, Camas Senior High School

College Plans: Stanford University

When I was four years old, I decided that I would become a scientist. So, I caught a "fuzzy-wuzzy caterpillar" from the abandoned lot next door, put it in a cage, and waited anxiously for my beautiful butterfly. Out came a hideous, furry moth. But, my simple childhood experiment made me fall irrevocably in love with science, and since then I have never looked back. My most interesting scientific experience was interning at a nuclear reactor, and in the future, I hope to research autism. Besides science, I am passionate about volunteer work and education. I spent last year serving as the Governor of the Pacific Northwest District of Key Club International, and as Governor, I implemented a literacy initiative. In my free time, I love to be outdoors, or discover tasty new restaurants in the city with friends.

Omosola O. Odetunde

Pearland, TX, Pearland High School

College Plans: Stanford University

Omosola wishes there were more hours in the day to accomplish everything that she wants and hopes to do, but has attempted to do her best with the little time that she has. This year, her first year in Academic Decathlon, she was the Texas State Silver Medalist in the Honor division, and medaled at nationals. She has a myriad of interests including playing the trombone, which she has pursued for six years; teaching Sunday School to preschoolers; Future Problem Solving, in which she is a three-time Texas State Champion; Academic Decathlon; Youth Group; multiple planning committees; honor societies, in two of which she has held or currently holds an officer position; the Spanish language, which she has studied for four years, earning awards at competitions; and participating in her favorite sport, gymnastics. She was also given the honor of being named to the Texas All-State Academic team. Her schedule is equally as hectic as it is exciting for her. She plans on majoring in Computer Science and ultimately becoming a programmer for educational software.

Ridge Olivieri

San Juan, PR, Saint John's School

College Plans: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

I enjoy flying, scuba diving, traveling, reading and writing. I constantly strive for the best in everything I do, be it as a pilot in the cockpit, a student in the classroom or an Eagle Scout in the wilderness. No stranger to foreign lands, I love to travel and have visited many countries all over the world. As an athlete, I've participated in Cross Country running and competitive Swimming at my school. This last year my swim team made the championships, and I won first place in the 50 meter freestyle.

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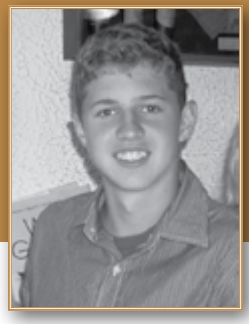


Zach Osborn

Bonn, Germany, Bonn International School

College Plans: Harvard College

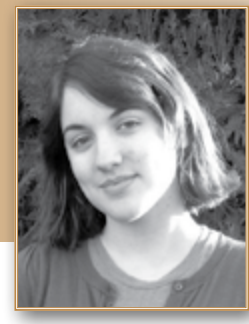
Coming from a military family, Zach grew up all over the world. His family's frequent moves meant that he was constantly learning to adapt to new circumstances and challenges. His high school education alone took place in schools as far flung as California, Germany, and southern Spain. While some might balk in such a situation, Zach relishes the adventure. He views every new experience as both a challenge to conquer and an opportunity to seize. Zach has excelled at numerous sports including Volleyball, Baseball, Golf, and Water Polo, and in his senior year he was elected Captain of his Cross-Country team. He serves as Treasurer in his school's Student Council, and is a Model United Nations Delegate, and an Eagle Scout. His experience as a designer and fabricator on his FIRST Robotics Team has motivated him to pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Leann Nicole Osterkamp

Boulder, CO, Boulder High School

College Plans: The Juilliard School

Leann is a scholar who lives for music. She believes most of life's lessons and self-discovery can happen with the 88 keys of a piano. Her journey has led her to performances across the United States and Italy. Along the way she has won or received top honors in many competitions. Highlights have been winning the Schlern International Music Festival Competition in Italy and being a "Rising Young Star" in a Colorado Symphony Orchestra Gala. She has won several awards in the Music Teachers National Association's competitions, including being a national finalist. Most recently she was awarded a 2009 NFAA youngARTS Silver award in music. She has spent summers at the Schlern International Music Festival and the Bowdoin International Music Festival. Leann has played in numerous Master Classes with some of the world's leading pianists. She has expanded her musical journey into jazz piano, composition, and orchestral conducting.



Avalon Owens

Boise, ID, Centennial High School

College Plans: Princeton University

When Avalon was growing up, she loved to read about grand adventures in fantastic worlds. Now the real world is too exciting, and demanding, for her to spend much time on escapism: she has been involved in Idaho's Academic Decathlon and Competitive Speech programs for three years each, and she is also involved in National Honors Society, her school's human rights and environmental clubs (as well as a club that produces an annual art and literary magazine), cycling, running, tennis, and various types of art. Though her interests cover a wide spectrum, her greatest passion is science. She wants to major in biology in college, with the intent of becoming a genetic engineer, and minor in Mandarin Chinese. She has two goldfish, Scylla and Europe, whom she credits with all of her successes.

Marissa Pan

Alpharetta, GA, Alpharetta High School

College plans: Harvard College

When Marissa was five years old, her science experiments involving mud and earthworms in the kitchen were not met with much enthusiasm from her mother. Thankfully, these days she is having a bit more luck – her extensive neuroscience research in circadian rhythm has taken her to the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair and allowed her the honor of National Semifinalist in the Siemens Competition. In addition to science, another one of Marissa's passions is dance. She is a member of the professional ballet company North Atlanta Dance Theater, and her favorite roles to perform have been Dewdrop Fairy in the *Nutcracker* and Esmeralda from the eponymous ballet. In school, Marissa is an integral member of Student Council, President of Medical Club, and President of Spanish National Honor Society. She actively volunteers in the Hispanic community, and her most fulfilling endeavor this year was to create a tutoring program for Spanish-speaking students. Marissa also enjoys working as a live and print model, pilates, eating, travel, and poetry.

Andrew Peters

Rochester, MN, Mayo High School

College Plans: Carleton College, Northfield, MN

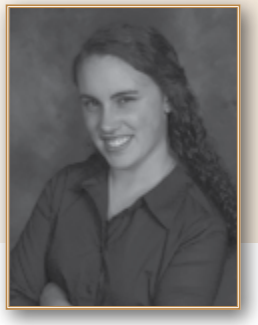
I might have trouble deciding on a college major: fields I enjoy include physics, biology, math, classics, and languages/linguistics. (For the last, I participated in the North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad.) I have also competed in the state finals of Knowledge Bowl for three years. Some of my favorite pastimes are composing and playing music – I've played the piano for twelve years and the French horn for seven, and I'm active in my school band. For the last few years, several friends and I have helped to run and expand the newly formed Youth United program, a branch of Habitat for Humanity in which we construct a house each year. I also love drawing and taking photographs – you might imagine the Minnesotan landscape too desolate for that last hobby, but I think my home state is beautiful.

Anne Pfeifle

Rapid City, South Dakota, Stevens High School

College Plans: Yale University or Augustana College

As an avid runner, I have loved competing for my high school cross country and track teams since eighth grade. When I'm not training, I play my cello in our school orchestra, in the community orchestra, with other Suzuki students, or for fundraisers, such as the annual Messiah concert at Christmas. In between fundraisers and track practice, my co-president and I represent our class on student council making decisions about graduation, class activities and service projects. Outside of school, I relish improv competition with Destination Imagination. While I enjoy all these activities, my true favorite is reading. By the time I was ten, I had read all the books on snakes in the local library. I hope to continue to pursue these interests in college, combining them into a major or career that I could pursue the rest of my life.

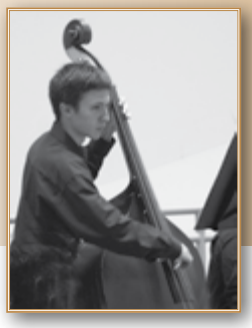


Elizabeth Phillips

Anchorage, AK, West Anchorage High School

College Plans: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

A life-long Alaskan, Elizabeth dedicates herself to a variety of pursuits. A delegate in Model United Nation for three years, she was a 2009 Committee Director and awarded "Most Outstanding Delegate" in the 2009 Alaska Model UN Conference. An Honor Society member and President of her school's Mu Alpha Theta chapter, she tutors students in both math and Spanish. Starting 3 years ago on West's varsity rifle "A" team as "most improved," she finished this year as Co-Captain in addition to four years on her school's state champion varsity tennis team. Extremely active in Anchorage Youth Court, she provides "justice for youth by youth," serving as the President, leading attorney, presiding judge, Board of Directors Co-Chair , and Ethics Board Bar Counsel. She plays the flute in her school's symphonic band, and loves playing with her dog and gardening. She plans to study biological engineering and pursue a career in international advocacy.

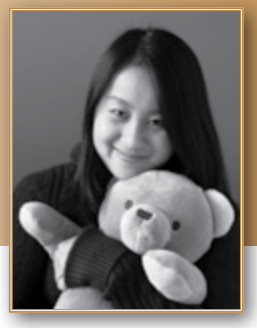


Nathan Prillaman

Potomac, MD, Richard Montgomery High School

College Plans: Yale University

Nathan is a serious student, composer of classical music, and performer. He is currently in the International Baccalaureate Program at Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville Maryland where he is active in the music program and music scene as a performer on piano, bass, clarinet and guitar, as an arranger, as a band leader, and as composer, all in various ensembles playing various genres of music. He is also an Eagle Scout with a bronze palm, and is junior assistant scoutmaster in Boy Scout troop 1434.



Xin "Kathy" Qian

Solon, OH, Solon High School

College Plans: University of Pennsylvania

A self-described sushi fanatic and flaming hot cheeto addict, Kathy is a passionate piano player and an avid fan of forensic science. Her latest project, Pass the Pulse, is a community outreach initiative which aims to increase organ donation awareness in the Northeast Ohio region, and the group has been featured in numerous newspapers throughout the area. In her spare time, Kathy enjoys web design, volleyball, and aspiring to grow taller. She has led her team to numerous national finishes as Captain of Science Olympiad and Future Problem Solving, as well as been a successful international extemporaneous speaker and Vice President of Speech and Debate and an attorney and Secretary of Mock Trial.

Ryan Ragaglia

Cheyenne, WY, Cheyenne Central High School

College Plans: Brown University or the University of Wyoming

Ryan has had many successes in both academic and extra-curricular endeavors. He was selected as a National Merit Finalist, a Presidential Scholar Semi-Finalist, and an AP Scholar with Honor. He is involved in many clubs and organizations and performs a leadership role in many of those organizations. He is his Senior Class Secretary, Chair of the Cheyenne Mayor's Youth Council, Vice-President of Art Club, a member of National Honor Society, and a performer in his school's Drama Team. One of Ryan's main extra-curricular interests is the oboe, and he was selected as the 2009 Wyoming All-State Orchestra's Principle Oboist. He plans to major in International Relations major with a focus on European Politics, and to possibly minor in Performing Music at either Brown University or the University of Wyoming.

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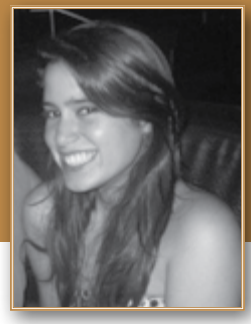


Mariana Ramírez de Arellano

Guaynabo, PR, Saint John's School

College Plans: Harvard College

This year I am president of the Student Council and president of Model United Nations Club and I am involved in the National Honor Society and Junior State of America Club. Aside from clubs, I fundraise for students in public primary schools in Cambodia through a cookie company I started three years ago. One of my most memorable experiences was last summer, when I was able to teach the students I was helping out in Cambodia and see what my fundraising helped achieve. In my spare time, I enjoy practicing yoga and cooking for and spending time with my family and friends. After college, I plan on attaining a joint degree in Business and International Law to keep serving the world community.

Brian Reiser

Seattle, WA, Lakeside School

College Plans: Princeton University

My broad range of interests matches the equally diverse experiences in my life. Living in Europe for five years, during which time the Euro was introduced, started my interest in languages and foreign affairs. After moving to Seattle, I developed a strong interest in math after only a few months of math class under Ms. Kol, my seventh-grade math teacher. Many of my other interests, such as piano and Boy Scouts, have similar roots in my life and the interconnectedness of these are highlighted. The same skills I use in coaching a fifth-grade math club helped me earn my Eagle Scout award. The same organizational skills I use in my work with the Middle School Science Olympiad team are equally applicable in my work as Vice-President of the state Junior Classical League Latin convention. It is this dynamic between different but interwoven interests that characterizes my own passions and accomplishments.

Elizabeth Rodenbough

Greensboro, NC, Grimsley High School

College Plans: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

My interests range far and wide, from environmental activism to classical music to working with classmates on a Rally for Darfur. I love to dance, to run, to write and to hang out with my friends. Playing piano and violin occupy much of my time outside school. Mission trips with my church have taken me from the soups kitchens of DC to the casinos of Atlantic City to the mountains of Chiapas, Mexico. Summers growing up in NC meant hiking and backpacking the mountains or kayaking the Outer Banks with an environmental camp program. I also founded my own day camp for young children when I was in middle school, and "Camp Libby" was a part of my summers thereafter. The third of four children, I value family and friends most of all. My life will make a positive difference in the world, and I am eagerly anticipating the future.

Rebecca Roelofs

Hockessin, DE, The Charter School of Wilmington

College Plans: Undecided

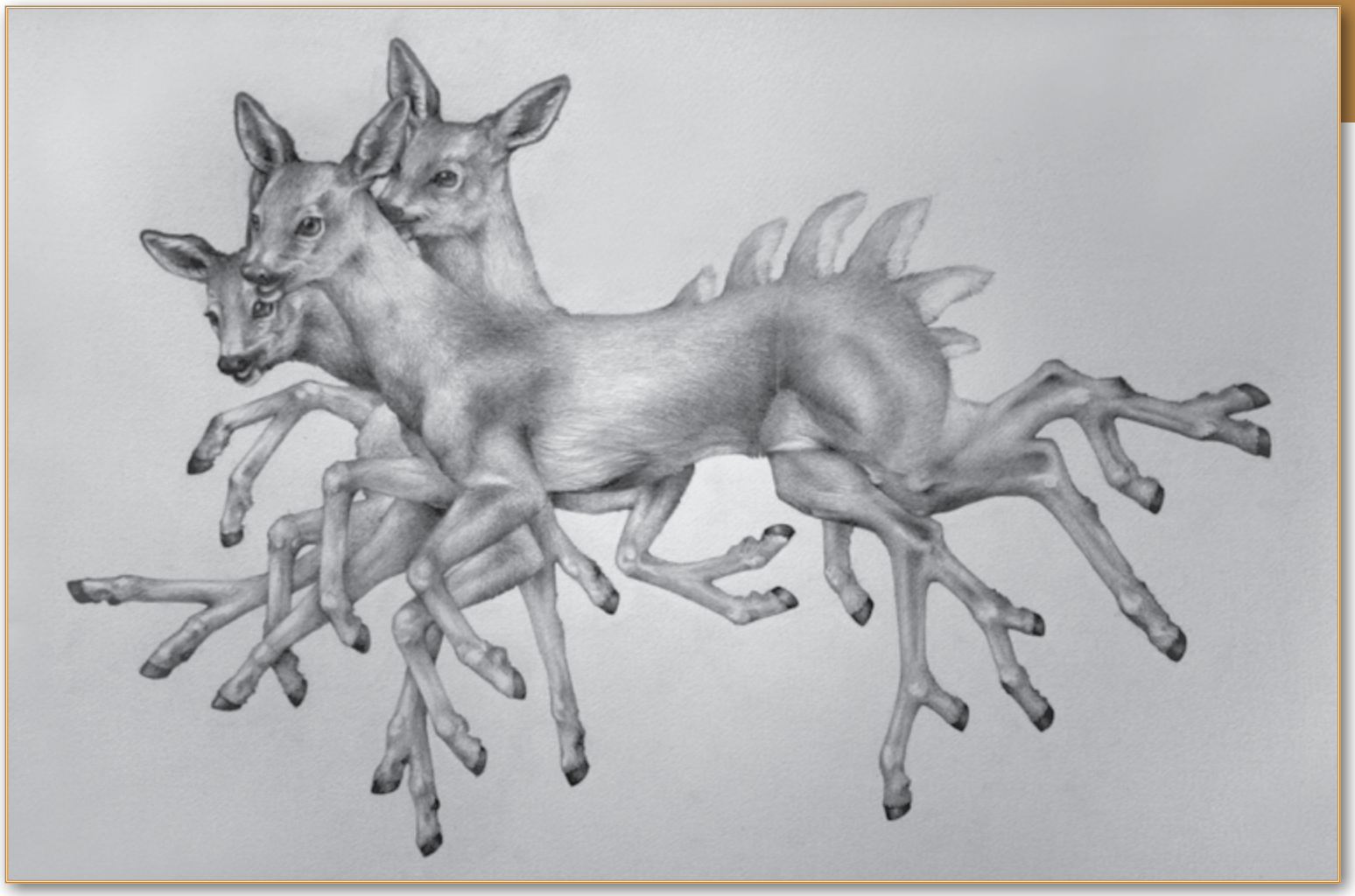
Pursuing what I believe in and am passionate about has led me down some of the most challenging and rewarding pathways of my life. I love the outdoors, from sailing on the Chesapeake Bay to backpacking through the Appalachian Mountains to a quick stroll through my local nature preserve. I have carried my passion for the environment over to my academic pursuits: last summer my Envirothon team took first place at the International Canon Envirothon and I was also able to conduct research on the invasive wetland plant, phragmites australis, at the University of Delaware. In addition to these activities, I also play the violin in my school's orchestra, tutor elementary students in science fair projects, am captain of the Science Olympiad team, and participate in many environmental-related community service activities, such as road clean-ups and bird banding. In college, I plan to major in engineering.

Annemarie E. Ryu

Rochester, MN, Mayo High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Annie wonders whether she should stop trying to prioritize since she tries to do her best at everything, regardless of its given rank. Annie has excelled in tennis, captaining her team to the state finals and winning the doubles championship, in music, as the concertmaster of the Southeastern Minnesota Youth Orchestra, and in a myriad of other extracurricular activities ranging from researching gene expression in cancers at the Mayo Clinic to organizing events and fundraisers as president of her school's student government and Spanish club. Annie credits her achievements to her supportive family, friends, and teachers, and a vital combination of optimism and aspiration. Annie is thoroughly enjoying life and appreciating the challenges that it offers. She hopes to, in the future, write a novel, play in a reputable orchestra, advance human welfare with a scientific discovery, and partner with Captain Planet to halt damage to the environment.



Meagan C. Jenigen
Ghosted Roots
graphite on paper
30” x 20”

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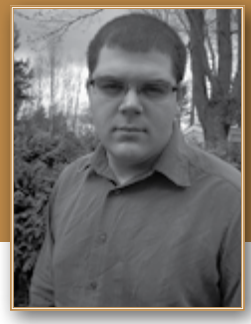
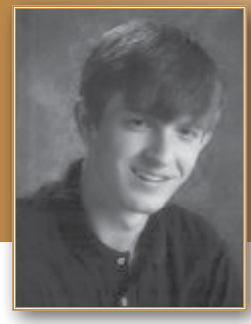


Lucas San Juan

Dover, NH, Dover High School

College Plans: Wesleyan University

First and foremost, I am a writer and a filmmaker. I have written and directed short films that have been viewed by over 12,000 people and presented at the New Hampshire High School Short Film Festival. For the past three years, I have been the director of Dover High School's annual film festival. I am the New Media Director for the Tide, DHS's student run newspaper. As New Media Director, I covered the 2008 presidential election, receiving press clearances to film news videos of a Barack Obama campaign speech and a Sarah Palin rally. I have been a practicing martial artist for the past eight years and have attained the rank of First Degree Black Belt in Shaolin Kenpo Karate. This fall, I will attend Wesleyan University, where I plan to major in Film Studies



Hunter Sceats

Colorado Springs, CO, Cheyenne Mountain High School

College Plans: California Institute of Technology

Although hardly such an epic traveler, Mr. Sceats finds a great deal of kinship with Tennyson's "Ulysses" in his desire to "drink life to the lees": he seeks to plumb its depths with weighted line and search out the dark corners of the world. His interests lie in the realm of science, particularly polymer chemistry, but he enjoys studying Late Antiquity Western Europe as well as the Korean martial art of Tae Kwon Do. A born-and-raised Coloradoan, he values his proximity with nature a great deal and spends his time there traversing canyons and mountains, as well as participating in the encompassing challenge that is big game hunting.

Grace Serio

Madison, MS, St. Andrew's Episcopal School

College Plans: Rice University

I am not trying to change the world but just want to keep it from losing its culinary edge! I am on a mission to get both guys and girls into the kitchen to teach them how to cook. While I have never had cable television in my home, I learn by watching cooking shows while exercising at the gym and therefore broaden my cooking repertoire one mile at a time. My love of cooking also encompasses my passion for travel as I love to sample local foods when in a new city. I am learning to speak Italian and hope to travel to Florence someday to practice pediatric medicine and continue to explore my Italian ancestry. Back home in Mississippi, as co-founder and president of my high school Environmental Club, I lead my peers in recycling and conservation efforts.

Clare Sestanovich

Washington, DC, Sidwell Friends School

College Plans: Yale University

There are a thousand labels I might pick for myself; the most mundane, yet perhaps most meaningful, is simply "student." Since I left kindergarten twelve years ago, the daily excitement of going to school has inevitably faded but, in many ways, learning has never ceased to feel like some kind of thrill-seeking. Biology may not be as conventionally thrilling as parachuting, but there are certainly educational adventures to be had – inside and outside the classroom. Inside, I've discovered I'm an American history buff (especially anything Supreme Court-related) who's interested in Genetics. Outside, I've buried myself in good books, tested the waters as an amateur short-story writer, learned the details of Icelandic glaciology from the experts, contributed to my first art show, and turned into a running fanatic. I'm looking forward to more lessons – and of course, more thrills.

Konlin Shen

Logan, UT, Logan High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Konlin is a mixture of academics, classical music, and "raw" hip hop. As the math club and MESA presidents, orchestra concert master, and self-taught breakdancer and rapper, Konlin is definitely not your average high school student. He took first place overall in the Utah State Academic Olympiad, and consistently ranks in the top three in the Utah State Math Contest. Konlin started playing violin at five, and has soloed five times with local orchestras and has been a member of the All-State Orchestra three times. In addition, Konlin has been dancing for four years, and has performed for many events. Konlin is also the Online Editor of the Logan High "Grizzly" newspaper, a senior class officer, a GED Tutor, and a critter care specialist at the Stokes Nature Center. He is a recipient of the Siemens Award for Advanced Placement and hopes to become an applied scientist.

Patrick Short

Raleigh, NC, Jesse O. Sanderson High School

College Plans: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Patrick is never afraid to seek new challenges and explore new avenues. As Drum Major of the Marching Band, Patrick led the Marching Spartans to the first Grand Champion trophy in seven years, a goal they worked very hard to achieve. Last year, Patrick was named the Most Outstanding Player on the Sanderson Tennis Team and led the Sanderson Math Team as President. Patrick values physical fitness very much and enjoys running and lifting weights to cross train for tennis. In his community, Patrick has made a large impact as Student Council Vice President, National Honor Society Volunteer, and Church Youth Board member. Patrick has a very curious mind and enjoys inventing and dreaming up new ideas. Patrick will be taking a Gap Year to learn Mandarin in China and teach in Guatemala. Patrick will enroll at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a Morehead-Cain Scholar in the fall of 2010.

Yookyeong Carolyn Sim

Seoul, S. Korea, Indian Springs School

College Plan: Princeton University or Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Research requires investigation, analysis and publication. As the eye of a storm is peaceful and calm, I was able to get a new perspective by standing at the center of the entire research process. My research on Frequency-dependent Characteristics of Terahertz Radiation has been recognized by an SCI journal, "Current Applied Physics." As the first author, I implied the clinical application of terahertz technology for tissue classification. I hope my contribution can help the development of the terahertz endoscopic probe to eliminate the painful biopsy procedures. Research especially helped me to get in touch with areas outside of academics, such as personal responsibility and team work. Even though the entire research process was at times frustrating, through this experience I discovered my interest in bio-medical research and realized how satisfying scientific research can be.

Anne Song

Hudson, OH, Western Reserve Academy

College Plans: Harvard College or Yale University

Anne loves challenges and loves to have fun, and she has found that she can achieve both in many ways – through academics, athletics, arts, research, extracurriculars, and service. In academics, Anne loves all the disciplines, particularly those involving problem-solving and using logic and creativity to find a solution. On the athletic field, Anne plays soccer, basketball, and runs track. Her favorite is soccer, and in her senior year, she was named to the NSCAA Scholar All-America team – one of thirty-five student-athletes in the country to receive the honor. She also plays the clarinet in the school band. This past summer, Anne worked as an intern and conducted research with the Department of General Pediatrics at the Cleveland Clinic's Main Campus. She participates in her school's Academic Challenge team and Forensics Club, and she loves helping others through various volunteering activities.

Janet Song

Audubon, PA, Methacton High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Janet is driven to explore the intricacies of life. A laboratory intern since her sophomore year, Janet was an Intel Science Talent Search finalist and a Davidson Fellow. Her constant desire to expand the breadth of her knowledge has led to research on the early detection of cancer and brain volumetric methodologies, the latter of which she studied at the Research Science Institute where she was named one of the top five presenters. Although Janet is a scientist at heart, she also seeks to serve her community. She is president of Mock Trials and the Tri-M Music Honor Society and teaches her peers about HIV/AIDS and eating disorders through Peer Connections. Furthermore, Janet often plays piano at a local nursing home and was a finalist in the American Fine Arts Festival. In the future, she hopes to become a biomedical researcher and join the fight against diseases like autism or cancer.

Philip Vidal Streich

Platteville, WI, Home School

College Plans: Harvard College

I've always loved science, and living on a farm is like having my own giant laboratory. In seventh grade I began home schooling for greater challenge. Since ninth grade I've taken undergraduate and graduate courses and conducted research at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. Research has been my most intellectually thrilling and sheer fun experience as I've disproved generally held assumptions and made "patent pending" discoveries published in Advanced Materials and the "Editor's Choice" section of Science, befriended fascinating "science-kids" from around the world, co-founded a company, and won fantastic awards totaling almost $250,000, including the top award at the Intel International Science Fair. I also love music – from Bach to Coltrane to Hendrix – and politics, where I was elected Treasurer of the Democratic Party of Grant County. My dream is to combine science and politics to help solve some of our most daunting problems, not least global warming.

2009 PRESIDENTIAL

William Sun

Chesterfield, MO, Parkway Central High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Like many five-year olds, I was fascinated with space exploration. However, rather than aspiring to become an astronaut, I instead was inspired by the masterful Ed Harris, who played the Mission Control Director in *Apollo 13*. Though my interests have markedly shifted since then, I still retain a passion for integrating leadership and the sciences. I have published my research in *Nature Chemical Biology* as co-first author and was awarded second place in the Intel Science Talent Search. At the same time, I enjoy foreign policy debate and politics; I had the opportunity of participating in Boys Nation over the summer. As president of our National Honor Society, I planned events that raised money for cancer research and organized volunteers to help around the community. When I'm not glued to C-SPAN watching quorum calls, I love playing cello and pickup basketball games with friends.

Amy Tai

Tulsa, OK, Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics

College Plans: Harvard College

I want to do everything and anything. Although I consider myself a mathematician, I am also a moralist and a musician, a writer and an orator, an astronomer and a programmer. Despite these broad interests, I am a well-balanced individual, and I know what I want to do, my position in society, and my strengths and weaknesses. My life is a journey of personal cultivation, during which I share any newly acquired happiness and understanding with others. Further, I believe there is a disturbing incompetency in a singular, static existence, so I continuously seek people with whom I can exchange interesting stories and nontrivial trivia. If I can achieve an inner equilibrium by studying subjects that I love or playing music or cooking scrumptious meals, why can't others?

Robert Tamai

Honolulu, HI, 'Iolani School

College Plans: Harvard College

Robert Tamai can always be found around campus with a smile on his face. At 'Iolani, he is a proconsul (student body president) and an enthusiastic participant in the school's student government. Robert is a member and team captain of both the varsity tennis and cross country teams. In addition to his leadership roles, Robert plays in the school's top orchestra and is on the yearbook staff. He is a National Merit Scholar, Cum Laude Society member, and recipient of the school's Top Scholar and Headmaster's List distinctions. In 2007, he attended the HOBY World Leadership Congress as the Hawaii representative. Robert has two older sisters and two very loving parents and would like to thank them for all of their support and encouragement over the last eighteen years. Aloha!

Anish Tilak

Lawton, OK, Eisenhower High School

College Plans: University of Southern California

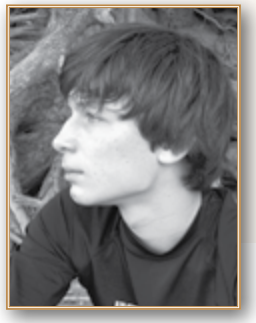
Anish. Oh Anish. The last eighteen years have seen him through some great times. He was born in Bombay, India and raised in Oklahoma. Thus, he has grown up to appreciate the diversity of the human experience. He is passionate about helping others and strives to accomplish his goals. Although he has an easygoing personality, he is constantly searching for new challenges, new experiences. He is his high school's Student Body President, Homecoming King, and Key Club Treasurer. He thrives on creativity and is an avid photographer/artist. He hopes to be an architect one day. But just to clarify, he does not want to be the typical architect. He wants to make a difference in the way people live. He plans to build simple, affordable, yet innovative and environmentally friendly, structures for those who currently live in unfortunate circumstances. I hope the world is ready for this kid!

Devyn Tyler

Pearland, TX, The High School for the Performing and Visual Arts

College Plans: Columbia University

Devyn is originally from New Orleans, Louisiana; however, she relocated to Houston after losing everything in Hurricane Katrina. She studies theater, has a passion for French, and loves to read. Devyn is a member of the International Thespian Society, National Honor Society, and the American Leadership Forum. Along with her school work, she also has years of film and television experience; her resume include roles in *The Great Debaters* and *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. Her latest accomplishments are her unforgettable experience with the youngARTS program and her acceptance into Columbia University. Theater is one of the things that Devyn can truly embrace, and studying theater has been fundamental to her growth as an actor as well as a person. She is thankful for her parents; they have taught her to live without limits.



Mark Vander Schaaf

Westfield, NJ, Union County Magnet High School

College Plans: Rice University

I've yet to discover exactly what I'll do in the future, but I'd like to continue my family tradition of working to improve the world somehow, not as a diplomat, minister, teacher or social worker, like my family, but as a scientist and engineer. I'm curious about nanotechnology, molecular biology, organic chemistry, engineering entrepreneurship and more, and hope to create revolutionary materials that will help solve human problems. I love Ultimate Frisbee, rock-climbing, snorkeling, hiking, woodworking, time with friends and family, Thai food, music, exploring new places, and meeting people. The words of the poet, Mary Oliver, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" run through my mind when I think about the future, all the while staying open to discovery, because my life is unpredictable, and I like it that way.

David Wagner

Sparks, NV, Spanish Springs High School

College Plans: Brigham Young University at Provo

Henry David Thoreau would often walk in hopes of discovering "an absolutely new prospect," which was "a great happiness" to him. To seek and discover the new is also a great source of pleasure to me. As an Eagle Scout, I associate my knowledge with service opportunities. I have taught myself to play viola and piano competitively. My father's heritage has encouraged me to learn Spanish, which I speak conversantly at home and abroad. I will apply all of these skills on a two-year mission, just as I apply them now. I love to read. Of late, I have developed an affinity for Plato, who taught me that learning is endless. This fall, my unending walk takes me to BYU, where I will pursue my double major in physical science and music. I plan to earn a PhD, from which I will teach and research at the collegiate level.

Ilana Walder-Biesanz

Portland, OR, Riverdale High School

College Plans: Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering

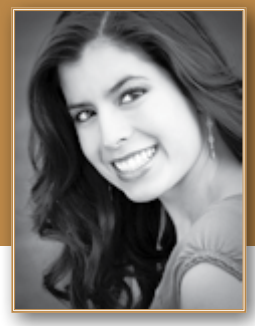
When given one word to describe myself, I pick "polymath." Everything interests me. I build robots, argue cases for mock trial, answer trivia questions as captain of the science bowl team, play defense on the soccer team, speak three languages (English, Spanish, and Japanese), and act, sing, and dance. I spend my summers polishing my drama skills in Shakespeare acting intensives, teaching elementary school (in Spanish) in Honduran two-room schoolhouses, or helping design hands-on math exhibits for my state science museum. In my free time, I philosophize with friends, sing Broadway and opera tunes around the house, and read Romantic-era literature. Though I plan to major in engineering, I'll continue pursuing my passions for languages, linguistics, cognitive science, philosophy, theater, literature, and education. I haven't yet decided whether I'm going to teach, build multilingual robots, run the U.S. Department of Education, or be the international spokesperson for NASA.

Anne Wang

Omaha, NE, Millard North High School

College Plans: University of Pennsylvania

Pablo Picasso stated, "Some painters turn the sun into a yellow dot, others turn a yellow dot into the sun." Throughout my life, I have attempted to turn yellow dots into suns. In kindergarten, that meant finger painting expressionist artworks. In later years, that meant delving into the worlds of pencils and pastels, black and white keys, civilized argumentation (debate), and peer tutoring, putting my own twist on the world. I am curious and eager, and very much spontaneous. I have attempted yoga, track, ice-skating, hip-hop dance, and paintball. I've recently received my diploma in the art of square dancing, and studied in a grocery store with my IB family. In recent years, I've researched PTKs at the Research Science Institute and depression medication at Creighton Medical Center. Whether I am delving into the mysteries of science or expressing myself through art, I have many more yellow dots to change.



Camille A. Wasden

Layton, UT, Northridge High School

College Plans: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

As a curious child, Camille never hesitated to ask, "How does it work?" She continues in her quest for knowledge, always wanting to understand the world around her. Camille loves voice, dance, and piano. She has performed lead roles in several school musicals, her most memorable being *Fantine* in "Les Miserables." Having lived in Japan for 6 years as a child, Camille speaks Japanese. This experience helps her connect with her heritage, since her grandmother is from Okinawa. Math and science have been especially rewarding for Camille, with experiences ranging from friendships formed in AP classes to a NASA article award. She enjoys applying her knowledge to solve real-life problems, and finds happiness in service. Camille has held leadership positions in National Honor Society, advanced choirs, and her church youth group. Her Swedish great-grandmother's words say it all: "Life is beautiful, but you have to keep working at it!"

2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Jeanette Wat

Exeter, NH, Phillips Exeter Academy

College Plans: Rice University

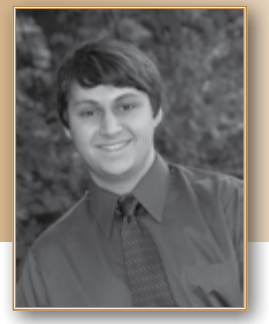
As a kid, Jeanette loved to play musical chairs, partly because she liked the prizes (usually chocolate cakes), but mostly because she enjoyed figuring out her chances of winning from the length of the music. The mathematician in her led her to qualify twice for the USA Math Olympiad and complete graduate-level studies in Abstract Algebra at the University of Chicago. She has also been fascinated by science and research, attending the Research Science Institute and becoming a Semifinalist in both the Siemens and Intel Science Competitions. As Vice President of Chemistry Club and Book Award Manager, she enjoys organizing activities to help others learn science. In community service, she loves volunteering at the Spanish Fiesta Festival and International Day. A National Merit and Cum Laude Scholar, she tutors others in a variety of subjects. In her spare time, she swims, plays piano, and spends time with friends and family.

Annie Wentzell

Ocean Springs, MS, Mississippi School of the Arts

College Plans: Maryland Institute College of Art

A modern day adventurer, Annie Wentzell sometimes drives out into the country simply to get lost. With a camera in hand, she wanders through ghost towns and abandoned theme parks exploring forgotten places. Until she began attending an arts boarding school, horse back riding, doodling and wandering in the woods consumed Annie's life. Since going to her rural Mississippi art school, Annie has developed groundbreaking methods for securing pennies to railroad tracks and a love for photography. Her interest in exploring has encouraged her to pursue photojournalism as a career, suiting her desire to move around and to document.



Nathaniel Patrick West

Upper Arlington, OH, Upper Arlington High School

College Plans: The Curtis Institute of Music

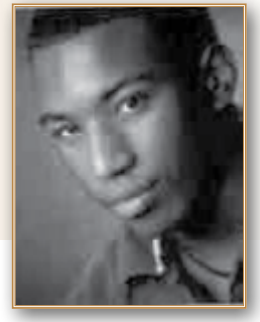
My goal is to be the principal bassist of a major orchestra. I've challenged myself on a daily basis to develop the skills needed to study at a top conservatory and I've come to believe that dreams can be achieved if you dedicate yourself to realizing them. I received scholarships to attend both Interlochen Center for the Arts and Aspen Music Festival. Recently, I participated in the NFAA 2009 youngARTS week and was awarded first prize in the 2009 ASTA National Solo Competition. Last year, I performed on NPR's *"From the Top"* radio show and served as principal bassist of the ASTA National High School Honors Orchestra. As a sophomore, in 2007, I was awarded second prize in the International Society of Bassists' Solo Competition and won the High School Concerto Competition at Interlochen. This fall, I look forward to studying at The Curtis Institute of Music.

Emily White

Lewisville, TX, Lewisville High School

College Plans: Brigham Young University

Emily has a great love for knowledge and scholarship. She has been named a National Merit Scholar, Finalist for Denton Area Youth Leader of the Year, A Honor Roll, state qualifier for UIL Literary Criticism, 6-medal winner in Academic Octathlon and current President of Academic Decathlon. She enjoys tutoring other students, especially in math. As Woodwind Captain in her high school band, Emily spends many hours in what is – for her – a labor of love, helping other students hone their musical skills. In what little spare time she has, Emily enjoys swimming, classic literature, old movies and classical music. Emily spent much of her 8th grade year being treated for Stage 4 Hodgkin's Lymphoma. That experience has led to an interest in mechanical and bio-medical engineering, with a goal of inventing new prosthetics and devices to help cancer patients and others who have lost limbs, sight, and hearing.

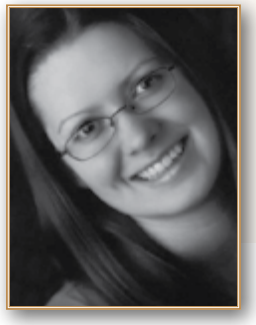


Tyler Christian White

Crystal Lake, IL, Crystal Lake Central High School

College Plans: Stanford University, Yale University, or University of Michigan

I pride myself on being passionate and involved. I'm always chasing a colossal ambition, often working late into the night to realize the unimaginable. When I'm not building to a framework of ideas, I can be found listening to or singing Korean pop music. My Kpop obsession led me to create a youtube video, which got me invited to New York to meet the group and perform on stage with them. On my weekends I volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters, and can be found playing basketball or at the park with my Little, James. I consider myself an intellectual, and spend much of my time poring over sociology research journals, often concerning the dynamics of race and class. As you can imagine, my myriad interest have made it nearly impossible to decide what I want to do with my life. Yet I feel that as long as I follow my passion, I'll be heading in the right direction.



Amanda Williams

Newburgh, IN, Castle High School

College Plans: University of Notre Dame

Amanda is a scholar who pursues many interests and accomplishes many things. Amanda has been an avid reader since a very young age. Amanda loves music and is an accomplished pianist. She enjoys playing piano for her own pleasure and also for others. She has played piano in competitions, at her church, at nursing homes, and at fundraising events. She has played keyboard with her high school jazz band and in the county summer musical orchestra. Amanda enjoys being active in her school, church and community and especially enjoys working with children. She is a Sunday School Teacher in her church's Preschool Program, a key staff member in her church's Vacation Bible School Program, and the Director of the Junior High Music Ministry at her church, a group she founded. Also a swim lesson teacher at the YMCA, Amanda hopes to continue to be of service to children throughout her life. She plans to pursue a career as a Pediatrician.

Connie Wu

Lexington, KY, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School

College Plans: Yale University

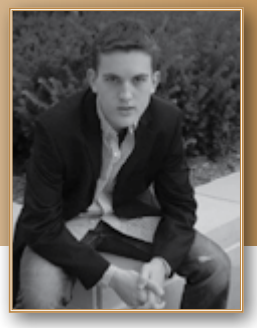
I am always doing something – something that challenges my mind and truly interests me, whether it is music, math, or chess. Since age five, I have immersed myself in the music world, continually discovering ways to express myself through the piano. As an avid performer and competitor, I have enjoyed the thrill of playing at Carnegie Hall in New York. At the opposite end of the spectrum, my passion for numbers and problem solving has led me to become a US Physics Olympiad Semifinalist and a four-time USA Mathematical Olympiad Qualifier. My busy life often finds me pursuing chess as well. These sixty-four squares have given me countless opportunities to exercise my mind, to be creative, to take risks. For seventeen years now, I have dedicated myself to many different worlds – a mere handful of all the worlds still waiting to be explored.

Tony Wu

Corvallis, OR, Crescent Valley High School

College Plans: Yale University

In his four years of high school, Tony has never ceased broadening his interests. Kindled at an early age by Beethoven's Appassionata, Tony's love for music led him to win multiple district and state competitions on the piano and trumpet. Inspired by Leonardo Da Vinci and Scientific American alike, Tony interned as a software developer at Oregon State University and won 3rd prize at the Intel Northwest Science Expo in materials engineering. Interested in international affairs, Tony studied abroad for ten months in Germany on a Congress-sponsored scholarship, founding a youth Amnesty International Club at his school and participating in local politics. This past year, Tony studied international development at the Telluride Association Summer Program, and plans to focus his efforts at the junction of applied science and poverty while majoring in biomedical and electrical engineering at Yale University.



Jackson Peter Wyche

Overland Park, KS, Pembroke Hill School

College Plans: University of Southern California

Call me Peter or Jackson – I answer to both. I plan on majoring in philosophy, politics, and economics in college. I like acting, and I hope to pick up another language or two to add to my semi-fluency in Japanese, French, and Latin. I love movies and taught an Asian film class during high school. I have lived in five states and was homeschooled through the sixth grade. I admire Caesar Augustus for his political savvy and my grandfather for his character. My best quality is my sense of humor.

Alice Xiang

Kingsport, TN, Dobyns-Bennett High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Alice is a lover of life and novelty, and as such strives to experience as much of the world as possible. From going on "wanderings," to Rubik's cubing, to baking muffins, to learning new languages, to "conversing" with peacocks, she has found her interests both varied and unlimited. Although her existence is largely characterized by spontaneity, she is unwavering in her devotion to her organizations and teams. As the Lt. Governor of the Ohio River Valley Junior State, Alice has made it her mission to encourage students to take an active role as citizens of our democracy. An avid Varsity runner, she enjoys training with her team whenever injuries permit. Her propensity for inadvertently leading large groups of people astray (people often follow her thinking she knows where she is going) has surprisingly coincided with her success as a leader of many clubs at her school. Alice's future plans remain vague and amorphous, but her ultimate goal is benefit humanity through her work, to use her passion for life to better the lives of others.

2009 PRESIDENTIAL

Bo-Tsuong Xiang

Charlotte, NC, Myers Park High School.

College Plans: Duke University

Despite my given name, I'm usually called Tong-Tong. I've got two very hard-working, compassionate parents and a broadly knowledgeable, incredibly talented brother at Wake Forest. I'm a fan of distance running and the Avett Brothers. I want to be like the people I admire – Paul Farmer, Jim Kim, Richard Feynman. I'd like to see the world, meet people I believe in, find my talents, and develop them deeply.

Ping T. Yeh

Ellicott City, MD, Centennial High School

College Plans: Harvard College or Massachusetts Institute of Technology

One of my favorite books is Robert Fulghum's *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. The things that matter, whether intangible concepts like wisdom or down-to-earth ideas like sanitation, are learned not in high school nor in college but in the little playground sandbox. Of course, these fundamental ideas have pushed me to excel in the real world. At church, I teach Sunday School and sing in the choir, youth *a capella* group, and worship team. With the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for five years, I have delved deeply into the history, culture, and ecology of the watershed. I preside over the Environmental Club, run a tutoring club for immigrant elementary schoolers, organize my school's Quizbowl tournaments, and lead the viola section in orchestra. I hope to earn an MD-PhD degree so I can continue research while also serving people from all walks of life through medicine.

Allen Yueh

Bridgewater, NJ, Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School

College Plans: The Juilliard School

Over the last few years, Allen Yueh has established himself as a prolific pianist. He is the winner of numerous competitions and has performed with several orchestras around the world. Allen won the grand prize of *The Fourth New York Piano Competition* and as a result, performed several solo engagements in New York and Washington D.C. In addition, in January 2009, Allen won the Gold Award in of youngARTS Week, sponsored by the National Foundation of Advancement in the Arts. At the age of twelve, Allen gave his solo recital debut by opening The Shandelee Music Festival. He returned to the festival a year later, garnering praise from The Times Herald Record: "Every once in a while, there emerges a young performer who shows the promise of uniqueness. Such a one is Allen Yueh. Remember his name."

Ge "Andy" Zhang

Marietta, GA, George Walton Comprehensive High School

College Plans: Harvard College

Gimme two ounces of Tupac and Rachmaninov in a high ball glass. Make it quick! Add equal heaps of table tennis and service, and blend vigorously with ½ poetry, history, and art, ½ rock hard sciences. Voilá! This is what I do. / Into a new cup, pour high fructose idealism over three cubes of pragmatism and four of Cooperade®. Mix together 80% ingenuity, 100% sweat, and 100% Curiosity Blue® with a fresh dash of initiative, and strain over a healthy splash of empathy. Be generous. Add 120-proof crazy juice and wait 'til bubbles effervesce. This is who I am. / Pour both cups together, and swirl until ingredients, friendships, and memories coalesce – each union, a smile, a laugh, a cry. Now shake, don't stir. In fact, shake violently. And light it all on fire baby. Alas, garnish with a twist of luck. A product of my choices and actions, it's a rare and potent mix, but I'm taking that risk. With one hand, I hold dearly onto yesterday. With the other, I grasp that glass madly onto tomorrow.

Jasmine Zhuang

Moorestown, NJ, Moorestown High School

College Plans: Yale University

Jasmine, Mei-mei, J.Z., Bi-Ling, Jie-jie, Jazz – the list could go on and on. My plethora of names reflects who I am, involved in and passionate about so many different activities. I am a house of cards – no part of me can stand alone. I am the Co-President of the International Affairs Club/Model UN, Co-Captain of the Math Team, a volunteer at the local Chinese School, a violinist in the New Jersey All-State Orchestra, and a runner on the varsity cross country and track teams. I have also been lucky enough to experience unforgettable summers volunteering as an English teacher in Taiwan and participating in the New Jersey Governor's School of the Sciences. As Shakespeare once proclaimed, "All the world's a stage…one man in his time plays many parts." Not limited to who I am at the present, I have yet to make countless more entrances in the theatre called Life.

Lauren Zumbach

Hinsdale, IL, Hinsdale Central High School

College Plans: Princeton University

I love to hit the ground running. Literally, as I've been a member of the cross country and track teams throughout high school and will continue competing in college, but also figuratively. Nothing excites me like new challenges and the chance to pursue my diverse interests. I've been involved in service through Athletes Committed to Excellence Club and National Honor Society. An interest in world events led to my involvement in a political discussion club and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, while my desire to learn more about environmental issues directed me to the student naturalist program at my local forest preserve. While I will undoubtedly continue to pursue these passions, my infinite list of fascinations, from mountaineering to Russian writers, and limitless possibilities for the future are what really inspire me to never limit myself and always seek new opportunities.

Annie M. Wentzell

Circus: Clown

digital image, archival inkjet print

20" x 16"

2009 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS BY STATE

**Presidential Scholars in the Arts*

Alabama

Lauren E. Faraino
Nikhil Goel

Alaska

Leif K. Johnson
Elizabeth A. Phillips

Americans Abroad

Zachary T. Osborn
Yookyeong C. Sim

Arizona

Booyeon J. Han
Vishal Maini

Arkansas

Helena Liu
John N. McDaniel

California

Kristina E. Bohl
Sejal Hathi
*Julia A. Kellman**
Daniel J. Kim
Jesse T. Nee-Vogelman

Colorado

Evanne M. Montoya
*Leann N. Osterkamp**
Hunter J. Sceats

Connecticut

Alyssa M. Bilinski
Emmett F. Gilles
*Daniel Mitra**

Delaware

Christopher N. Copeland
Rebecca D. Roelofs

District of Columbia

Edmund T. Downie
Clare S. Sestanovich

Florida

*Priscilla S. Aleman**
*Ernest F. Baker**
Andrew P. Carmedelle
Fedja Kadribasic
Elan Q. Nguyen

Georgia

Marissa Pan
Ge Zhang

Hawaii

Lucia Mocz
Robert J. Tamai

Idaho

Linyi Gao
Avalon C. Owens

Illinois

*Julian A. Cook**
Benjamin D. Crosby
*Steven L. Johnson**
Jeffrey C. Lerman
Tyler C. White
Lauren E. Zumbach

Indiana

Kevin V. Chaung
Amanda C. Williams

Iowa

Stephen E. Henrich
Sandy H. Huang

Kansas

Tiffany J. Hwang
Jackson P. Wyche

Kentucky

Jacob S. Bailey
Connie Wu
Adam T. Horn

Louisiana

Jane A. Ball
*Holden M. Brown**
Charles F. Gyer

STATE

Maine

Michael P. Girouard
Erin L. Mills

Maryland

*Celia D. Bell**
Peter I. Kamel
Nathan C. Prillaman
Ping T. Yeh

Massachusetts

Alexander D. Bruce
Irene B. Jacqz

Michigan

Aparna K. Ananthasubramaniam
Thomas G. Ankenbauer
*Andrea C. Jarrett**

Minnesota

*Rachel A. Clausen**
Andrew T. Peters
Annemarie E. Ryu

Mississippi

Jared E. Moffat
Grace M. Serio
*Annie M. Wentzell**

Missouri

Jessica J. Hwang
William J. Sun

Montana

Kyle D. Doyle
Emily L. Howell

Nebraska

Benjamin J. Kotopka
Anne A. Wang

Nevada

Carmen G. Lai
David R. Wagner

New Hampshire

Carolyn E. Douglas
Lucas E. San Juan
Jeanette J. Wat

New Jersey

Mark D. Vander Schaaf
*Allen Yueh**
Jasmine B. Zhuang

New Mexico

Andrew A. Chael
Elise C. Gurney

New York

*Joshua A. Arky**
Mary R. Awadallah
Grace F. Chao
Allen Granzberg
*Maggie R. Millner**

North Carolina

Elizabeth M. Rodenbough
Patrick J. Short
Bo-Tsuong Xiang

North Dakota

Shelby N. Dvorak
John B. Kenney

Ohio

Henry Liu
Xin Qian
Anne Song
*Nathaniel P. West**

Oklahoma

Amy Y. Tai
Anish Tilak

Oregon

*Kathryn L. Davis**
Ilana Z. Walder-Biesanz
Tony Wu

Pennsylvania

*Peter C. Ferguson**
Lee Kennedy-Shaffer
Janet Song

Puerto Rico

Ridge T. Olivieri
Mariana I. Ramirez

Rhode Island

Matthew E. Baglini
Leia M. Dwyer

South Carolina

Bonnie A. Antosh
Andrew W. Henderson

South Dakota

Aaron M. Mead
Anne M. Pfeifle

Tennessee

Vladimir Kenji Alexander
Alice Xiang

Texas

Sameer K. Deshpande
Abhinav Golla
Omosola O. Odetunde
*Devyn A. Tyler**
Emily A. White

Utah

Konlin Shen
Camille A. Wasden

Vermont

Joseph Dexter
Bailey Hoar

Virginia

Lily L. Hsiang
*Meagan C. Jenigen**
Kevin K. Luo

Washington

Sally C. Chu
Stephanie A. Nicholson
Brian T. Reiser

West Virginia

Brian Chen
Emily W. Ngan

Wisconsin

Suvai Gunasekaran
Philip V. Streich

Wyoming

Garnet E. Henderson
Christopher J. Maze
Ryan T. Ragaglia

COMMUNITY

Characterized by their interest in community issues and compassion for those in need, the Presidential Scholars have actively reached out to others. Service has played a significant role in their development and is prominent in their future plans.

2009 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS AT WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

Aparna Ananthasubramaniam, Michigan

Does helping people internationally necessarily imply a degree of cultural effacement, of interfering in their traditional systems? I, like many others, continually grapple with this question as I try to find my functional niche in the realm of volunteerism. All I know is that we cannot continue to deny these people access to both the material goods necessary to ensure a quality standard of living and the means necessary to procure the skills now necessary to earn these goods, under the label of "cultural preservation." I watched a movie on the debilitating effects of uncured, ignored blindness in rural villages. I attended a presentation on leprosy and the related social ostracization. And, of course, I always wanted to help, but I always wondered what effort I could take that wouldn't morph into the archetypal well-intentioned failure. Perhaps intervention and assistance most effectively takes the form of a collective effort by economic, social, political, and technological experts to alter globalized, homogeneous infrastructure and models in favor of individualized ones that allow people to keep their cultural identity while gaining prosperity, and not simply integrating them into the very system that left them out in the first place.

Ernest Baker II, Florida

Because the arts are used in an everyday manner, I feel it would be a very dark world to live in if they didn't exist, quite hard to bear. Many of my community service projects have intrigued both my school and my community in ways that are almost unimaginable. I found a way to provide dance space to students who are deficient in finances and transportation, thereby providing a chance for them to pursue their dreams as artists. 'The Whole Project' has opened an extensive horizon for helping people in need, particularly inner-city children. Helping them pursue their dreams is the absolute least I can do. After all, someone took the time to educate me about dance. Why not do the same? Students, parents, and faculty and staff have all benefited from 'The Whole Project'. My students have learned, with inestimable accomplishments, engaging in all forms of dance, acrobatics, modeling, impersonating, and the Martial Arts. Given the education I receive from working with different nationally acclaim artists, the students in my school are benefiting in many ways. I hope the experience ignites something inside of them, letting them know that they can accomplish much also. For me, accolades for my performances are an honor, but to see another become motivated by his or her discovery of dance through me is priceless. Parents are given the opportunity to see their children create dreams…to see them perform and be applauded for their hard work. I want to affect the community, to affect the world through dance.

Jane A. Ball, Louisiana

Whether by cleaning and rebuilding flooded homes and playgrounds in my beloved city of New Orleans where my family has lived since 1703, or by fostering a love of academics mixed with athletics for children in need, it is very satisfying to stay busy putting my faith in action by helping others. Since school and sports, especially basketball, are my favorite activities, I am always happy to share the joys of learning and physical activity to make all children healthier, improve their grades, promote friendly competition, and open various doors for their future success. I am committed to the approach of integrating academics and athletics to fully develop children into positive citizens and to expose them to the joy of helping others. This mixture allows children to learn about and challenge themselves, enhance their understanding and exposure to many other people, improve their self-discipline and concentration, and teach teamwork; sports can also be used as a reward for improving their school scores. I love working with physically, mentally and economically challenged young people, including some who are my age, and enjoy watching how far they can become involved with overcoming needs beyond their own too.

Celia Bell, Maryland

I scarcely spoke Spanish. When I pointed to the lightning flickering over the orphanage walls and asked the boy beside me what it was called, he asked, "No lo hay en los Estados Unidos?" Don't they have that in the United States? I couldn't really explain what led me to volunteer at the Hogar Esperanza de un Niño—the Child's Hope Orphanage—located in the town of Monte Cristi, in the Dominican Republic, just east of the Haitian border. The things we did were so simple—we sorted clothing and donations, ran an English camp for the village children, and traveled to the worker towns near the Haitian border, the bateys, bringing clothing and food, juice for the children, and games for them to play. Small things, and at times it seemed that they were only a drop in the well of all that needed to be done. Yet the children we were living with never seemed to see it that way. I remember Mariani, seven years old and standing up in my lap as I swung back and forth on the orphanage swing set, the earth tilting below us, and how she laughed as I tried to steady her or pull her into my arms, and she repeated, over and over, "No voy a caer." I won't fall.

Kristina Bohl, California

Because I am concerned about the future of underprivileged youth in my community, I have worked with the San Diego Yacht Club Sailing Foundation to launch the Monarch School Sailing Program. Collaborating with the Monarch School for homeless and at-risk children and teens, I have played a lead role in the project for the past two years, coordinating volunteers, teaching sailing basics, and serving as a mentor on the water. Under my direction, this free program has grown in participation and duration, and as I pass the torch to younger sailors' leadership, I will ensure that it flourishes long after I head off to college. This experience is very rewarding because it allows me to introduce kids for whom life is especially challenging to a lifelong sport that provides independence, camaraderie and fun. My leadership of the Monarch School Sailing Program reflects my aspiration to become a servant-leader. I've explored real-life applications of science through global outreach, immunizing Sudanese refugees with the Centers for Disease Control. I've shared my knowledge of computers with senior citizens through Teen-Senior Connect, helping to bridge both the technology and the generation gap. I care about others and always seek to contribute to my community.

Alexander Bruce, Massachusetts

Freshman year I approached the director of the Boys and Girls Club to ask if tutors were needed, and since then I have gone every week to help students with their homework. My most gratifying experience there involved working with a seventh-grader named Kendia. The first time Kendia asked me for help with her math homework, I was perplexed that her worksheet contained questions based around an amazingly broad cross-section of mathematics including addition, fractions, geometry, algebra, and everything in between. I found to my dismay that she could not solve the majority of the problems, but Kendia worked diligently on the practice questions that I made to help her understand the concepts. The next week Kendia was waiting for me with an almost identical math worksheet. This time she was able to answer a few more of the easier questions on her own. Every week after that Kendia continued to get a worksheet with the same format, and by the end of the year she could answer nearly every problem by herself. Kendia also told me that she was now scoring much higher on her math tests. Kendia's success made me feel like I was actually making a difference.

Andrew Carmedelle, Florida

Each of the last two years I participated on school mission trips to Jamaica to construct housing for needy families and visit orphaned children and adults. And each time, I found the tables turned on who was helping whom. In the few words available here, it is difficult to describe the impact these trips had on me. Perhaps the best insight is to share one particular diary entry about an orphan girl named Crystal who has Down syndrome. "… she leaned her head against my shoulder. She was quiet now, content simply to be held. I quietly whispered song lyrics to her. She turned her head and looked deeply into my eyes. She was smiling. In her way, Crystal thanked me for spending my morning with her. The love she shared with me was boundless and full. I actually felt chills as I held her. I saw God inside of her, looking at me through her smile. I sensed my purpose and meaning in life being told to me right there: to love others unconditionally and do all I can to the best of my abilities for the benefit of others."

Grace Chao, New York

These past few years I have had the honor of mentoring inner-city youth in New York City. From the South Bronx to Canarsie, I have taught over 100 students leadership and advocacy skills. I became a mentor because I wanted to share with my peers the empowerment that I had experienced as a youth advocate speaking with city officials and publishing a public policy report. At one session, a girl in a Brooklyn high school came up to me and said, "Seeing kids my age come talk to me about active leadership was amazing. You really inspired me today." Our work was even recognized by the New York City Department of Education which asked us to conduct a workshop on student leadership in schools at the DOE Teen Leadership Conference. As a peer mentor working throughout the city, I see the poverty, language barriers, and gang pressures that confront many young people every day. The youth I have worked with have big dreams for changing their communities, and it has been an amazing experience for me to help turn those visions into realities.

Sally Chu, Washington

At Stevens Hospital, I work on 8 West, the oncology department. There, I help the nurses and doctors make each patient's stay more comfortable and I help answer the patient's questions about their condition. Sometimes, when the patients do not understand English as proficiently as Spanish or Chinese, for example, then I translate for them, and readily pay attention to their gestures to satisfy their needs. I also sit with them, and tell them stories to keep their mind off of their stay in the hospital and their medical problems. It is amazing how quickly the patients come alive when they hear about high school once again because it brings back memories of their youth, and motivates them to regain the health they had when they were young. Immediately, they are determined to get out of bed, and with me to walk by them in case they fall, their recovery accelerates by leaps and bounds. I love each and every patient I come across, and I feel their pain when they are bleeding or vomiting or just plain uncomfortable. I empathize with their hardship and worries, not just from dealing with recovering from their illness, but also from having to let their family see their weakness instead of the strength that they are associated with.

Benjamin D. Crosby, Illinois

For years, a Rotarian who lived in my subdivision had run an annual food drive to benefit a local food pantry. She moved away, however, and the drive gradually died. The summer after my sophomore year, my neighbor and I decided to restart the drive in our subdivision. I was thrilled with the way we were able to unify the neighborhood around a common effort organized from within and benefiting other community members. After a successful first year, we convinced some friends to expand the drive to their subdivision and I successfully proposed further expanding this food drive concept to my fellow members of the Carol Stream Youth Council, an organization which serves as a liaison between the town youth and the village board. I have sought to transmit my food drive vision to some of the younger Council members, and believe that my dream of a network of Youth Council-facilitated, youth-led, community-oriented drives across the village may someday soon be a reality. Pursuing this dream over the past few years has not only positively impacted my community but has also transformed me into a more confident, active leader, eager to embark on other service endeavors in the future.

Sameer Kirtikumar Deshpande, Texas

Before entering high school, I viewed community service more as necessary chore rather than as a fulfilling part of my life. However, about midway through that year, I had the opportunity to tutor several younger students in mathematics. Teaching and tutoring resonated with me. Helping others in mathematics, especially, allowed me to share my love of the subject in a very meaningful way. In the students' improvement, I saw the direct benefit and value of my efforts, and this has inspired me to continue tutoring and to aspire to teach mathematics.

Edmund Downie, Washington, DC

Last summer, I volunteered on the National Mall at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, a celebration of world culture that takes place every summer in Washington, D.C. I served as Lead Volunteer for the Recycling and Sustainability Aides, managing approximately 125 volunteers over the course of the two weeks. This job was a great fit for me because it combined two of my strongest interests: cultural exchange and environmentalism. The 2008 Folklife Festival brought to the United States Bhutanese monks who had never traveled outside their home village, let alone their home country. And just a few feet away, musicians and cooks from Texas showed us all that regional culture still thrives in America. I loved helping at an event that impresses upon one million visitors per year the importance of cultural diversity. At the same time, the Festival's extensive public recycling effort shows the Smithsonian's commitment to sustainability. I enjoyed working in a program that takes seriously our responsibility as stewards of the planet.

Shelby Dvorak, North Dakota

During my high school career I have had the opportunity to volunteer on two Students Today Leaders Forever Pay It Forward Tours. On my first Pay It Forward Tour I traveled from my hometown of Dickinson, ND to Omaha, NE stopping in various towns along the way. At my first stop in Moorhead, MN, I helped load computers into a truck to be sent to Africa. Next, in Roslyn, SD, I spent time at a nursing home playing games and visiting with residents. Then, in Sioux Falls, SD, I packed boxes at the local food bank. At my final destination, in Omaha, NE, I picked up garbage at the Salvation Army Kids Camp. On my second tour I journeyed from Dickinson, ND to Bozeman, MT. First I stopped in Miles City, MT to help clean up a church. Then in Gardiner, MT I cleaned out a ditch to prevent flooding. Following this, I went to Idaho Falls, ID, to rake leaves in a graveyard. Lastly, in Bozeman, MT, I picked up garbage along a highway. Some places I visited admitted they had never had volunteers before. It was amazing to see the joy I brought to people with such simple acts of kindness.

Leia Dwyer, Rhode Island

This past summer, I was involved with therapeutic horseback riding as a viable therapy option for children and adults with disabilities. I believe that individuals with disabilities need active participation in alternative forms of therapy. While conventional therapy is necessary, additional activities can be more pleasurable and effective for these individuals. Therapeutic riding is one such activity that has been shown to aid in the treatment of individuals with a wide array of disabilities. My project began with an extensive research process wherein I gathered information about therapeutic riding and results from studies conducted to prove its efficacy. I volunteered as a therapeutic riding assistant as well. Then, I embarked on a campaign to raise awareness about therapeutic riding. I visited facilities for individuals with disabilities to give presentations on therapeutic riding and distribute materials I had compiled for their use. Lastly, I used the information I had gathered to create a website dedicated to spreading information about therapeutic riding. It is my hope that my work will reach beyond those to whom I was able to speak directly, that I have set into motion a chain of raised awareness about this effective form of therapy.

Lauren Faraino, Alabama

I had tutored younger students in my suburban community for years. I was unaware at the time, but my prior tutoring experience had not prepared me for Cotezz Childers, a 6th grade boy from inner city Birmingham. Denied a proper elementary education, Cotezz struggled with even the most basic concepts of mathematics. Despite numerous lessons, Cotezz showed little progression over the months. I became frustrated that I could not understand why he seemed to have such difficulty motivating himself. Not long thereafter, however, I had the opportunity to visit his house. I met Cotezz's family... two aunts, two siblings, and his grandmother, all living in a tiny house in a neglected part of Birmingham. His grandmother was raising three children for the *fourth* time, doing her best to clothe and feed them, but unaware how to direct Cotezz toward proper study habits. She had relied on the schools to help him in that regard, to little avail. She smiled at me, telling me I was helping Cotezz's confidence, though I now knew it paled in comparison to her devotion. From that day forward, I resolved to be a little more patient with Cotezz, while still pushing him to reach his potential. I also gained a tremendous admiration for his grandmother, an unsung hero who taught me that compassion and kindness form the basis for a moral society.

Nikhil Goel, Alabama

Earlier this year, I was one of the primary organizers of the Rocket City Junior Math Mania Tournament at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama with the Grissom Math Team. We offered the tournament for elementary and middle math teams and I was an essential part of organizing and running this year's tournament. The competition had over 600 participants competing in five different categories in five grade levels, in both individual and team competitions. As one of the tournament's Directors, my duties included writing and proofreading a major portion of the twenty-five sets of tests and solutions, coordinating tournament logistics, organizing workers, supervising and administrating the testing facility, and hosting the awards banquet. The major inspiration to volunteer to run the tournament was the prospect of getting the chance to influence the talented minds of young, gifted students and to provide a fun, enjoyable experience in the world of mathematics. The greatest part of being involved in the successful tournament was to see a smile on every child's face at the end of the day, whether they had won a trophy or not; I had never before seen so many young children excited about math. As a young child, I too was avidly interested in mathematics but did not have the opportunity to participate in tournaments such as RC Junior. Since the tournament, my email inbox has been flooded to this day with ecstatic remarks from not only parents and teachers, but young students as well, praising the opportunity that they received and the drive and interest they now possess in mathematics. In that one day of the tournament, I not only got to explore one of my major passions, mathematics, but got to instill a similar passion in hundreds of other students as well.

Abhinav Golla, Texas

Community service has always been an important part of my life. As a Boy Scout, I have had the opportunity to volunteer in numerous community programs. The most memorable of my many volunteer experiences has undoubtedly been my time spent with Mobile Loaves and Fishes, a local social outreach program dedicated to feeding and clothing the homeless. Each week, after preparing wholesome meals and loading them onto the delivery truck, my fellow volunteers and I drive to underpasses, side streets, abandoned lots, and other hidden enclaves of Austin serving as temporary "homes" for the city's homeless. Surrounded by hungry families in tattered clothes, I was initially overwhelmed by the inadequacy of our offering, keenly aware of the vast chasm between the sandwich in my outstretched hand and the enormity of the problems of poverty and homelessness. I soon realized, however, that our mission provides more than a meal: it is, in fact, about stitching together the torn fabric of community. For myself, seeing the smiles on the children's faces when the truck comes into view, watching them laugh and play, suddenly energized by hope and a nutritious meal, these are the highlights of my day.

Allen Granzberg, New York

I have always wanted to give back to the community that has given me so much. When I found out last year that one out of every three individuals will need a blood transfusion in their lifetime, I knew that the position of Blood Drive Coordinator was right for me. After applying and receiving this position, my co-coordinator and I started working very hard in order to make sure we could plan the most successful blood drives possible. I spent countless hours cooperating with the New York City Blood Center and school administrators in order to make sure that the Blood Drives ran smoothly. This year I was able to create two very large blood drives, collecting 178 pints at the first. We broke a school-wide record of 205 pints for the second Blood Drive, saving over 400 lives. Knowing that I made a difference to 400 people and their families was truly rewarding. I hope to continue to give back to my community and helping people continue to live their lives, because every life is meaningful.

Adam Horn, Kentucky

As community service has become a more widely heralded factor in college admissions and scholarship contests, pressure has mounted for students to find long-term, high-involvement service projects. Students often feel obliged to bend over backwards to involve themselves in projects they may or may not be interested in or have time for. In my experience these contortions are unnecessary. I became a volunteer boys' basketball coach because I have experience with athletics, enjoy working with children, and happen to attend a church with a growing basketball ministry. I chose to coach Academic Team because I have done it myself for so many years; I desired to teach all I had learned over the years. Neither was a herculean task. Neither was a stretch beyond my natural interests. But both were in areas I was passionate about: both were activities I could truly enjoy. And because I chose to serve out of my inherent interests, I found that I could approach my tasks as true service should be approached: with a joyful, willful attitude. As a consequence, I feel that I was able to bless the children and feel blessed in equal measure.

Sandy H. Huang, Iowa

Tutoring is one of my most cherished activities because nothing is more rewarding to me than helping others succeed. When I am explaining a topic to someone, the eventual light bulb moment is priceless, for when the student understands, I feel that I have accomplished something noteworthy. I completely fell in love with tutoring recently, when I began volunteering at a local homeless shelter and started tutoring young children whose families stayed there. I always look forward to spending time with those children; their cheerful smiles and lively speech warm my heart. They are so lively and always begging for hugs and piggy-back rides, especially Jordan. One of my first afternoons there was spent teaching Hailey two-digit subtraction; during another afternoon I helped Cora with a figurative language assignment. It is truly a privilege to have the opportunity to guide these bright but sometimes neglected children towards the path to success. I hope to build upon the love of learning that is already present in their young minds. After all, education provides boundless opportunities that these children deserve to have.

Jessica Hwang, Missouri

Although I have volunteered for many organizations in the past four years, I have focused on providing math help for public school students. I believe that education is fundamentally empowering and that math education is especially powerful, paving the way for well-paying jobs in fields as diverse as business and physics. I strive not only to foster a love of math but also to open doors for my students' economic success and, in the long run, to help maintain the United States' presence as a global leader in science and technology. In tenth grade, I tutored the Gentry Middle School math team: one session per week, five 7th graders, twenty practice problems, countless calculator malfunctions—a definite trial of patience. Although initially retention of knowledge was low and forgetfulness high, I soon witnessed, with pride, the small signs of progress: Nicholas reading the questions carefully, Avantika searching for an efficient solution, and Riaz managing to sit through twenty minutes of problem-solving without falling out of his chair. I have tutored not only math team members but also students who struggle in math class by volunteering at homework help sessions for students in remedial math and calculus alike. I am convinced that every student can learn math if given encouragement and nurture, and I believe my duty is to improve the math education of my fellow students in the little ways that I can.

Tiffany Hwang, Kansas

To me, the most important activity involves giving back to that which has nurtured me; since I was five-years-old, that something has been the Wichita Chinese School. After attending the school and its functions until I was fourteen, I became part of the volunteer staff. For the past three years, my duties have included assisting the teachers at weekly classes and summer camps, teaching Chinese dances to students, and most importantly, instilling an interest in the Chinese culture. Teaching the students makes me realize how much I have learned and now have to contribute. I see in this year's students myself as a student a decade ago, proud to carry the stories of our ancestors onto the stage and into our community. Enduring the passage of time is the eagerness to absorb the lessons our culture has to teach, whether in verbal, written, or physical form. I can find no better use of my Sunday afternoons than spending it with today's students and sharing with them the very lessons that once taught me who I was yesterday, thus shaping who I am today.

Leif Johnson, Alaska

The most significant community service experience for me has been with Mat-Su Youth Court because I can see how it impacts the lives of at-risk young people. I have put in over 200 hours, and am now an Associate Judge. Although I can't talk specifically about any cases I have heard, I firmly believe that for the majority of defendants, this experience of the criminal justice system has been a force for positive change in their life. Most defendants walk away saying something like "Wow, I'll never do that again." Knowing that I had a part in such a change is tremendously gratifying. Defendants choose to have their cases handled and adjudicated by peers through Youth Court. For some, it appeared that being prosecuted for their behavior was the first time they had been held accountable for their actions. For others, their criminal behavior may have been a momentary lapse in judgment, and they quickly realize that they have made a mistake. For almost all, Youth Court is a life-changing and learning experience.

Fedja Kadribasic, Florida

There are many ways a person can contribute to the community. While some help in the health and nursing industry and others with animals, I have chosen to help where I feel the strongest: in the field of science. Thus, as the president of the school Science Club, I engaged its 30-some members into promoting science in our community. Our activities range from attending competitions on regional, state, and higher levels, organizing Science Fair judging and performing simple experiments in local elementary schools, to organizing science tutoring. There is a legacy left for future students in the form of the school chapter of Florida Junior Academy of Sciences that sets promoting sciences as its priority, but there are other accomplishments as well: motivating an unusually high number of students who went to Florida Junior Science, Engineering, and Humanities Symposium at the University of Florida and, most importantly, organizing and preparing the State Vice-Champion Team for the Science Olympiad. And, to prove that we all are kids who care, we participated in Relay for Life. Doing what I do best and enjoy the most, science-related work, has given me an opportunity to give back to the community in a very productive way.

Julie Kellman, California

I have been privileged to serve on the Pacific Palisades Community Council, which connects our small town with the city and county of Los Angeles. In Council, residents and local businesses consider community issues and resolve conflicts. As the primary Youth Representative with a full vote, I participate in all debates, on matters such as renovating community spaces, approving new businesses, and considering effects of decisions on traffic flow. Confronting community issues has taught me to appreciate the role of compromise, but also the importance of action. For example, in our town is a steep, winding, unlit road through a canyon, a favorite spot for speeding teen and adult drivers, and the site of three recent fatal accidents involving teen drivers. Our Council recommended to the LA City Council that reflective lane markers be installed and police presence increased, measures that were successfully implemented. We also organized public discussions among young drivers, their parents, and the town in hope of averting further tragedy. On the Council, I feel I have learned much about my community and have made some small contribution to its well being. I have come to understand that a great community requires energetic participation and initiative from its citizens.

John Kenney, North Dakota

When a friend from California asked how my week was going earlier this year, she was surprised to hear my response; "Well, I was airlifted by helicopter out of a neighborhood this morning." This spring I joined the youth in my community in a frantic effort to save our city from the rising waters of the Red River. School was canceled at both the collegiate and high school levels for two weeks as the young people of my area bore the brunt of the sandbagging effort. Although one of the houses which I tried to defend was eventually flooded, leading to my first experience with a helicopter, the vast majority of our city was saved from certain disaster due to the efforts of thousands of volunteers, but in particular the efforts of students. Standing in a sandbag line next to a fifth-grader and an elderly stranger, both perfect strangers yet devoted to the same cause of helping one's neighbor, I witnessed the definition of "Community." A newspaper columnist devoted an article to the value of youth turnout to the flood fight, and I agree with his conclusion: If our youth are our future, than our future is bright.

Benjamin Kotopka, Nebraska

Participating in Mathcounts had a deep impact on me, making school relevant and math challenging for the first time. It was natural, that I would help bring the program to schools in Lincoln that lacked resources to support their own program. By visiting these schools, I personally learned much about the challenges less affluent schools face. I'll never forget the lack of technology, the difference in math readiness and the language barriers present in these schools. Once we began instructing, I had to learn quickly that people approach problems with varying basic skills and confidence. When I began connecting with the kids, however, I was gratified at the excitement of one student who discovered for himself the relationship between the slope formula and the real application of it when graphing, or the young Vietnamese whiz kid who was so intensely shy at first that no one knew her true potential until she began to trust us. The satisfaction I see on the kids' faces when they suddenly understand a once unattainable concept is all the proof I need to let me know my efforts have had a lasting and important effect on the very kids who in turn taught me so much.

John Nathan McDaniel, Arkansas

Early in the fall of my senior year, a handful of my friends and I founded a small social club called "the League." We were an entirely male group dedicated to the appreciation of gentlemanly pursuits and chivalry. In the following weeks, as the group grew in size, I realized the true potential of the League we had created. With over seventy members, we converted our club into a philanthropic community service organization. Just a few weeks after the birth of the League, we were already preparing to throw a huge rave-style dance party for high school students around Jonesboro. It was to be called "EuroBash." The party would provide a safe, fun, and unique experience for teenagers, and the money raised at EuroBash would be donated to the American Red Cross. EuroBash was held in a warehouse fully equipped with the necessary black lights and strobes. We played techno music and sold glows sticks. At the end of the night, the League had raised over $2,000 for the American Red Cross. I consider the success of EuroBash my most significant achievement as well as a testament to the amount of good that a motley crew of teenagers can do.

Aaron Mead, South Dakota

I volunteer at a local art and science museum, the Washington Pavilion. I work during Spooky Science Night (a Halloween-themed event) and during summer camps which the Pavilion hosts. Through volunteering at the Pavilion, I get to directly interact with the area's youngest inquiring minds. These kids only need to be shown science can be and is fun. With a little prodding in the right direction and proper nurturing/stimulation, these kids will grow into the next generation's vanguard of scientists, explorers, inventors, and discoverers. My impact may be small overall, but in every horde of kids there are a few whose eyes light up in pure innocent wonder. These children make it all worthwhile. I see, reflected in their shining eyes, images of myself, and my childhood fascination with science and insatiable thirst for knowledge. These future movers and shakers motivate my involvement and justify it simultaneously.

Maggie Millner, New York

In eleventh grade, I founded a local chapter of FirstBook, a non-profit organization that encourages children's literacy by distributing books to underprivileged families. As President of my school's National English Honor Society, I recruited a FirstBook advisory board of community members, students, and teachers. We held a pancake breakfast and a used book sale to raise funds. Community programs received free books for the children they serve, paid for by our fundraising. Borders donated $4,000 in gift cards. All together, over 500 children in Otsego County received free books. The impact of this service project was most evident at the "book party" we held at the local library. Children and parents gathered to read and listen to stories, play games, and make crafts. It was inspiring to see children with so much enthusiasm about reading and writing. Over 50 people left the library with a new book. Through this project, I affected the lives of many people in my community. I helped children open the door into the infinite world of literature. Personally, I have learned to value my own opportunities. I feel increasingly grateful for my family and teachers, who first inspired my own love of literature.

Lucia Mocz, Hawaii

While learning is an integral part of my life, it is only one aspect of my character. Through the school clubs I am a member of, I participated in various community projects including performing music for public events and serving as a teacher's aide. But what I find most rewarding of all my service experiences is volunteer teaching. I tutored disadvantaged students at my school in math and served as a music clinician for the Mililani Middle School Orchestra. I worked with small groups of violinists and violists at their annual music camp and during their after school rehearsals, teaching them performance techniques, confidence in their own playing abilities, and lessons in interpreting their repertoire. I also hosted an event entitled Winter Math Day where I instructed elementary school children how to make artistic crafts using math as a basis. I remember one young girl in particular. I inspired her to be more involved in mathematics and her enthusiasm to become a math teacher one day was absolutely fabulous. Her family was very happy about her new motivation. Nothing is more exciting than to see another enjoy learning, a goal I have in all my community teaching endeavors.

Emily Ngan, West Virginia

Tagging along with my dentist mom who was involved with the Special Olympics Special Smiles program, I found myself in a coliseum inundated with kids and adults, bopping to the tunes of an off-key karaoke singer. Taking a closer look, I noticed all the medals and ribbons hanging from around their necks and ineffaceable smiles on their faces. Screening the athletes and teaching them about oral hygiene, I got to really interact with these exuberant athletes. Win or lose, they gave their best performance and exuded hearty laughter and genuine love for one another. Childlike innocence is one of the rarest and most precious qualities the world has to offer, and even though I came to the event as a volunteer, I ended up learning something more important than anything a textbook could ever tell me – how to appreciate the inner beauty and uniqueness of each human being. After serving in the Special Olympics for two years, I have come away more compassionate, patient, generous, and appreciative of the sincere and loving qualities of human beings, which often get buried in our self-centered and competitive world.

Stephanie Nicholson, Washington

Entering high school, I always thought that my favorite dance memories would come from Homecoming, or Senior Prom. Never would I have guessed that my fondest memories would come from an "Old Hollywood" themed dance at a camp for people with disabilities. Decked out in our boas and top hats, we danced the night away without a care in the world, and I will never forget our happiness. This dance was part of a weeklong session at Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp, which provides overnight summer camps for adults and children with disabilities. I volunteered there as a counselor, working one-on-one with campers. At camp, the mentality was "camper first," and the focus was on what the campers were able to do, not on what they were prevented from doing because of their disability. Watching a camper overcome his fear of heights and ride a horse for the first time felt more like a victory to me than earning an A on any test, and I will remember seeing a homesick camper smile when receiving a care package from her parents for far longer than I will remember being accepted to college. Spending time at Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp taught me to appreciate how every person is special in his or her own way. Everyone has a unique gift to share with the world, and it is the world's job to discover it.

Elan Nguyen, Florida

As a basketball fanatic, I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to volunteer at Special Olympics. Not only does the cause resonate with my family's aspirations to help people rise above their disadvantages, but it also gives me the chance to experience all the activities related to sports: refereeing games, running drills, organizing tournaments, accompanying the players on out-of-town field trips, and playing all kinds of sports (basketball, volleyball, soccer, etc.) with the team during practice. The fun I have, though, pales in comparison to the new perspective I have gained. Contrary to my ignorant expectations, the mentally disabled athletes are enthusiastic and playful. Months later, I am still moved by their lack of self-pity and inspired by their unfussy and light-hearted determination to overcome challenges. These days, I cringe when my friends jokingly insult each other as "retards." And I no longer define intelligence in terms of academic success. Rather, it's the ability to make the best of any situation so that when we can't have what we like, we can still like what we have.

Ridge Olivieri, Puerto Rico

For the past nine years, I've been involved with a program that I founded in third grade to help the Good Shepherd Orphanage in Haiti. The project consists of collecting used and new clothing, washing and then distributing them to the orphanage. Over the years, I have managed to collect over 6000 pieces of clothing for the Good Shepherd and have been able to visit the orphanage on various occasions. I must say, one of the most impacting moments in my life to date was the first time I ever visited. The smiling faces of all the children, at receiving something so simple as a uniform, were amazing. It's hard for us to imagine, with all the conveniences that our lives afford us, that these kids have nothing but the roof over their heads at night and the clothes on their backs. I'm just glad to help.

Leann Nicole Osterkamp

Being an artist, I always feel that sharing music and its significance with others is what I am meant to do. I always try to contribute an undying enthusiasm for music with my community through: participating in my school's talent shows, playing in the school pep band at the sports games, the huge Bolder Boulder 10K road race, playing jazz gigs, and by playing at my neighborhood's retirement home. But the retirement home is unique. I feel a freedom to experiment and totally pour myself out into my music. The talk-backs during my concerts teach me even more than the performance. Having the capability to talk with people, who are as willing to share in the world of music as myself, is an experience beyond words. Getting a chance to talk with the retirees afterwards and learn of their own life stories, gives me even more to bring into my music. Every time I play at the retirement home I not only feel an incredible freedom to share myself and my art with the world, but also an ability to share a bit of my generation and life with those of another generation.

Elizabeth Phillips, Alaska

For six years, I have devoted over 650 hours to judging, defending, and prosecuting defendants in Anchorage Youth Court (AYC), a diversionary juvenile justice system. I first joined hoping to gain volunteer experience and learn about the justice system. I've since learned to look beyond myself and focus on helping those less fortunate than me. I see AYC as an effective opportunity to help my peers. Deprived of opportunities that allow them to lead successful lives, many teenagers turn to crime. Teenage attorneys and judges in AYC provide positive peer pressure to encourage better lifestyles. Though the court is run entirely by teenagers (judges, attorneys, bailiffs and all), it maintains a less than 10% recidivism rate, much less than that of the regular juvenile justice system. I have worked over 100 sentencing hearings, directly helping over 100 teens and their families learn from mistakes like shoplifting, drug abuse, and burglary. AYC is an effective alternative to the over-tasked justice system that struggles to give defendants the range of support necessary to help learn from their mistakes. Through AYC, defendants are given a second chance, and the community is redressed. Many of the defendants even become AYC members and positive role models after completing their sentence. AYC is one of the few organizations where I, as a teenager, can make a real difference in someone else's life.

Nathan Prillaman, Maryland

One hundred man hours to replace a roof on an old gazebo and do some painting? I thought my Eagle project would take nowhere near that much time, and that the powers that be would swoop down and reject my pitiful excuse for a project. However, as usual, I had grossly underestimated the amount of work ahead of me. Instead of finishing in one day, it took five, and required over four hundred man hours to finish. I was so lucky that I had my friends and family to help me, so that it took four hundred man hours and not four hundred Nathan hours. They came, they saw, and instead of eating donuts and leaving like any normal teenagers, they worked hard for hours on end. I was proud of the project after it was finished, but I was most delighted with the willingness of other people to come out and help.

Mariana Ramírez de Arellano, Puerto Rico

In the summer of 2006, I began my non-profit project "Cookies for Learning." With my original chocolate chip cookie recipe, I bake and sell cookies throughout my school and my community. Then, I send the proceeds to the Ponheary Ly Foundation (theplf.org), which purchases school uniforms and supplies for students in public primary schools in Cambodia. Although my passion for baking initiated the cookie project, I was inspired by Ponheary Ly's philanthropic work and her hardships during the Khmer Rouge regime. I sell over 120 cookies per week. Within my community, I sell boxes including literature describing the current precarious situations of children in Cambodia to local law firms, banks, and individuals. Throughout the last three academic years, I have raised over 15,000 USD, sponsoring six hundred students in primary public schools of Siem Reap, Cambodia. I continue to find ways to increase awareness using the resources at hand and plan on continuing my project during and after college.

Brian Reiser, Washington

Creating and running the Middle School Science Olympiad team was a daunting task. In order to even start the club, I had to consider the many concerns of the school administration ranging from making sure the club was not too competitive to how to raise funds. It took over a year to address the issues and find a faculty sponsor. Once everything was in place, the club took off. The club members brought unbridled enthusiasm and incredible diligence to a degree that I did not expect from middle school students. However, they needed help constantly, new supplies every week, and additional funding for those supplies. The work was exhausting. However, their work and mine paid off when the team qualified for the state tournament. The team was not planning to attend due to a lack of funding, but the team's collective excitement convinced the administration to pay for the trip. Working with the club required a wide variety of skills and a significant time commitment, but the enthusiasm of the members and their passion justified all of the effort. After that experience, I understood that helping others with their intellectual pursuits is a necessary component of my own intellectual vitality.

Annemarie Ryu, Minnesota

The belief that some persistent societal problems can be alleviated with creative solutions is a steadfast source of motivation in my life. I have always been an environmentalist and have participated in several community clean-up and tree planting events. Since I studied AP Environmental Science last summer, I have maintained a compost heap in my backyard and have been exploring ways to convert organic waste from local schools into compost. Recently, I called the local Forest Service to inquire whether any trees were available for an Arbor Day project. The service obliged, offering one hundred 10- to 15-inch white pine trees. I have posted sign-up sheets for these trees in science classrooms, and the first one hundred people who pay two dollars will receive a tree on Arbor Day. Proceeds will be used to create a grant for a project to better the environment. I have created informational sheets on specific tree care, as specified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, to be distributed with the young trees in hopes that the trees will flourish in their new homes. The newly planted white pine tree in my backyard reminds me of the positive difference that an individual can make.

Grace Serio, Mississippi

As a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity since the age of fifteen, I have witnessed the changes that a generous charitable organization produces in a community. My 15th birthday present to myself was spending the day working on the Burrell Family House in Jackson, Mississippi. This house was one of the many that Habitat for Humanity built to help rejuvenate an inner city neighborhood. My participation in the work of this international organization allowed me to experience first hand exactly how I could work to make a difference in someone else's life and in society as a whole. On multiple occasions, as I pounded nails and painted while balancing on scaffolding, I watched walls go up, the porch constructed, and a family of three move in to start their new lives full of hope and gratitude. When a charitable opportunity like Habitat for Humanity brings a community together to build a home for a family, there is so much friendliness and optimism that it is hard not to have fun and want to return again and again.

Konlin Shen, Utah

I am a GED math tutor for the Bridgerland Literacy Center. I teach adults how to do long division, and reduce a fraction. It has been an eye-opening experience. The students come from every background: immigrants, high school dropouts, recovering drug addicts. But they all have one thing in common: they all truly want to learn mathematics, in contrast to my high school peers who always act as if math is a punishment dished out by spiteful teachers. My GED students realize their lost opportunites in life and are desperately trying to compensate. They want to know what's really going on beneath those algebraic manipulations, so that they will be able to answer any question that pops up on the GED exams. Even though I do get "warm fuzzies" from my students' many thanks after every class, I've realized that in every lesson, my students teach me just as much as I teach them. In a way, I've learned every moral of every children's story: "be fair, be respectful, don't judge a book by it's cover." But to sum it up even more succintly, while I teach them mathematics, they teach me about life.

Patrick Short, North Carolina

Service has intrinsic worth – and hands-on service enriches the soul. One must truly and completely enjoy the service, and thus dedicate themselves to it. As a student and community member, I have tried to make a meaningful impact on my community. Through our church youth board, I have organized many great service projects including the Christmastime Giving Tree, Stop Hunger NOW, and countless visits to local nursing homes. Through Student Council, as a team, we galvanized the school to raise over 176,000 pounds of food for the North Carolina Food Bank. As a member of Mighty Taylor and the Flaming Vegetable Bandits, a Jazz Band formed to play at local nursing homes, I was able to exercise my talents much to the delight of the men and women of the nursing homes. To see the happiness and joy spread across their faces when we began to play "In the Mood" or "It Don't Mean a Thing" made every moment of practice and preparation worth it. I have learned through service that the most meaningful interactions are those that are the most genuine, and the most purely from the heart.

Amy Tai, Oklahoma

My successes and life philosophies derive from not only my own hard work and experiences but also from the dedication and lessons of teachers, adults, and peers in my life. By offering my passion and time to others, I mirror the supportive roles of these individuals. I am part of a youth philanthropy group that established a pilot adolescent depression awareness program in my hometown. Interacting with members of the philanthropy group and with students in local schools, I witnessed true-life examples of a stigma-enveloped social issue, including its deleterious effects on victims. These experiences touched me to the core, compelling me to pour my sweat and blood into this educational pilot program. Working as a research coordinator and a grant-writer has cultivated in me a greater sense of social awareness, especially for those who fall beneath the radar, such as teenagers afflicted by depression. The most touching yet triumphant moments are when high school students admit to their depression and become willing to seek therapy. Seeing these students overcome depression is a physical manifestation of my philanthropic work and shows the positive effect of my efforts on society.

Ilana Walder-Biesanz, Oregon

The summer after my freshman year of high school, I wanted to do something extraordinary. My plans to stay with a family in Mexico hadn't worked out, so I searched for another opportunity. I ended up in a two-room schoolhouse in a remote Honduran village. The first-through-third-grade teacher handed me the second-grade class for six weeks. I was stuck in a country I'd never been to teaching students I didn't know in a language I barely spoke. I had no training in education, so I winged it. Using personal white boards, flash cards, and "poofs," I pieced together engaging lesson plans including games of geography hide-and-go-seek, symbiosis charades, and multiplication around-the-world. I studied my Honduran geography and history late at night to keep ahead of my class. I returned the next summer, speaking fluent Spanish, to teach third grade. This time I knew what I was doing. I planned a behavior incentive system to keep my students on task and led fun and successful classroom activities, which the regular teacher copied for use with her other classes. In the end, I gained a little teaching experience and a lot of perspective on cross-cultural communication and life in a developing country.

Camille Wasden, Utah

Two Japanese girls moved into my neighborhood and were struggling with English in our local schools. I volunteered to work with them on conversational English, since I speak Japanese. Using English and Japanese books to develop a customized curriculum, I carefully planned lessons with games, study guides, and role playing/practice. Both girls acted extremely shy, but as I taught them American phrases and customs, they became more outgoing. We worked together until the girls could use English for events, such as following instructions in school or cooking, and discussing topics with friends. Their new understanding of English improved their schoolwork. Working with these girls was exciting, and I was able to help them bridge a new culture. We became friends and had fun together at every session. Their confidence in speaking English grew with each lesson, and I enjoyed being able to help them. As I taught, I loved watching the girls progress until they could fully participate in community activities.

Jeanette Wat, New Hampshire

"Aquí puede aprender la gramática," I explained to a large family of six that gathered eagerly around our booth. At the Spanish Fiesta Festival, I conversed with immigrants from Mexico, most of whom spoke little to no English. Working with other students, I helped to organize and man the booth that taught the newcomers how to use new software designed to take them step-by-step through the intricacies of the English language. After recognizing the growing Hispanic population in our community, we chose user-friendly and basic, but nonetheless effective, software that contained daily conversations – from common expressions for communicating with peers at school to those used at the grocery store. After an hour of instructing and demonstrating to each group that came throughout the week, I was excited to see that most had learned the skills and were able to independently operate the software, which I could see breaking numerous language barriers in their new environment. As I handed them the software for free, I felt an overwhelming joy in getting to know, personally, other members of my neighborhood and in helping to ease their transition to life in our country.

Connie Wu, Kentucky

The dismal gaze and frowning mouth of an aged man lying wearily on a bed greeted me as I walked into the small hospital room in the local Veterans Affairs Hospital and sat down next to him. Half an hour later, the patient's eyes had filled with a renewed vigor from our conversation, and the corners of his mouth had traveled upwards in a smile of gratitude – a smile that stayed on his face the next day I visited. For the past three summers, I have devoted myself to volunteering at the VA Hospital, serving veterans in need and fulfilling my desire to give back to the community that has nurtured my growth for seventeen years. Whether I was sorting and delivering medicine, assisting patients with hearing aids, or keeping patients company, the patients and hospital staff would always express a genuine appreciation for my efforts. The words "thank you," the gentle smiles, the grateful looks never failed to evoke a warm feeling in my heart and inspire me to continue serving others. My volunteer experience at the VA Hospital has made me discover that I possess the wonderful power to change another individual's life, to bring smiles to faces.

Ping T. Yeh, Maryland

Visiting Hollifield Station Elementary School in 2008, I was introduced to the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Homework Club. Shortly afterward, once I understood the pressing needs of the school's many immigrant students, I founded an ESOL Tutoring club at my school. Every Wednesday afternoon, fifteen of my friends and I go to Hollifield Station to mentor the Homework Club students, who come from India, China, Korea, and Latin America. Besides help with English and math, what these kids need most are role models: people who listen patiently to their needs, who praise and encourage them, who simply care. And that is what this club is about: we not only assist the students in learning basic academic knowledge, but we also nurture a work ethic that applies to schoolwork and to all areas of life. We show them that they are creative, capable people who have great potential. We are their big brothers and sisters, if only for a couple hours a week. The most important facet of this tutoring club, though, is that we pass onto these underserved but wholly deserving children the hope and opportunity to believe in themselves – and to make their own bright futures.

Jasmine Zhuang, New Jersey

The summer after my sophomore year, I flew to Taiwan to attend the Assisting Individuals with Disadvantages Program, where 300 Taiwanese Americans would teach young students in the countryside. On the first day at Nanhu Elementary, we expected to follow our pre-set lesson plans, but while we had naively set aside an entire hour to teach just colors, none of our fifth-graders possessed such a long attention span. We became master improvisers, keeping our students interested through a constant barrage of activities. From the pride I felt while watching my smiling students perform "I Believe I Can Fly" to the countless games we made up on the spot and surprisingly found to be immensely enjoyable, from our weekend explorations of the local winery to our final water balloon fight, this was one of my greatest, most fulfilling experiences. Ironically, in a place that was so unfamiliar was where I felt most comfortable, with my students, my teaching partners, and my own abilities. Gaining lasting friendships and strong connections to the kids with whom I originally thought I had nothing in common, I not only made a difference in my students' lives, but also brightened my own.

Lauren Zumbach, Illinois

After hearing about the challenges America's servicemen face both while overseas and once they return, it bothered me that this was a group whose needs were unfulfilled. I decided to organize the Trot for the Troops 5K race to benefit Operation Homefront, an organization that helps active servicemen and their families. As race director I was responsible for administration, publicity, fundraising, and recruiting eighty volunteers to help on race day. While the enormity of the undertaking was somewhat overwhelming at first, once I committed to the challenge and began learning from experience I grew comfortable in my role as the chief organizer of the event. When race day finally came, it was a huge success. We raised over $7,500 and received a Homefront Hero award for our efforts from the Illinois Lieutenant Governor. The best part of it for me was seeing the 200 participants on the starting line, whom I had inspired to come together in support of a common cause. Though I will likely never meet the people Trot for the Troops has helped, I am proud to say I was able to assist those who have given so much to our country.

TEACHERS

2009 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS TEACHER RECOGNITION AWARDEES

Each Presidential Scholar presents the program's Teacher Recognition Award to the one teacher, counselor, or school administrator who has been his or her greatest influence and inspiration. Every day, in classrooms across the country, these educators prove the power of excellent teaching to help guide young lives toward the realization of their true potential and the fulfillment of their highest aims.

Christopher T. Adrian (MI)
History
Hackett Catholic Central High School

Claudia Alldredge (GA)
Spanish
Alpharetta High School

Ellen Anderson (RI)
English
Classical High School

Titu Andreescu (TX)
Mathematics
University of Texas - Dallas

Michelle Bagley (MD)
Mentored Research
Centennial High School

Jason Baker (PA)
Mathematics
Mechanicsburg Area Senior High School

Peter Banker (MA)
English
Weston High School

Zedric K. Bembry, II (FL)
Dance
Miami Carol City Senior High School

James Benigna (MI)
Chemistry
The Roeper School

Gayle M. Berard (LA)
English
Fontainebleau High School

Jeffrey Berger-White (IL)
English
Deerfield High School

Margaret A. Bouck (NY)
English
Cherry Valley-Springfield Central Junior-Senior High School

John J. Brady, III (TN)
Mathematics
Ensworth High School

Kristi Bridges (WA)
Government
Camas Senior High School

Jie Bu (NV)
Music - Piano Performance

Raymond Buchheister (PA)
Independent Artist/Mentor

Ruth Burson (CA)
Social Studies
Notre Dame High School

Rob Burt (CA)
Drama
Elsie Allen High School

Clarissa Bushman (NY)
Economics
Stuyvesant High School

Matt Carey (IL)
History
Glenbard North High School

Jacob D. Charlebois (NV)
English
Spanish Springs High School

Ginger Cherry (NC)
English
Jesse O. Sanderson High School

Jeffery Cumpston (Zimbabwe)
Music

Nelson W. Daniel, Jr. (OK)
Chemistry
Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics

Samuel M. Davidson (NM)
Counselor
Albuquerque High School

Margaret DeBlois (ME)
English
St. Dominic Regional High School

Terri Dees (SC)
Biology
Spartanburg High School

John Deliman (OH)
Music
Upper Arlington High School

Karyn Dempsey (AZ)
Humanities
Corona del Sol High School

Marian DeWane (ID)
Science/AP Chemistry
Centennial High School

Paul Donovan (DE)
German
Sanford School

Douglas Dosky (OH)
Mathematics
Thomas Worthington High School

Katie Elsener (NE)
English
Pius X High School

Rosalyn Ericson (NJ)
Biology
Moorestown High School

Kimberly Este (MS)
English
Mississippi School of the Arts

Jim Fahy (ND)
Social Studies
Dickinson High School

Christopher Fatheree (TX)
English
Pearland High School

Kevin C. Fielden (TN)
Social Studies
Dobyns-Bennett High School

Anna Freundt (MS)
English
Jackson Preparatory School

Patricia Gardner (NM)
English
Albuquerque High School

Chris Girard (KY)
Mathematics
Simon Kenton High School

Kylene Gott (IL)
Guidance
Crystal Lake Central High School

Jo H. Green (TX)
Latin
Westlake High School

Beenu Gupta (DE)
Biology
Charter School of Wilmington

Stephen Guziewski (WI)
Physics
James Madison Memorial High School

Michael Hagstrom (ND)
Charity and Justice
Shanley High School

William Hanewald (WY)
Chemistry
Tongue River High School

Cynthia Hardesty (VA)
Physics
York High School

Lorraine Heinrichs (Germany)
Mathematics
Bonn International School

David Henner (PR)
Physics
St. John's School

Mercedes Higuera (PR)
Spanish
St. John's School

Josh Hilberman (MA)
Tap Dance

Sandra Hindsman (MS)
Biology
St. Andrew's Episcopal School

John S. Hirsch (MA)
English
Middlesex School

Susan M. Hodgin (ID)
English
Moscow High School

Celeste Hutton (KS)
English
Wichita High School East

Yelena Ivanov (NJ)
Piano

Rob Jensen (MT)
Science
Hellgate High School

Terrie Joplin (NC)
English
Grimsley High School

Aimee Joyaux (VA)
Photography
Appomattox Governors School for Arts & Technology

Gaye Klopack (IL)
Vocal Music
Jones College Preparatory

Lilia Kol (WA)
Mathematics
Odle Middle School

Julia Kolander (NE)
Latin
Millard North High School

Francine Kontos (NH)
Art
Dover High School

Randy Kuchynka (OK)
World History
Eisenhower Senior High School

Michael Lazere (IA)
Science
Ames High School

Laurie LePore (OR)
Biology, Genetics
Riverdale High School

Evie Lewis (WY)
English
Jackson Hole High School

Nick Lewis (OH)
English
Western Reserve Academy

Mark Littlefield (MA)
Mathematics
Newburyport High School

Jason L. Lovera (MO)
English
Parkway Central High School

Amy V. Maddox (AL)
History
Vestavia Hills High School

Andrew Mahar, IV (NC)
Spanish
Myers Park High School

Frederick Martell (NY)
Classical Voice
Hunter College

James E. McCarter, Jr. (IN)
Science
Central Middle School

Lisa McCulley (SC)
Publications
Spartanburg High School

Daniel McKeen (OH)
AP Computer Science
Solon High School

Beth A. Messere (PA)
Calculus
Methacton High School

Rebecca Meyer-Larson (MN)
Honors English
Moorhead Senior High School

Barbara Milburn (MN)
English
Mayo High School

David Montee (MI)
Theatre
Interlochen Arts Academy

Elizabeth Moore (IL)
Mathematics
Naperville North High School

Tom Moore (CT)
Modern European History
Conard High School

Kane More (FL)
AP Biology
West Boca Raton Community High School

Janie Mueller (CO)
Chemistry
Cheyenne Mountain High School

Cathy Murphy (GA)
English Literature and Composition
George Walton High School

Kristen Murphy (RI)
American Literature
Cumberland High School

John Naisbitt (IL)
Social Studies/AP European History
Hinsdale Township High School Central

Suzanne Nelson (SD)
United States Government
Stevens Senior High School

Andrew R. Nielson (UT)
Physics
Logan High School

Gary Nyhus (IA)
Mathematics
Newman High School

Jane O'Connor (CO)
Language Arts
Monarch High School

Cynthia Ogden (TX)
Theater
The High School for Performing & Visual Arts

Bryan Ott (FL)
Theology
St. Joseph Academy

Debora Palmer (WV)
Studio Art
Trinity High School

Bill Parker (AK)
Biology
Wasilla High School

Ivor Parsons (NY)
United States History
Syosset High School

Peter Perry (MD)
Music
Richard Montgomery High School

Larry Peterson (UT)
AP Mathematics
Northridge High School

Alan G. Phillips (LA)
American History
Vandebilt Catholic High School

Jason Piluk (MD)
Biology
Centennial High School

Wright Porter (AR)
History
Jonesboro High School

Doris Pridonoff Lehnert (CO)
Professor of Piano
University of Colorado-Boulder

RoseMary Pringle (FL)
Fashion
Design & Architecture Senior High School

David Quinn (WA)
English
Edmonds-Woodway High School

Wallace B. Ragan, III (DC)
Classics
St. Alban's School

Cheryle A. Redelings (CA)
History
Francis W. Parker School

Jonathan A. Rice (VT)
Science
Green Mountain Union High School

Cindy Rodgers (AL)
Mathematics
Virgil I. Grissom High School

Michael Roh (WV)
Math and Physics
University High School

Dan Ruff (KY)
English
Woodford County High School

Beth Russell (OR)
English
Crescent Valley High School

Ellen Sassenberg (MN)
Latin
Mayo High School

Mark Savage (ME)
Outdoor Education
Brewer High School

Dawn Schmidt (AZ)
Social Studies
Desert Vista High School

Mary J. Schmitz (SD)
History
Roosevelt High School

Laura J. Segedin (NJ)
Industrial Arts
Roosevelt Intermediate School

Diane Sheppard (AL)
English AP
Indian Springs School

Leonard Sievers (IN)
Math/Geometry
Castle High School

Anthony Silk (CA)
Math
Harker School

Kathleen Smith (NY)
Biology
St. Mary's High School

Randall Smith (CT)
History
Joel Barlow High School

Sally Squibb (TX)
Debate
Lewisville High School

Annice Steadman (AR)
Biology
Central High School

Steve Steinbach (DC)
History
Sidwell Friends School

Matthew Stergios (MT)
History
Loyola Sacred Heart High School

Amanda Streich (WI)
Spanish and General Studies
Home School

Judith Tanzman (CA)
Fine Arts
Marlborough School

Robert Tostevin (MO)
Social Studies
The Pembroke Hill School

Gail Tuthill (HI)
Chemistry
Iolani School

Joe Vaccaro (LA)
Sciences
St. Martin's Episcopal School

Edward Vaitones (NH)
German
Pinkerton Academy

Almita Vamos (IL)
Violin Performance
Unknown High School

Irina Voro (KY)
Piano
University of Kentucky, School of Music

Deanna Wasman (MO)
Mathematics
David H. Hickman High School

William Waters (MD)
English
The Bryn Mawr School

Sandra L. Webb (HI)
Biology
Mililani High School

Sherwood Williams (VA)
AP English Language & Composition
Thomas Jefferson High School for Science & Technology

Jayne Wingate (WY)
AP Calculus
Cheyenne Central High School

Bernie Yanelli (FL)
Social Studies
St. Stephen's Episcopal School

Andrew Zartmann (AK)
Mathematics
West Anchorage High School

REFLECTIONS

2009 TEACHER RECOGNITION AWARDEES REFLECT ON TEACHING

Each year we ask our distinguished teachers to describe what they enjoy about teaching, or to recount an incident that has given them a sense of pride in their work. Clearly the Scholars' great gratitude for these exceptional teachers is matched only by the teachers' devotion to challenging, motivating, and supporting the students entrusted to their care, and their joy in watching those students take flight.

Christopher Adrian, Michigan

I am profoundly fortunate to teach in a Christ-centered educational environment. Parents, faculty, and students inspire me each day to be a better person and educator. Working with students like Thomas Ankenbauer is a cherished privilege.

Claudia Alldredge, Georgia

Seeing my students learn Spanish and overcome uncertainties is my passion. As they acquire self-confidence in their language skills, I feel their enthusiam for this language and culture. These skills will prepare them for new challenges in our global society. What a joy to know my contribution to their successes!

Ellen Anderson, Rhode Island

I love seeing my students use the interpretive tools I have helped them discover to unlock the insights and gifts of authors and characters. Not only can I appreciate Jane Eyre or William Blake in a new light, but I am thrilled to introduce a new generation to lifelong friends.

Jason L. Baker, Pennsylvania

One of my many rewarding moments of teaching is when students graduate and return to thank us for helping them. At that point you know their thoughts are genuine and they appreciate that you played a part in helping them start down the next path of their lives.

Peter Banker, Massachusetts

Teaching English. Every day, I get to interact with untainted minds, to facilitate and participate in serious discussion about topics of great significance to the lives of students. We also share in laughter. Every day, we take the chance to laugh. There is no better way to spend a lifetime.

Zedric Bembry, Florida

I'm a self- taught dance teacher, who has had a company for twenty years. Working alongside different personalities, cultures, styles and disciplines, and displaying them as one, motivates me the most. My greatest feeling of accomplishment is when a student states, "You have made a difference in my life."

Jamie Benigna, Michigan

I am lucky to earn a living doing what I love and sharing with students an excitement and passion for learning. I get to bask in the fascinating microscopic and macroscopic world around us every day and bring new minds along for the adventure.

Gayle Berard, Louisiana

Teaching literature to creative, inquisitive, gifted students is a great challenge. I try to find the right tools to help each student reach his potential: reading, question and answer, writing, discussion, presentations. The thrill comes from watching young students like Holden Brown "smile" at the irony in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice *in his writings and discussions.*

Jeff Berger-White, Illinois

I want my students to "[s]peak what [they] feel, not what [they] ought to say" (William Shakespeare); to "risk delight"(Jack Gilbert); to discover "things [they] didn't know [they] loved" (Nazim Hikmet); and most of all, to realize the beauty of their "one wild and precious life" (Mary Oliver).

Margaret Bouck, New York

I have the pleasure of working with bright and exciting students who inspire me to be more than a teacher. Their drive and enthusiasm force me to be contemporary, creative, inquisitive, and passionate about language and literature. It is magic when together we create this wonderfully cyclical environment in which I am the student as well as the teacher.

Kristi Bridges, Washington

Stephanie's adaptability, curiosity, self-motivation, interpersonal skills, academic ability, and leadership make the people and places she interacts with better for her having been there. She has been an asset to our community, and she will continue bringing positive change to any part of the world she is in contact with.

Jie Bu, Nevada

Teaching is an impossible mission while leading is. It's such a joy to share what we believe; to guide what they imagine and to cheer what they achieve. I am especially humbled that I have had the opportunity to accompany some of my students, like Carmen, in her musical journey for over 12 years. My students often refer me as their second father when I truly regard them as my own children and best friends. The reward and responsibility are so immense that I know my mission is worthwhile.

Raymond Buchheister, Pennsylvania

As a teacher, what is most gratifying to see is the light in a student's eyes when they realize that their talent to draw and paint can become something more than what they just love to do, that being an artist can actually become their profession and earn them a living.

Ruth Burson, California

Daily the halls are full of laughter; the classroom is bursting with inquisitive minds, the sharing of ideas, critical thinking and hard work. Everyday I have the opportunity to learn, meet new challenges and touch the lives of students…to make a difference and plant seeds – amazing!

Rob Burt, California

Each year I am blessed to receive into my charge remarkable young people who inspire and delight me. I relish guiding students through the creative process as they make discoveries that expand their unique minds and spirits. My job is to make it matter. They make it matter for me.

Clarissa Bushman, New York

Teachers wait for the moment when current events breathe life into theory. It is the best time ever to be teaching Macroeconomics, as the formerly academic concepts come alive on today's world stage. The final is not the Advanced Placement Exam. It is the ongoing test of making not only personal financial decisions, but global ones.

Matthew Carey, Illinois

There are two factors that influenced my decision to become a teacher. First, my dad is a teacher. He's been my role model for the ideal teacher: intelligent, caring, and dedicated. Through him I came to realize the profound positive impact a teacher can have on students' lives. The second influencing factor is my time studying abroad in college. That was a transforming experience, as it sparked my curiosity about history. As a teacher I hope to develop in my students that same curiosity and excitement about history. This task I find endlessly challenging and rewarding.

Jacob Charlebois, Nevada

In education, it's difficult to see the myriad ways we affect the students' lives. Sometimes, it's the casual conversations we have with them in the hall that can be the legacy-type memories they craft about their school days. To be the basis for these memories is humbling and gratifying.

Ginger Cherry, North Carolina

I teach because I love my subject. Books, literature, texts, are powerful conduits, and I love to explore them with my students. Reading can soothe, excite, teach, empower, and entertain, and too often students are unaware of its allure. I find joy in awakening and nurturing my students' reading souls.

Jeff Cumpston, Oregon

I love music, and I love kids. My music experiences in public school were amazing and had a powerful impact on my life. I am passionate to provide the same wonderful experiences for my students. It is incredibly rewarding to see them fall in love with music and have it a central part of their lives.

Nelson W. Daniel, Jr., Oklahoma

Learning requires the meeting of minds and spirits of teacher and student. Thus the Latin adage "In learning you will teach and in teaching you will learn" is realized. Teachers can learn amazing things from their students – especially about human nature – but only if they are open to the dialogue.

Samuel Marc Davidson, New Mexico

I am most deeply fulfilled by the diversity, challenges and rewards of working in an inn-city school. The highest achieving, deeply motivated students work alongside many other students of varying motivational levels and goals, resulting in commencement ceremonies that consistently bring tears to my eyes. Graduates from professional families off to big-name institutions, and students headed for local community colleges, who are often the first in their families to attend any institution of higher education, all join together in joy-filled celebrations.

Peggy DeBlois, Maine

There is nothing as energizing as spending time with teenagers! There is not a day that I don't leave class without learning something new by seeing the world through their eyes. Literature is a search for truth, and I am blessed to take that journey with my students.

Terri Dees, South Carolina

When students ask questions that I can't answer, they are going beyond what I or the textbook can tell them and are thinking for themselves. My greatest moments are when students show me that they understand the physical and chemical workings of a living system and that they appreciate the wonder of it all.

John R. Deliman, Ohio

Great music touches one's soul. It motivates students to strive for quality in all that they do. I find joy in helping my students develop from fourth grade children into young adults. My greatest reward comes when students, like Scholar Nathaniel West, gain success by taking full advantage of opportunities that we as teachers provide.

Marian DeWane, Idaho

Intertwining my lifelong journey of learning with that of my students creates opportunities for me to encourage and support their voyages. I offer support, caring, and a safety net when they need it. Every day, I have the chance to be the spark igniting their passion for learning and to make the magical world of chemistry meaningful and relevant.

Paul Donovan, Americans Abroad

Thanks to my students, I have been able to maintain my enthusiasm for and dedication to teaching German language, literature, and culture for more than forty years. I am thrilled when young people begin communicating in another world language and delighted when some of them gain global perspective from studying or working in a German-speaking land.

Douglas A. Dosky, Ohio

In college, I gained a great appreciation for mathematics and the impact that it has with the real world. Because of this strong devotion, I strive to enlighten the students so they can see, love, and appreciate all the splendors that mathematics can bring to them as they journey through their life.

Katie Elsener, Nebraska

Teaching is not merely a job or a profession. It is an exploration into creativity, productivity, intellect, and talent. The privilege of guiding my students into constructive adulthood is exciting and inspiring. I watch as they soar. "Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself." –Chinese Proverb

Rosalynn Ericson, New Jersey

I feel fortunate to be a teacher. Teaching gives me the opportunity to help students make sense of their universe, to challenge them and in turn, be challenged by them. It allows me to connect with young scholars through reciprical learning experiences, and to serve as a bridge between generations.

Kimberly A. Este, Mississippi

Although I am an academic teacher at the Mississippi School of the Arts, I feel that it is my responsibility to encourage my students to continue to cultivate Mississippi's rich artistic heritage and to provide opportunities for them to share their talents with the nation.

James A. Fahy, North Dakota

My students bring me back to the classroom excited to teach day after day. Each student provides inspiration to me whether it be to provide the extra help to succeed or the extra challenge. Teaching inspires me to keep learning for the sake of the students.

Anna Halley Freundt, Mississippi

Everyday, every student, every lesson is different; the challenges inherent in teaching motivate me to grow as an instructor and as an individual. My students make me want to be a better teacher. They make me laugh and make me think. Teaching offers lessons about living with passion, curiosity, and empathy.

Patricia A. Gardner, New Mexico

For me, teaching is a calling, where I get to work with amazing students. I love what I do, and while that may be payment enough, it is rewarding when a student comes back and tells me they learned something from me that helped them in another class or endeavor.

Chris Girard, Kentucky

I love teaching because there is a new challenge every day. Whether it is helping a student who is struggling, challenging a student to go the extra mile, or celebrating successes, each day is different than the last. It means a lot to know that I am making a difference.

Kylene Gott, Illinois

My inspiration for teaching comes from the diversity and independence of each young person with whom I work. Students inspire me by their tireless efforts to establish identity and by their persistent and focused struggle to overcome and learn from challenges.

Jo Heim Green, Texas

Like most teachers, I have always been an optimist. I want the best that I can give and the highest that each student can achieve. I hope every student will learn something positive in my classroom whether it's Latin or a love of learning, a respect for individual eccentricities or cultural differences. Teaching is passing the torch from one generation to another keeping alive the highest traditions of learning.

Stephen Guziewski, Wisconsin

I teach because my students need to know they can and will succeed. I teach because in the eyes of my students I see glimmers of hope and sparkles of enthusiasm. I teach because I get to see students grow and achieve great things every day. But mostly I teach because my students inspire me!

Michael Hagstrom, North Dakota

Every human life is a great mystery – lived in the dramatic tension between who one is and who one is meant to be – according to the late Pope John Paul II. The noble role of a teacher is to call students to use personal freedom for excellence.

William G. Hanewald, Wyoming

Students who want to learn the "whys" and "what for" of physical science, who challenge me, try to prove me wrong, and ask probing questions motivate me to continue teaching. I sense their earnestness when using experiments to evaluate theoretical learning and share their delight when the "aha!" moment arrives.

Cynthia Hardesty, Virginia

I teach for the "light bulb" moment, the moment when you see in a student's eyes that a concept, which has been frustrating or confusing them, has finally clicked, and understanding has occurred. The light of that moment keeps me teaching.

Lorraine Heinrichs, Americans Abroad

I like to think of myself as an educator. In class, the focus of my role is the students and their needs. Pass information on to students and they will forget it very quickly. If on the other hand they are allowed to discover the answers on their own, they will learn.

David Henner, Puerto Rico

The motivation of my teaching is the annual alumni reunion at Christmas. Former students return to share their triumphs and failures, joys and disappointments, and playfully recreate our time together in the classroom. It reminds me every day that my students are truly a work in progress.

Mercedes Higuera-Pereda, Puerto Rico

The poet Antonio Machado once said: "in matters of culture and knowledge, what is not shared is lost.," that is my motivation. With students like Mariana, this is easy to live by as she clearly realizes the importance and beauty of language and literature. Congratulations, Mariana, for your commitment to excellence and society!

Josh Hilberman, Massachusetts

Teaching tap dance is about connection: connecting aural, neural, and motor impulses; connecting ourselves to our dancing spirits and musical voices; connecting to historical traditions and reinventing those traditions. Challenging and being challenged, exploring, developing, playing, learning constantly; that is teaching to me.

John Hirsch, Massachusetts

I teach because I can't help it: whatever profession I chose in life, I would have felt driven to teach, in some way. I teach English because reading, discussing, and writing about literature is both what I'm most passionate about and the academic discipline that, I find, allows me to engage students in the fullest, most interesting way.

Susan M. Hodgin, Idaho

Teaching and learning begin with trust – and for me, a sophomore English teacher--that comes through writing and revising, reading, listening, speaking, and viewing. The processes begin, and students unfold like a spring bloom. With good practice, the classroom becomes a landscape of respect, confidence, humor, and thought through response.

Celeste Hutton, Kansas

Teaching remains timeless, not students. Bored instructors doubly bore students. Enthusiasm's key, not dog-and-pony shows. Laughter's necessary, at self and pieces of beloved discipline which beg satirizing. A teacher who doesn't push is unrespected. When the profession's inevitable crisis occurs and we wonder who cares anyway, this honor offers proof.

Yelena Ivanov, New Jersey

As both a musician and teacher, I strive to nurture young, talented pianists. Together, my students and I carry on the noble tradition of revealing real meaning in the music of great composers. My greatest joy and most precious reward is when I can help my students liberate their imagination, technique, individuality, and sense of harmony.

Rob Jensen, Montana

I teach for the "aha" moments, for the kid who hated science yet now at least tolerates it, for my smile when I see my student in a play, for the student honoring me with this recognition some two years after my class. I teach for the difference it makes.

Terrie E. Joplin, North Carolina

Conversations about novels and poetry generate ideas and clarify in understanding of one's own and others' worlds. When I help students unlock and explain artistry and meaning, while still valuing the remaining mystery, then we have embarked on a continuous journey.

Aimee Joyaux, Virginia

I love teaching because I love learning. I see art as a way to present virtuous ideas, raise legitimate questions and elevate the debate on the complex issues of our times. I want my students to see art as a vehicle to express their place in this history.

Gaye Klopack, Illinois

I teach young people to sing. Trying to teach them vocal technique is like putting together pieces in a puzzle. And even before I've figured out how all the pieces should fit together, I ask them to do a very scary thing – go on stage and perform. Eventually they begin to free themselves from that fear, and begin to feel in touch with the music and their own artistry. When that happens, they not only empower themselves but also give their audience much joy, and this teacher gets to be part of that audience.

Lilia Kol, Washington

Teaching math is my passion. My assignment is particularly challenging and rewarding because I have students for several years in row. This offers me the opportunity to see their talents develop over time. I have had many students choose math related fields for their careers. This motivates my teaching.

Julia L. Kolander, Nebraska

Any time a scholar is engaged in a curious, meaningful, and authentic search into ancient history and literature – a long standing tradition of education survives. By exploring the past and embracing the present, the future of humanity can be shaped through knowledge and wisdom. As an educator, it is my honor to practice a craft which embodies a whole realm of possibilities and adventures with young people.

Francine Kontos, New Hampshire

Teaching is exciting. From the simplest assignment to the most complex, my students never cease to surprise me with their response. It is a thrill to see the moment that their idea solidifies; to watch their excitement grow with each new piece they add to their work. The end result is rarely what I imagine it will be.

Randall Kuchynka, Oklahoma

Teaching school is the greatest job in the world. It is wonder and discovery. As a history teacher, I see the wonder in the students' eyes as they discover another amazing concept about our world and the people in it.

Michael Lazere, Iowa

I often tell my students that I don't like the words "teacher" or "learner" because they imply that education is one-way – that they are "empty vessels" ready to be filled with knowledge. In my classes I strive to create an atmosphere where we are all teachers and learners.

Doris Pridonoff Lehnert, Colorado

Teaching piano for 50 years has brought me great joy. My experience as a pressured child pianist with expectations of greatness, my passion for music, and the raising of my own 4 children, has helped give me greater insight and empathy for the individual student's I have I taught. My scholar, Leann Osterkamp, loves music and has been an exemplary student.

Laurie LePore, Oregon

In seventh grade I fell for science. That "tumble" had mostly to do with my teacher. Cropped hair, lace-up Hush Puppies, plain blouse and skirt; initially fearsome, always straightforward, and tough as nails, she loved us and science, in that order, and by the end of the year I knew my calling. The mark she made was truly indelible, and now I get to do the same.

Evie Lewis, Wyoming

The dual nature of my job gives me great pleasure and satisfaction. Teaching Drama and English provides the opportunity to foster "rigor, relevance and relationships." Regardless of the content area, students develop and merge creativity with self-discipline as they gain confidence to present themselves as serious English students or dramatic artists.

Nicholas Lewis, Ohio

I teach in order to help my students deepen an appreciation for other sets of eyes while simultaneously shaping their own perception of the world. It is an immensely rewarding experience; teaching is also learning. Students, like Anne Song, have the incredible ability to open my eyes to new possibilities.

Mark Littlefield, Massachusetts

My passion for teaching comes from working with students to achieve success through hard work, dedication, and discipline in their academic studies and other activities. Working with students to develop confidence and to set and maintain high expectations in challenging mathematics courses brings great rewards for me as their teacher.

Jason Lovera, Missouri

My motivation to teach English rests in the notion that the success of each individual depends upon each individual's ability to recognize, value, and celebrate the human soul. The disciplined, rigorous study of literature offers that journey, through which each individual can learn to embrace the values of love, compassion, and hope.

Amy Maddox, Alabama

What I appreciate most is being reminded daily that our future is in excellent hands. I believe that it is my civic duty to share the gift of essential lessons with the next generation. Yet, I failed to realize the enormous blessings I would receive in return. Teaching is an always challenging, infinitely rewarding experience.

Andrew H. Mahar, North Carolina

One aspect of teaching that I find exciting is the possibilities that each new group of students brings to the classroom. They are at such a pivotal age in high school that we, as their educators, can influence whatever direction they end up taking in their lives.

Fredrick Martell, New York

I try to promote excellence, especially to those students who the muse has chosen by granting them interest and desire for excellence. My wish is to have them feel the personal transformation that happens when they apply themselves to creating and performing excellently. My hope is for them to pass the same desire to the next generations.

James E. McCarter, Jr., Indiana

I recall teachers who challenged me as a child, exposing me to new worlds and ideas I would otherwise never have encountered. As an educator I have always sought to provide my students with equally challenging opportunities and experiences that they would not get anywhere else.

Lisa McCulley, South Carolina

The creative process is awesome to behold! As budding journalists enter the publications lab, they bring fresh, new ways of perceiving the world. I have the ultimate pleasure of watching them share ideas and become fluent in expressing them both verbally and visually for others to enjoy. What fun!

Daniel McKeen, Ohio

I love teaching. My motivation: the daily surprises, the enthusiasm of youth, the thrill of small successes, the joy of creation, the shared humanity, the unexpected laughter, the metamorphosis as they grow from children into adults. I was an engineer for 10 years before teaching. Now I wake up happy.

Rebecca Meyer-Larson, Minnesota

"Art is the symbol of the two noblest human efforts: to construct, and to refrain from destruction" - Simone Weil. I spend my days with young artists dedicated to creating more than the rest of the world can destroy; a noble pursuit indeed! My soul is inspired every day by creation.

Barbara Milburn, Minnesota

Voltaire said that if you teach people to think that they are thinking, they will imitate you and adore you. If you teach people to truly think, they will challenge you and not honor you. Perhaps Voltaire didn't have the opportunity to work with Presidential Scholars like Annie and Andrew.

David Montee, Michigan

I've learned more about my subject (acting and psychological behavior) over my years in the classroom than during all of my time acting professionally. Students open my eyes to new horizons every day I'm with them. It's an honor to share their lives and creative breakthroughs; it's where art and heart meet.

Elizabeth Moore, Illinois

To me, nothing is as inspiring or as humbling as teaching. I love sharing my excitement with students, opening their eyes to possibilities, and getting to know them as thinkers and as young adults. Without a doubt, I have learned as much from my students as they have from me.

Thomas Moore, Connecticut

To paraphrase Thoreau, "I wish to brag as lustily as Chanticleer in the morning, not to annoy my neighbors, but to awaken them." I want my students to question what they hold dear, and to squirm as they confront the new ideas that will force them to think.

Kane More, Florida

What makes teaching such a satisfying profession is knowing what you do may well impact the future. Each day brings new challenges and opportunities to share with my students and to watch them grow intellectually. Learning is also a two-way street, which keeps me young and forever inquisitive.

Janie Mueller, Colorado

I love young people – finding each student's special gifts and talents and building them up to believe in themselves to pursue their dreams; to dare to dream new dreams. Finding teens who fluorish in the hard sciences and can go on to touch others and our nation is my passion.

Cathy Murphy, Georgia

Freshmen: Lia asks about theme. Hers isn't arguable. She returns with "Man is inherently evil."

Juniors: "A Rose for Emily." For forty years, Emily's slept with a dead body. Does Emily symbolize the antebellum South? LitMag: Angela's story. Blind girl's brother dies in a fire. Should she commit suicide or have split personalities? I love teaching.

Kristen Murphy, Rhode Island

I regard the profession of teaching as the most important of all professions. Our job is to inspire excellence and motivate success in the lives of our students. Despite its many challenges, teaching has given me reason to believe that we can all make a difference in the world. I am priviledged to share the life -long experience of learning with my students. There is nothing better than being involved in the intellectual and emotional development of a young mind!!

John S. Naisbitt, Illinois

Teaching for me is about creating positive, energetic and productive relationships with the students. Once kids know you care about them the real learning can begin. My mother taught for 30 years, and she told me to "have the students fall in love with you, and the rest is easy."

Andrew Neilson, Utah

Teaching motivates me. Not the "teaching" that dispenses information for students to memorize, but the teaching that challenges students to view learning as true conceptual understanding. My students don't typically say they love the physics I teach. Rather, they say they like the way I teach. They like to understand.

Suzanne Nelson, South Dakota

Passion for truth is the foundation of my personal studies. This search ultimately leads to other questions, particularly "why?" I revel in this search and believe it's the basis for positive change. I push my students to focus on the "how" and "why" as a means for understanding the "what."

Gary L. Nyhus, Iowa

I loved teaching mathematics because applying problem solving techniques to real life situations defines mathematics at its best. Watching students gain confidence in this skill for close to forty years was very rewarding. I feel fortunate to have had this career that I loved.

Jane O'Connor, Colorado

On a daily basis, I am impressed with my students' tenacity and desire to achieve excellence. They sometimes feel that they are put through the wringer, but they consistently meet and exceed my expectations. They inspire me to be my best; I don't ever want to let them down.

Cynthia Ogden, Texas

Living in a post-modern world, I feel the pressures that my teaching must reflect an eclectic understanding of the global economy, cultural diversity, and the surge of technology and information. I can appreciate that the whole world does indeed seem close and immediate because of these. But I also sense that the basic elements of learning are not nearly so complex. I have discovered the power of looking right into a student's eyes and saying "You are smart. You are talented. You are beautiful." Those are very simple, straightforward statements. Yet they can be so difficult to express in the faces of students who use cynicism, anger, or defiance to mount soundproof walls of armor around their pain. However, when I have been brave enough to say them, I have always been amazed by the results. I think it is because these kinds of statements really touch a common need in all of us – a need that transcends cultures, socio-economics, and statistics. It is the need to be recognized, seen, heard. When every perspective is validated, the walls come down. The classroom is safe. I teach. My students learn.

Bryan Ott, Florida

Jesus, Himself, dedicated much of his ministry to teaching others. I am honored to follow in His footsteps by trying to lead others to understandings that will ultimately bring them to peace, happiness, and fulfillment. My goal is to teach my students to love and be loved.

Debora D. Palmer, West Virginia

Being able to share my passion for the arts with students is a privilege. Being able to watch them grow in skill and understanding, and then to approach the rest of their lives with sensitivity, creativity, and a sense of aesthetics, is a gift they give to me.

Bill Parker, Alaska

Although I have been teaching for over thirty years, I am still thrilled by the "aha" moments when students connect new concepts to the foundations we have been building. I am indeed fortunate to be able to teach the same highly motivated and able students for up to three years. Their growth is a wonderful thing to observe, and the gratitude of students and parents is priceless.

Ivor R. Parsons, New York

It is the story of America – a city on a hill, a beacon for all mankind. It is so rewarding to work with young people who want to know that story. A day never goes by when I don't have renewed energy and enthusiasm from their questions and challenges.

Peter Perry, Maryland

I teach my students through the vehicle of music. The experiences we share through this pursuit help establish personal convictions, teach life lessons, and formulate values that the students will use for the rest of their lives. I am excited about my facilitating role in this process, and look with pride as my students mature into productive members of society. I relish the fact that this growth and maturity takes place through the performance and study of music, and that my students leave me being educated participants and consumers of music.

Larry J. Peterson, Utah

Teaching Advanced Placement students lets me work with the best students in the world. They will be the leaders of tomorrow. I enjoy challenging them to reach their full potential. My goal has always been to be the teacher that students were glad they had… five years after they graduated.

Alan G. Phillips, Louisiana

For forty years I've had the honor to work with outstanding young people who have inspired, challenged and affirmed me. They've given me far more than I've given them. Their expressions of love will live forever in my heart. There is no more noble profession – I am a teacher.

Jason Piluk, Maryland

The most rewarding aspect of teaching biology is knowing that the intellectual and social boundaries of the student have expanded beyond his or her immediate environment with the ultimate realization that they are part of a larger, more dynamic continuum. Scientific knowledge has no limits, nor does teaching, about it.

Walter Wright Porter, Arkansas

My greatest sense of accomplishment is when students embrace their natural inquisitiveness to learn on their own. I want students to understand that learning is a life-long process. It may not always be simple or easy, but the rewards are immeasurable.

Rosemary Pringle, Florida

"Mrs. Pringle I don't understand!" is music to my ears. I find teaching irresistible! The rewards of teaching come often for me. I love to watch students blossom, to realize command of the tools, to create a product they are genuinely proud of, and to gain the respect of their peers.

David Quinn, Washington

"What do you do?" asked my classroom visitor. We were watching a student lead a large-group discussion on ethics, having just broken from smaller clusters. "What protocol should we use?" the student asked. With consensus reached, another discussion leader began asking probing questions of her peers. "I learn." I replied.

Wallace B. Ragan, District of Columbia

Teaching is, like parenting, essential to social cohesion and cultural vitality. For me, teaching is a calling and sacred trust. As my own life has been shaped by wise and caring mentors, dedicated to what is true, good, and useful, so I endeavor through teaching the Classics to open up new worlds to the young people entrusted to me.

Cheryle A. Redelings, California

Socrates called himself "a midwife of ideas." It is an apt description of a teacher's role. By teaching history I can acquaint students with the entire range of human ideas. And there is no more exhilarating experience than opening students' minds and hearts to good and true ideas.

Jonathan A. Rice, Vermont

As a child of migrant workers, I attended many schools. Caring teachers gave up their planning time to help me catch up, invited me into science clubs, and shared their love for learning; they inspired me and helped foster my love of science. May I always follow in their footsteps.

Cindy Pessoney Rodgers, Alabama

I enjoy watching students mature, find their own talents and interests, and make choices for their futures. My students publish their own international math competition, host a local tournament for elementary and middle school students, and compete in a variety of contests themselves. They are bright, enthusiastic, capable, problem solvers.

Michael Roh, West Virginia

I believe there is a fundamental yearning in all young minds to understand the mysteries of the universe. There is no greater thrill than seeing this burning wonder and being able, as a teacher, to direct such students to an understanding of their curiosities.

Dan Ruff, Kentucky

Recently, a past film student returned to my current film class to teach a mini-lesson on video editing. He cited numerous examples from the earlier class, illustrating a thorough knowledge of the subject matter. To realize that a student has successfully retained information and can successfully, enthusiastically impart it to others, well; that is certainly one of teaching's greatest rewards.

Beth Aeowyn Russell, Oregon

Someone once told me that philosophy is dangerous in the hands of children. This may be true, but where would our kind be without fire? Our task is to tend the flame of human consciousness. Love of knowledge, tempered by moral sensibility, is the gift that warms us all.

Ellen Sassenberg, Minnesota

As a Latin teacher, I believe that knowledge of the ancient world can illuminate life in the 21st century and explain why we do what we do. Producing well-rounded critical thinkers who can make connections across the millennia is vitally important in shaping tomorrow's leaders.

Dawn Schmidt, Arizona

I encourage students to have an appreciation for the past and understand the implications for the future. Creating global citizens who are informed about the world in which they live is imperative in today's society and I hope students will be inspired to travel and learn from their life experiences.

Mary Schmitz, South Dakota

Writing innumerable letters of recommendation for college admission, placement, or scholarship has become a necessary evil in my yearly routine. Crafting an original and truthful snapshot of each student who asks is challenging. Reading the much-appreciated, "Thank you," or hearing, "Your letter made my mother cry" is priceless.

Laura Segedin, New Jersey

There aren't many jobs I'd take, no matter how lucrative, if educating kids wasn't involved in some way. Over the years I've learned how much I truly love kids! They are a part of me, my day, and my world. I'll take a school play over Broadway any day.

Diane M. Sheppard, Alabama

As a child, I loved hearing my mother tell stories; she taught me the power and beauty language gives. As a teacher, I try to help students develop their own voices and the skills necessary to tell their stories. Together, we embrace writing as the heart of self discovery and communication.

Leonard R. Sievers, Indiana

It is both a privilege and a honor to be a teacher. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to affect so many people in a positive way; to help nurture and mold future adults like Amanda Williams one day at a time. Teaching – it's what I do. It is the most rewarding job in the world.

Anthony Silk, California

I took a long and crooked road to teaching, starting with Navy Test Pilot, then to Software Project Manager to Cruise Ship Social Host, and finally here. Of all my jobs, this is the only one where each day is highlighted by the exhilaration of discovery. Who could ask for anything more?

Kathleen M. Smith, New York

To help students understand the intricacies of all living things and their interactions with our planet is a privilege and a responsibility in these changing times. With greater appreciation of the complexities of life on earth, I hope to foster in students a greater sense of stewardship for their lives, their communities, and their world. What I continue to love about teaching is the unique journey that I take each year with students as they grow and develop as individuals and as a class.

Randall Smith, Connecticut

To me, teaching is the chance to give back, the War On Ignorance, the quest for meaning, the business of building effective citizens, to nurture the adult in the child, to kick a kid's game up to the next level, and to help our replacements do better than we did.

Sally Squibb, Texas

1960 made me a teacher! JFK established the Peace Corps. I read the words of George Washington Carver: "No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it." I leave much behind!

Annice F. Steadman, Arkansas

My students and I engage in a sharing experience. As they share their cultures and past learning experiences, we build our biology class around these experiences. Questioning and active learning are standard procedures. I encourage students to think beyond the classroom and to never give up because there is more to discover.

Stephen A. Steinbach, Washington D.C.

My college experience was shaped by an incredibly intelligent and inspirational professor. If I convey only a fraction of her commitment and energy to my own students, I will have succeeded as a teacher. Truth be told, though, I learn as much from my students on a daily basis as they learn from me.

Matthew Stergios, Montana

I have found the teaching profession to be very rewarding. For me, teaching is not a job, but a vocation. To have the opportunity to positively influence the future is very exciting and fulfilling. As the years go by, I have discovered the additional benefit of coming into contact with outstanding human beings – which has made me a better person!

Amanda Streich, Wisconsin

Home-schooling has been a most rewarding experience as I've encouraged my three children to learn for the joy of learning by pursuing what interests them, by bringing real world experiences into their studies with plenty of time and space to think, and by fostering an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

Judith Tanzman, California

As an artist and an educator, I encourage and challenge students to take risks with ideas and process in order to create work that is both meaningful and personal. When students tap into their imagination and the power of creative thinking, they discover the artist within themselves and the tools for a successful and creative life. Thank you, Julie, for this great honor!

Robert M. Tostevin, Missouri

I have spent my entire life in school, which is the one place where the serious pursuit of serious ideas and the spirited company of inquisitive young minds join together. Teaching has privileged me by helping to keep my thinking fresh and my interests youthfully alive.

Gail Tuthill, Hawaii

When I first watched a master teacher captivate his students with mind-boggling demonstrations and geeky science jokes, I was hooked. I love my students, and I gain happiness beyond measure in not only helping them understand chemistry, but also in bringing a smile or a look of wonderment to their faces.

Joe Vaccaro, Louisiana

Teaching high school chemistry and biology came to me as a career change after Hurrican Katrina. My biggest surprise and greatest joy since that time has been the impact that I have had on students outside of class simply by listening to them with an open mind and without judgement.

Edward Vaitones, New Hampshire

Learning German opens new ways to view the world and to communicate. It is exciting to watch students advance and begin to think in German. They make the language their own and acquire flexibility and creativity in their thinking. I aim to teach with an enthusiasm and love of learning.

Almita Vamos, Illinois

For me teaching is a way of life. It's an opportunity to pass on the knowledge and skills I received from my dedicated teachers. What a thrill to have students such as Andrea Jarrett who like a sponge sops up as much kowledge and inspiration that I can give her.

Irina Voro, Kentucky

We learn how to do things better and to be happier mostly through the process of asking questions. So, I teach the joy of asking questions as a nifty shortcut in the pursuit of happiness. …Because, if the process of asking questions brings us joy, we are already happy…

Deanna Wasman, Missouri

One of my students recently said, "She really pushed us to think outside the box...She loved to teach and loved the topic of mathematics so much, and that's the most important thing, to do something you love." I find continual inspiration in challenging my students to reach their potential and find their passion.

William Waters, Maryland

I grew up in the home of an engineer and a nurse, a place of invention and healing where possibilities met at the intersection of hard work and hope. I found this again in the schoolhouse – as a student and then as a teacher – and I've been there ever since.

Sandy Webb, Hawaii

After 25 years of teaching, what I enjoy most is helping my students become successful, confident young adults. It is an honor to work with students, like Lucia Mocz, who are clearly capable of helping to solve the many challenges that face our nation.

Bernard Yanelli, Florida

As a late-in-life teacher, I feel invigorated to spend my days surrounded by teenagers and ideas. In his last public speech, Horace Mann boldly proclaimed, "Be ashamed to die until you have achieved some great victory for mankind." My students inspire me to seek such victories every day.

Andrew Zartmann, Alaska

Education isn't about standards, college entrance, or jobs. What we learn is who we are. I have succeeded if my students ask better questions and have a broader sense of the possibility of ideas.

COMMISSION

THE COMMISSION ON PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS AND ITS PARTNERS

The Commission is a group of private citizens appointed by the President to select and honor the Presidential Scholars. Commissioners are selected from across the country, representing the fields of education, medicine, law, social services, business, and other professions. The Commissioners make the difficult choices of selecting Scholars from an initial pool of approximately 2,600 candidates who demonstrate exceptional accomplishments in academics and the arts, and an outstanding commitment to public service.

The Commission invites the Presidential Scholars and their Teachers to Washington, DC for National Recognition Week. Activities are funded through a public-private partnership of the Presidential Scholars Foundation and private corporate and philanthropic sources. As guests of the Commission, the Scholars meet with government officials, educators, authors, musicians, scientists, and other accomplished persons. Scholars also attend recitals, receptions, and ceremonies in their honor and visit museums and monuments of the nation's capital.

Stanley E. Taylor, Virginia

Commission Chair

As outgoing Vice President for Metropolitan Relations at George Mason University (GMU), Mr. Taylor has been involved with federal and local governments, private and non-profit companies, organizations and associations that will benefit the university and support and enhance interaction and goals for all. He worked with GMU central administration and academic units to develop and/or address their mission and goals for support from the private sector, non-profits, and local and federal government agencies, to support academic goals, internships, partnership and research initiatives; and to promote initiatives with international governments. His professional, business and civic roles include Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Greater Washington, BB&T Bank, for the Washington Metropolitan Regions, Lead Virginia, and Leadership Arlington. In June, Mr. Taylor will retire from the University to pursue private projects in real estate development and other areas.

Richard Bearden, Arkansas

Senior Partner, Impact Management Group, Inc., a Little Rock Southern strategy and grass roots-based political consulting firm. State Director of the Bush for President Committee-Arkansas; Chief of Staff to Congressman Jay Dickey (R-AR4) from 1993-1995; Executive Director of the Republican Party of Arkansas from 1990-1992 and 1996-1999. Managing Partner, Capital Resource Management from 1999-2000. One of *Arkansas Business Magazine's* "40 most influential businessmen." Board member of The Little Rock Club from 1996-1999; Board member and legislative committee chairman, Professional Counseling Associates from 1995-2001. He served on former President Bush's Commission on White House Fellowships, and as an instructor on Building Democracy for the International Republican Institution in Washington, DC.

Glen T. Becerra, California

City Council Member in Simi Valley, California, elected in November of 1998. Currently a Public Affairs Region Manager for the Southern California Edison Company. Former Legislative Aide to Assemblyman James L. Brulte, responsible for legislation dealing with California's utility industry and the State Allocation Board, which finances the renovation and construction of public schools. Former Deputy Director for the Office of External Affairs in the Administration of Governor Wilson, overseeing the operation of the Governor's field offices and serving as liaison for constituent groups. He is an active community member, serving on the Simi Valley Education Foundation and Boys & Girls Club Board of Directors and participating in the Economic Development Collaborative of Ventura County. Council Member Becerra and his wife Sally have two children, Elizabeth and Nicholas.

Scott A. Bundgaard, Arizona

Scott is a Vice President with J.P. Morgan Inc., resides in Phoenix, and holds an MBA from Thunderbird Graduate School for International Management. Prior to his current position, Scott served Legislative District 19 in the Arizona State Legislature for eight years. First elected at age 25 to the Arizona House of Representatives, Scott was elected two years later as the youngest member of the State Senate, serving as Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee for six years. He also served on the Appropriations, Judiciary, Commerce, Natural Resources & Environment, and Joint Legislative Budget Committees. Scott coaches basketball for the Boys & Girls Club, the City of Glendale, and Arizona Youth Sports. He is an active board member and a mentor with MatchPoint, a faith-based one-on-one mentoring program for at-risk youth, affiliated with Prison Fellowship Ministries

Hattie Daniels-Rush, Wisconsin

Hattie Daniels-Rush is the President and CEO of the Hattie Daniels-Rush Institute, the largest African American education and human service consultant firm in Wisconsin. Hattie Daniels-Rush was formerly the director of community relations for the Milwaukee County executive. She has also served as a school administrator, program coordinator, school social worker and classroom teacher. Mrs. Daniels-Rush is a licensed marriage and family therapist and a clinical social worker in the state of Wisconsin. She, along with her lovely daughter, Ericka Kathryn are partners in the Hyssop Diagnostic, Treatment, and Social Service Agency. Mrs. Daniels-Rush is extremely active in her church and community. She is a former weekly radio talk show host and in 2001 was appointed by Milwaukee's Mayor John Norquist to serve as the city's Faith-Based Liaison. Hattie serves on numerous boards including the Salvation Army Advisory Board, COGIC Social Services, Christian Business and Professional Alliances, Hyssop Diagnostic and Treatment Center, St. Michael's Hospital, Wheaton Franciscan and V&J Foods (a franchise of Burger King and Pizza Hut). She is the recipient of many honors and awards. Hattie and her husband Robert are the proud parents of one daughter, Ericka Kathryn Rush.

Jeanne Ferst, Georgia

Mrs. Ferst has been deeply involved international, public, and civic affairs for over 30 years. She has served as a participant in many international conferences, including the Ditchley Conference of 1996 & 1999, the German-American Economic Relations Conference in 1997, and was a member of the President's Commission Hostage Compensation in 1981. She studied at the University of Chicago and then began working with the United Nations. Since then, she was a member of the President's Panel on South Asian Relief Assistance, the Acting Chairman of the Cultural and Civic Affairs Committee in Atlanta, Georgia, and a member of the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid with the Agency for International Development/US State Department. She is a board member of several international organizations, including the Southern Center for International Studies, and is a Trustee of the Morris Brown College.

Michael A. Galiazzo, Maryland

Dr. Michael Galiazzo is president of Get Results, a project management company that specializes in collaborative workforce development efforts involving business, labor, government and education. He has served in a variety of leadership roles in community-based organizations, and worked in higher education. Dr. Galiazzo has earned a Doctor of Philosophy, Education Administration, Community College Leadership Program, The University of Texas at Austin; Leadership Certificate, Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, North Carolina; Master of Science, Applied Behavioral Science, The Johns Hopkins University; Hopkins Fellow, Community and Organizational Systems, The Johns Hopkins University; Bachelor of Arts, Human Services Administration, Antioch University, 1978.

Robert A. Gleason Jr., Pennsylvania

Mr. Gleason, a leading insurance broker, has served in his family's business since 1965, after 4 years as a Captain in the US Air Force. Rob led Gleason, Inc., as President from 1970-1994, and next as Chairman/CEO. In 1985, he held a 2-year term as Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Returning to Gleason, he also kept active in national, state and county politics: in 1996 he was elected Chair, Cambria County Republican Committee, winning re-election in 1998. From 1993-1997, Governor Casey named him to the State Turnpike Commission; in 1997, Governor Ridge tapped him for the Transportation Commission. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, Rob is a University Trustee, and served St. Francis College for 10 years as Trustee, and for two years as Vice Chair. In 1999, The Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers named him Chair. Rob is also director/secretary for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown's Foundation; trustee/former Chair of Memorial Medical Center; trustee of Conemaugh Health System; and chairs his Parish Finance Council.

Marcia A. Jackson, Virginia

Marcia Jackson, a graduate of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration-Accounting. She currently serves as the Coordinator for Study Abroad and Cultural Liaison at Virginia's Hampton University International. Mrs. Jackson is experienced in the marketing and business development area, specializing in growth strategies for small and mid-size firms. Her work has focused on coordinating and developing HIV/Aids projects, corporate social responsibility projects in Africa, and agri-industrial development. She is on the Board of Trustees of Meridian International, a regional board member of The National Women's Museum of the Arts and sits on the Executive Committee of the Links Incorporated, Metropolitan Chapter of Washington, DC. In 1995, then-Governor George W. Bush appointed Mrs. Jackson to the Governor's Commission for Women; in 2001, former President Bush appointed her to serve on the Commission for Presidential Scholars and the President's Commission for White House Fellowships. She is married and has two daughters.

Elizabeth K. Johnson, Virginia

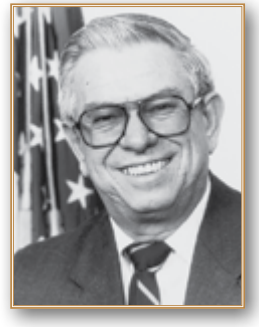
Practicing Landscape Architect, private practice, A.S.L.A. Former Board Member of the Virginia Board for Architects, Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, Certified Interior Designers, and Landscape Architects. Active campaign and political volunteer.

Richard R. Kilgust, Texas

Dick Kilgust is Managing Partner, Global Public Policy and Regulatory for PricewaterhouseCoopers. He is a Member of the firm's Global Leadership Team. He develops and helps implement PWC policies and positions relating to legislative and regulatory changes impacting the accounting profession. Dick meets frequently with lawmakers, other policy-makers, investors and regulators to address matters affecting the accounting profession and its role in capital markets. Dick is a former member of PricewaterhouseCoopers Global Oversight Board and U.S. Board of Partners and Principals. He has served as the lead partner on audit clients of all sizes, including some of the firm's largest. Dick joined Price Waterhouse in 1973 after graduating from the University of Wisconsin with an MBA degree. He was named as the 1995 Distinguished Alumnus of the University of Wisconsin Department of Accounting and Information Systems. He is a board member of Big Brothers and Big Sisters of North Texas.

Robert L. King, Kentucky

In December of 2008, Robert King was named President of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, the state's coordinating board for higher education. He previously served for three years as President and CEO of the Arizona Community Foundation, and prior to that was for nearly six years the Chancellor of the State University of New York (SUNY). King was named a University Professor, the institution's highest academic rank by SUNY's Trustees, and served as interim President of SUNY Potsdam. He served on President Bush's 2000 education transition team, and since 2004, on UNESCO's Education Committee. In 1998-1999, King was New York's budget director, and prior to that led Governor Pataki's Office of Regulatory Reform. He served as Monroe County Executive, and for five years was Rochester's State Assemblyman. King holds a law degree from Vanderbilt University and a bachelor's degree from Trinity College, and worked for 13 years as a prosecutor in California and New York.



Manuel Lujan, Jr., New Mexico

Mr. Lujan currently owns his own consulting firm, Manuel Lujan Associates. He also sits on the Boards of numerous companies, including the banking, construction, electric, gas, and telecommunications industries. He was the United States Secretary of the Interior from 1989 to 1993 and a Member of the United States Congress from 1969 to 1989. As a Representative from New Mexico's 1st District, he was on the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, the Science, Space and Technology Committee, and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. Mr. Lujan is the Organizer and Chairman of the Endowment for Excellence in Education, which provides college scholarships for students in New Mexico universities.

Modesto A. Maidique, Florida

Dr. Maidique is the fourth President of Florida International University (FIU), a public research university with an enrollment of 32,000 students. In November of 2008, Dr. Maidique presented his resignation to the FIU Board of trustees, but will serve until a successor is named. Appointed in 1986, Dr. Maidique is the longest serving public university president in Florida. He holds a Ph.D. in Solid State Physics from MIT and is a graduate of the PMD Program at the Harvard Business School. He has served as a member of the faculty at MIT, Harvard, and Stanford. He was appointed by former President George H. W. Bush to his Education Policy Advisory Committee, and was appointed by former President George W. Bush's Education Transition Panel. He serves on the Board of Directors of National Semiconductor and the Carnival Corporation and he is a member of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board.

Fernando A. Mateo, New York

Entrepreneur and self-made millionaire Fernando Mateo is President and CEO of Hispanics Across America, a not-for-profit organization promoting financial independence and homeownership for all Hispanics throughout the country. Mr. Mateo originated Operation "Toys for Guns", a popular anti-gun program, founded Carpet Fashions, and currently serves as President of the New York State Federation of Taxi Drivers. Recognized by the New York Chamber of Commerce & Industry for business excellence and commitment to New York City's growth, Mr. Mateo has been lauded by the state's entrepreneurial community for his work reflecting social responsibility. Mr. Mateo has lectured in the university, college, school and corrections circuits, and has conducted workshops on the dangers of drug abuse and criminality. Born in the Dominican Republic and raised on Manhattan's Lower East Side, Mr. Mateo is married with three children.

Charlotte Mohr, Iowa

Charlotte Mohr is a lifelong resident of Iowa, Registered Nurse, mother of four, and farming partner with Jim, her late husband of 42 years. Her career has included a 13-year appointment by then-Governor Branstad as the first chair of Iowa's Job Training Partnership Act Commission, and 18 years' service on the Environmental Commission. During her 32-year involvement with the Scott County Library, the system grew from one library to ten, culminating in a 2002 fundraising effort for the newest structure, in which she was instrumental. She served for 15 years as Chairman of the Scott County Board of Health, and continues as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Valley Bank-- in 1993, the first bank to be chartered in Iowa in 25 years. She was the state's delegate to the Associated Country Women of the World, traveling to Kenya in 1977 and Germany in 1980. In 2003, she was elected Trustee of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library.

Robert E. Moss, Washington, DC

Robert Moss has worked in many capacities, but his primary role has been as a public policy strategist. From 1993-1998, Bob served as Vice President for Government Affairs for the American Automobile Manufacturers Association. He spent ten years as Vice President of Federal Affairs for the Coastal Corporation and served as deputy and then chief legislative and intergovernmental affairs officer for the Department of the Treasury. He also acted as Treasury's Congressional and White House liaison. Mr. Moss spent eight years in top staff positions on Capitol Hill and as a member of the Federal Election Commission, and served as chief legal counsel for the U.S. House of Representatives. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of California at Berkeley (Boalt Hall) and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California.

John F. Mueller, Wyoming

Jack Mueller is a native of Cheyenne Wyoming and a graduate with a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Education from the University of Wyoming. He taught in public high schools in Texas and Wyoming before joining the Wyoming Department of Education. His assignments during his 30-year career included school accreditation, school evaluation, program evaluation and teacher certification. He is past Chairman of the State Library Board of Wyoming and the Wyoming Board of Geographic Names. He was appointed by Secretary of Education William Bennett to serve on the Commission on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility, where he served for six years. Currently he is semi-retired and is involved in volunteer activities.

Anthony Mullen, Connecticut

Mullen, a ninth through twelfth grade special education teacher at The ARCH School, an alternative education branch of Greenwich High School in Greenwich, Connecticut, is the 59th National Teacher of the Year. Due to family circumstances when he was young, college attendance along with a desire to become a teacher were deferred for full-time work, first in a factory assembly line then for 20 years as a New York City police officer. He received a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Long Island University in 1990 and earned a master's degree in Elementary Education and Special Education from Mercy College in New York in 2001. During his first year of teaching in 2001-2002, Mullen taught special education in grades seven and eight at Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services in Yorktown Heights, New York. He then went to The Arch School where he has taught for the past seven years. He is married to Susan Mullen and they have three children, John, Andrea, and Thomas.

Laura E. Owens, Kentucky

Laura Emberton Owens became the president of Advancement Strategies after serving as Assistant to the President for Regional Development at Western Kentucky University. Prior to that, she was for two years Kentucky's Secretary of Education. She previously served in the Education Cabinet as Deputy Secretary, and before that, as Commissioner of Workforce Investment, holding further appointments to the Education Commission of the States and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Before joining state government, she focused on education, workforce training and local government issues. She taught on the secondary and post secondary levels for some 20 years, and then became a curriculum coordinator and instructional specialist for the Barren County School District. She also provided leadership training as a communications consultant. In 2003-2004, Owens served as an elected city council member in Glasgow. She is a graduate of Western Kentucky University with bachelors' degrees in English and communication and a master's degree in communication. Owens and her husband Donnie reside in Frankfort, where he is Principal of Elkhorn Elementary School. They have a daughter, a son, and two grandchildren.

Bryan Pickens, Texas

Bryan Pickens is President of Pickens Capital, LLC, an entrepreneurial investment company focused on natural resource exploration and real estate development. He manages a diversified mix of companies, providing seed consulting and capital structure experience to emerging businesses with proven potential for aggressive, prudent revenue growth. He also co-owns Collectors Covey, Texas' premier wildlife and sporting art gallery and print publisher, representing the finest wildlife artists and offering original works, conservation art, and specialty merchandise for the sportsman. An active political fundraiser, he is the founding Chairman of Maverick PAC USA, an organization for next-generation political leaders under age 45. His strong community ties include serving on the boards of trustees of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation and the Circle Ten Council of Boy Scouts of America. He holds an MBA from Southern Methodist University, and a BA from Vanderbilt University. Bryan and his wife Jennifer reside in Dallas with their children.

Jean Potter, West Virginia

Jean Potter began her career as a teacher for the Norwin School District in Irwin, Pennsylvania. She was later asked to join the West Virginia State Department of Education to implement the Early Childhood Education Program, and, during her tenure there, also taught graduate and undergraduate courses for several colleges and universities. During the Reagan administration, Mrs. Potter served in the U.S. Department of Education as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, and later, as that Office's Acting Assistant Secretary. She left this position to become Deputy to the Chief of Staff in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. She is a professional speaker on the subject of early childhood education, and is an award-winning author of seven children's books that deal with educational subjects, and a developer of educational materials for pre-school. Mrs. Potter and her husband, Thomas E. Potter, are the parents of nine-year-old triplets, Christopher, Alexandria and Victoria.

Robert Ray, Iowa

Robert Ray, named "Most Influential Iowan," served an unprecedented five terms as Governor of his native state, and has been Republican State Chairman, Chairman of the Republican State Chairmen, and member of the Republican National Committee. He chaired the National Governors' Association, Republican Governors' Association, Midwestern Governors' Association, and Educational Commission of the States, and was President of the Council of State Governments. An army veteran, his career includes U.S. Representative to the United Nations, law partner, President and CEO of two life insurance companies, President of Drake University, and Trustee of the Hoover Presidential Library. He is on the Board of Directors of various corporations and health care organizations, as well as on national commissions and advisory boards, and has received countless professional, educational, and civic honors. He and his wife live in Des Moines, and have three children and eight grandchildren.

Renee Russell, North Carolina

Mrs. Russell is Director of Telecommunications for Mission-St. Joseph's Health System. In addition she has a telecommunications consulting firm. Her career has concentrated primarily in the private sector with the ROLM and IBM companies. As well as her professional obligations, she is also very active in the community as Vice Chair for Eblen Charities, Special Events Chair for the Mission St. Joseph's Foundation Board, and Vice President for Legislative Affairs for the North Carolina Medical Society Alliance. She is politically active on the local and state level. Renee lives in Candler, North Carolina with her husband, Don and her two children, Hailey and Allie.

Linda O. Shaw, North Carolina

Linda O. Shaw was elected Guilford County Commissioner in 1998 and is presently running for her third term. She has served as Republican National Committeewoman since 1992. She was elected to the Office of the Secretary for the Republican National Committee and served six years. At the request of then-Governor George W. Bush, Republican Presidential nominee, she served as Secretary of the Republican National Convention in 2000. She serves on the Board of Directors for the American Red Cross, the Metro YMCA, the Greensboro Economic Development Partnership, the Heart of the Triad (Economic Development) and the Greensboro Regional Committee on Economic Development. She is a former member of the NC Museum of Art's Board of Trustees, the Greensboro Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Greensboro Library Board and the Guilford County Board of Health. Linda and husband Bob (former NC State Senator) are in the restaurant business. She has two children and two grandsons.

Flo N. Traywick, Virginia

Republican National Committeewoman; Vice Chair, Southern Region, Republican National Committee; Executive Committee, Republican National Committee; Republican Party of Virginia, elected in 1984. Chief Deputy Commissioner, Department of Aging. Member of the Executive Committees of both the Republican Party of Virginia and the Virginia Federation of Republican Women. Trustee of the Lynchburg Academy of Music. Member of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars from 1991 to 1993. Worked extensively on the Republican National Convention from 1976 to the present. A member of President Reagan's Virginia Steering Committee and a Founding Board Member of the Virginia School of Arts. Candidate for Congress in 1986 and House of Delegates in 1977.

Paul G. Vallas, Louisiana

In May 2007, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana's Superintendent of Education tapped Paul Vallas to serve as superintendent of the New Orleans Recovery School District (RSD). From 2002-2007, as CEO of the School District of Philadelphia, Vallas oversaw the largest school reform effort in public education's history. As CEO of Chicago Public Schools from 1995-2002, he is credited with establishing the largest after-school and summer reading programs in the country. Previously, he was for six years Chicago's Director of Budget and Revenue, and for five years the Executive Director of Illinois' Economic and Fiscal Commission. Vallas began his career as a teacher in elementary school and higher education. He served in the Illinois Army National Guard for twelve years, earning the rank of Captain, and was a senior instructor at the Illinois Military Academy. He holds undergraduate and master's degrees from Western Illinois University. He and his wife Sharon have three sons.

Fidel Vargas, California

Fidel A. Vargas is a Founding Partner of Centinela Capital Partners. Prior to joining Centinela, he was a Managing Director for TMG Advisors, an investment/consulting firm specializing in business development, strategic planning, and government affairs. Prior to TMG Advisors, Mr. Vargas was a co-founder and served as a Managing Director of Reliant Equity Investors. Mr. Vargas has also served as Managing Director of TMG Ventures, Mayor of Baldwin Park, California, and member on several public and private sector boards including Sponsors for Education Opportunities, Operation Hope, Inc., the Los Angeles County Water Districts, President Clinton's Advisory Council on Social Security, President Bush's Commission on Strengthening Social Security and The Commission on Presidential Scholars. Mr. Vargas graduated with honors from Harvard University with a B.A. in Social Studies and received his MBA from Harvard Business School with a concentration in Entrepreneurship and General Management.

FOUNDATION

THE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS FOUNDATION

The Presidential Scholars Foundation, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, is the sole entity authorized by the Commission on Presidential Scholars to expand and enhance the public-private partnership that makes the Presidential Scholars Program possible. The Foundation seeks to provide financial support for the program; develop and maintain an alumni society, the "Presidential Scholars Association"; and ensure the future ability of the Commission to recognize the outstanding young adults who are selected each year. In reaching out to individual donors as well as corporate and philanthropic America, the Foundation emphasizes the value of excellence in education and the national interest in encouraging high attainment by students in secondary school and after graduation. The members of this Foundation feel the Presidential Scholars Program is the highest national means to encourage new generations of students to reach for the stars. The Foundation continues to seek additional active members of its alumni society, its Board of Directors, and its various committees, in order to ensure future of this special program.

Each year the Foundation raises funds from public and private sources to provide housing, transportation, meals and above all, education and enrichment activities for the Scholars during the program's annual recognition events in Washington, D.C. Each year's agenda aims to provide Scholars with structured ways to make a difference for those in need in our Nation's Capital; access to important national and international figures; and the opportunity to wrestle with issues that concern America and the world. Speakers, seminars and organized community service are essential components of this program. Through the years, Scholars have had the opportunity to meet with many distinguished individuals, including Justices of the Supreme Court, Senators and Congressmen, members of the President's Cabinet and staff as well as the First Family, astronauts, poets, scientists, athletes, experts in international affairs, journalists, political strategists, and artists in a variety of disciplines. The generosity of the program's supporters will help continue this great tradition, and connect successive classes of Scholars with each other and the program as mentors, peers, and colleagues.

Those interested in further information about the Foundation's activities or charitable giving may visit the Foundation's website at www.presidentialscholars.org.

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS FOUNDATION

Honoring Outstanding Achievement by America's Youth

May 2009

Dear Members of the Presidential Scholars Class of 2009:

On behalf of the Presidential Scholars Foundation Board of Directors, the Presidential Scholars Alumni Association, and our generous patrons, I send our sincere congratulations to each of you. You have achieved a notable honor, and we are pleased to join President Obama, Secretary of Education Duncan, and the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars in celebrating your extraordinary accomplishments.

At this very early age (for some of you, as young as 14!), you already stand out among your generation as students and leaders worthy of recognition by the highest office in our Nation. In these fiercely competitive and challenging times, you were selected, not only for your achievements, which show admirable discipline, remarkable resilience, and unswerving commitment to fulfilling your promise, but also for the character and service you have brought to your communities. Your sheer being is extremely gratifying.

As it has for the past 44 years, the White House confers this award with the hope of encouraging you in your future endeavors, and with the expectation that your example will inspire others to strive for excellence. You are exemplary students and model citizens. You have made choices worthy of emulation by your peers. As you continue on your path, proudly bearing the title of **Presidential Scholar**, remember to maintain the highest standards and to help others reach them along with you.

In addition to a Presidential Medallion, you have been given life membership in the Presidential Scholars family. We trust that National Recognition Week will be a meaningful introduction to this extraordinary community. We also hope that you will choose to engage in your alumni organization and invest through the Presidential Scholars Association and its parent organization, the Presidential Scholars Foundation. This Foundation serves to network the growing Scholar community, ensure a strong alumni presence during each year's celebrations, and support the program financially.

In 2014, the Presidential Scholars Program will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Our goal is to have established a $1 million Endowment Fund. We invite you and your families to join us in this and other important endeavors to strengthen the program and ensure its longevity. To learn more, please visit our website at: www.presidentialscholars.org.

Our Board of Directors and committed donors, including corporate sponsors and invested individuals, are proud of you. We wish you the best as you pursue the next chapter of your lives, and hope you will stay connected with us in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

James E. Farmer
President

MEMBERS OF THE FOUNDATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James E. Farmer, President
Avery W. Gardiner, Vice President for Alumni Relations (1993 Scholar, ME)
Ralph Jahr, Secretary-Treasurer
Matthew T. Anestis (1991 Scholar, CT)
Sharon Sayles Belton
Scott A. Bundgaard
Christina DePaul
James M. Dubin
Michael A. Galiazzo
Susan J. Ganz
Aris Melissaratos
Stanley E. Taylor

THE ARTS

THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS

The National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA) was established in 1981 to identify emerging artists and assist them at critical junctures in their educational and professional development; and to raise the appreciation for, and support of, the arts in American society.

YoungArts® is NFAA's core program. Through YoungArts, NFAA annually grants award packages totaling up to $900,000 and makes available $3 million in scholarship opportunities to America's most outstanding high school senior artists through its Scholarship List Service (SLS). Each year up to 125 ARTS applicants are invited to ARTS Week – a full schedule of performances, master classes, exhibitions, readings, interdisciplinary activities and enrichment programs.

By participating in ARTS Week, these artists also have the chance to be named Presidential Scholars in the Arts. NFAA exclusively, and at the request of the Commission on Presidential Scholars, nominates up to 50 artists to be considered as Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

NFAA also supports professional and emerging artists through career development programs including its Fellowships in the Visual Arts program, the NFAA Astral Career Grants and the ARTS Alumni Awards for Achievement in the visual arts. The Foundation offers its ARTS Alumni additional opportunities to serve as summer interns at the Sundance Theatre Laboratory and the Utah Shakespearean Festival. NFAA continuously explores other internships and career entry programs.

NFAA is a publicly supported nonprofit, nongovernmental 501(c)(3) organization with headquarters in Miami, Florida. Corporations, foundations, individuals and public agencies support NFAA's programs and operating costs through contributions and underwriting.

NFAA

NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
INSPIRING YOUNG ARTISTS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE
youngARTS™

June 2009

Dear Presidential Scholars,

On behalf of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA) and youngARTS™, I would like to commend and congratulate you on your extraordinary achievements. The dedication and excellence you have consistently demonstrated will continue to serve you and our nation as you fulfill your role as the next generation of great American leaders.

It is the distinct honor of NFAA to operate as the exclusive nominating agency to the Commission on Presidential Scholars for the designation of Presidential Scholar in the Arts. The Commission's role, advocating and identifying excellence in the arts alongside academics, sends a strong message to our country that the arts are essential to our future, to America's cultural landscape and to our strength as a nation.

We, the friends and family of NFAA, extend our sincere congratulations to all of the Presidential Scholars on your remarkable achievements and wish you continued success in all of your endeavors.

Sincerely,

James M. Dubin
Chairman, Board of Trustees
National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts

777 BRICKELL AVENUE, SUITE 370 MIAMI, FL 33131 TEL: 305.377.1140 FAX: 305.377.1149 WWW.NFAA.ORG

THE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS ALUMNI SOCIETY

The year 2004 marked the Presidential Scholars Program's 40th anniversary. With great pride in the past and great enthusiasm for the future, that same year the Foundation's Alumni Relations Committee turned its attention to growing the Presidential Scholars Association, with the goal of engaging our distinguished alumni community in enhancing and sustaining this singular recognition program. The Association's mission is to "improve benefits for Scholars during National Recognition Week and beyond, to increase the public stature of the program and to encourage and celebrate true excellence in scholarship, public service, and artistic pursuits."

The Committee has joined the Foundation's Board of Directors in adopting an ambitious ten-year growth plan in anticipation of the program's 50th anniversary, in 2014. Already this outreach has resulted in successful Scholar reunions in Boston and Chicago; ongoing efforts to identify Class Chairs for the years 1964-present; development of distinguished alumni profiles and other enhancements to the Foundation's website; substantial fundraising among the parent and Scholar community in support of the program's continued growth and success; and increased participation and presentations by Alumni during our annual recognition events. We warmly invite the 2007 Scholars to join this effort. To contact us, to learn more or to become involved, visit the Scholars section of the Foundation's website, or send a message to our Vice President for Alumni Relations, Matt Anestis (1991 Scholar, CT), at MAnestis@presidentialscholars.org.

To the Class of 2009:

Congratulations Presidential Scholars Class of 2009!

Over the next few days, you will meet some extraordinary people. I hope you savor every moment of the experience and view it not as the reward for past accomplishments but as a challenge to do even more.

Some advice from Teddy Roosevelt (April 23, 1910) seems apt:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

Here's hoping you dare greatly!

Brian Abrams, 1996
Scholar, Colorado
Managing Partner, Row Capital

I would like to wish this year's scholars and teachers a hearty congratulations! Please enjoy the engaging events in your honor and know that this celebration in the fabulous city I now have the privilege of living in is just the welcome party into a community of remarkable folks. Capitalize on the relationships you build over this brief time, and make the most of being amidst the buzz. Oh, and give your teacher and parents both a hug. They deserve it. Best of luck as you go forth. Take with you from this recognition week a bit of energy, a bit of knowledge, a bit of humility, a bit of inspiration, and a new friend or two.

Kristiana Garcia, 1995
Scholar, New Mexico
Attorney, Jones Day

Dear U.S. Presidential Scholars of 2009,

Congratulations on this milestone. You've survived the ride to this special week, this place, this group of your peers. There's a world of trouble out there for you to work on healing. There's a world of wonders to engage with. There's a world of potential and of actualities, within you and outside of you. You're arriving on the threshold of adulthood at a time of unprecedented change on our planet. Make the most of it. You're here to help.

Thirty-four years ago I traveled to D.C. to be recognized as you are being recognized today. Here's what I've learned about the lasting effects of that experience: This honor isn't something to dismiss as a fluke, unless you choose to. Some of you may have sought it, and some of you probably just had it land on you, and some of you may still be wondering "Why me?" I still wonder that, from time to time. Nonetheless, it's real. For me, it's been a lasting source of encouragement, and I've really needed that from time to time.

You may be standing here for many others, or you may be standing here just for you; whatever your interpretation, it's not a mistake that you're here. You're not an impostor. You don't have to spend the rest of your life trying to justify this recognition. You don't have to live somebody else's dream for your life. You're called to be yourself. That's what your country and this world need from you.

Find your passion, live it, and allow that process to change you, and change you again, and again. Work and play well with others. Fall on your face and get up again; make mistakes, own them and rise above them. Live authentically and live fully, whatever you choose to do. You don't have to set the world on fire, but you do have to be you. Nothing short of that is going to fulfill you.

You can learn to live from the true center of yourself, and watch your passion change your world. It's worth it. I believe in you.

Marion R. Kee, 1975
Scholar, West Virginia
Owner, Beryllium Sphere,LLC

Looking back, 11 years later, to call myself a Presidential Scholar and to count myself among the nation's brightest remains one of the greatest privileges of my life. Enjoy National Recognition Week – I assure you the people you meet and fun you have will be unforgettable!

Virgil Calejesan, 1998 Scholar, Puerto Rico
Guest Service Agent, The Waldorf Towers

Dear Presidential Scholar of 2009,

Many congratulations on your wonderful achievement!

It's been six years since I sat in your seat, flipping through my NRW yearbook, surrounded by 140 faces I did not yet recognize. At the time, I had no idea what NRW would be like. I knew being named a Presidential Scholar was an incredible honor, but I did not really know what it would mean for me beyond a few days of excitement in DC.

Now, long after NRW, some of my closest friends are still from that group of fellow Scholars. And what's more, I have continued to meet Scholars from other years through the Presidential Scholars alumni network, many of whom have become dear mentors, colleagues, and friends. From management consultants to singer-songwriters, they are truly amazing and inspiring individuals, and I almost certainly would not have met them if it hadn't been for the common connection of Presidential Scholars.

So put down your yearbook, go introduce yourself to someone new, and make the most of your time at NRW. And when NRW finally comes to an end and you find yourself not wanting to say goodbye, take comfort in the fact that you will get to enjoy the benefits of being part of the Presidential Scholars family for years yet to come!

Rena Xu, 2003 Scholar, Pennsylvania
Associate, The Boston Consulting Group

Congratulations to the 2009 Presidential Scholars! This extraordinary distinction that has been awarded to you is recognition of the hard work and commitment to your endeavors evident throughout your high school years. This group of select individuals of which you are now a part is a wonderful source of inspiration for you, because as diverse as the accomplishments and talents are, you share a common goal, excellence. As you take part in the Presidential Scholar events in Washington, you will forge new friendships within this impressive group, as I did and continue to do - many of us are still close friends and remain in touch a decade later! Enjoy the events this week in DC, they will leave you with many wonderful memories. Congratulations!!

Lauren Malan, 1998 Scholar, Connecticut
Associate, Barclays Capital

This honor recognizes not just who you can become - but what you've already given to the world of yourself. So congratulations! Carry this recognition humbly, gracefully, and welcome to a worldwide family. We're proud and happy to have you among us.

Katherine Klem, 2004 Scholar, Kentucky
Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator, American Cancer Society

I hope your National Recognition Week will be as memorable as mine was. In short, it was the most thrilling week of my life. Never before or since have I been a member of a group of people with whom I truly belonged. I made friends from around the nation that I am still corresponding with over two decades later. I met and became pen-pals with a Yale-bound poet and future best-selling novelist; she published my first poem in one of her journals. Down the hall from my room at the Georgetown dorm was a prize-winning cellist; across the hall, our advisor, a soon-to-be Rhodes Scholar. It was a dream come true for me, and for my family, and for my favorite teacher too (it was the very first year that teachers were recognized at National Recognition Week).

The National Recognition Week experience deepened me intellectually in long-lasting ways. Looking at my bookshelf as I type this, nearly 25 years after I received the telegram from President Reagan announcing my selection as a Presidential Scholar, what do I find? The biography of U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel Bell, whose "A Nation At Risk" report released not long before we arrived in Washington remains a landmark study of American education. Bell's life and work remain an exemplar of public service and integrity. In 1983 at a Scholars' reception I was able to shake his hand and thank him. On the same shelf is Princeton historian Eric Goldman's book on President Lyndon Johnson, in which Goldman describes his inspiration for the Presidential Scholars program in the early 1960s and how Johnson's tireless zeal brought it to fruition.

In short, without my connection to this program, I wouldn't have the same understanding of American government or of the unsung champions of education within our culture. It is this combination of the past with the future that has made my Scholars experience timeless.

And the experience isn't limited to one week in Washington or books on a shelf. Since the mid-1990s I have been involved in efforts to develop an alumni association of Presidential Scholars. As a result, I get to network with brilliant and personable Scholars of different ages and backgrounds all over the nation and world, as we work together and build support for a program we respect and love. In this way, the National Recognition Week experience keeps going and growing, broadening and deepening our impact on society in ways beyond even what President Lyndon Johnson envisioned when he announced on April 16, 1964 that the Scholars program would "revolutionize American education."

I belong to quite a few alumni groups from my high school, college and graduate school days. But the Presidential Scholars Alumni Association is the one I am proudest of and the one I will do anything to support. It is, for me, home. I hope you emerge from your National Recognition Week with the same sense of belonging, and of pride in being a part of the Presidential Scholars Program – now, and for a long time to come.

Dr. John Knox, 1983 Scholar, Alabama

Associate Research Scientist, University of Georgia

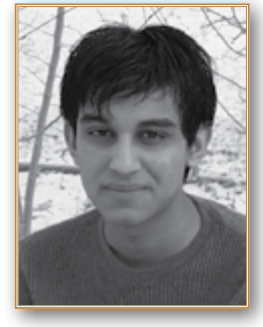
(Chairman, Distinguished Alumni Committee and Newsletter

Co-Editor, Presidential Scholars Alumni Association)

Melissa Apostolides
Executive Director

Simone Miranda Olson
Program Manager

Nicholas Golinvaux
Executive Advisor, 2006 Scholar (CO). Senior, Yale University. Major: Molecular Biology.



Aman Prasad
Executive Advisor, 2006 Scholar (ID). Senior, Cornell University. Major: Chemistry.

Caryn Grimstead
Program Manager

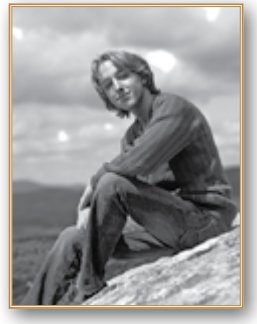
Kirsten Adam
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (IA). Sophomore, University of Notre Dame. Dual Major: Biology and Art History

Emily Ames-Ledbetter
Advisor, 2005 Scholar (MD). B.A., Wheaton College. Major: Anthropology.

Amanda Berbert
Advisor, 2007 Scholar (UT). Junior, Brigham Young University. Major: Neuroscience.

Kirsti Campbell
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (VA). Sophomore, University of Virginia. Major: Undeclared.

Abdi Farah
Advisor, 2005 Scholar (MD). B.A., University of Pennsylvania. Major: Fine Arts.



Christopher Fitzhugh
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (VT). Sophomore, Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering. Dual Major: Industrial Engineering and Business.

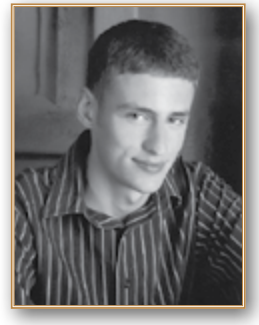
Kelly Fox
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (NH). Sophomore, Brown University. Major: Biology.

Alexander Katz
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (NH). Freshman, Princeton University. Major: Undeclared.

Justin Koh
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (CA). Sophomore, Harvard College. Major: Chemistry.

Emilie Lyons
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (KY). Sophomore, Vanderbilt University. Major: English.

Shalin Patel
Advisor, 2007 Scholar (MS). Junior, Rice University. Dual Major: Biochemistry and Cell Biology.



Travis Serebin
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (WI). Sophomore, University of Wisconsin, Madison. Major: Dual Major: Political Science and International Studies.

Ishna Sharma
Advisor, 2008 Scholar (GA). Sophomore, University of Miami. Major: Neuroscience.

Robert Waaser
Advisor, 2007 Scholar (IN). Junior, Carnegie Mellon University. Dual Major: Electrical/ Computer Engineering and Computer Science.

Linda Yao
Advisor, 2006 Scholar (WV). Senior, Harvard College. Dual Major: Applied Mathematics and Statistics.