



**Davidson Fellow  
Irene Sun**

(\$25,000 Scholarship Recipient)



**Personal Info**

Irene Sun  
Age: 16  
Indianapolis, Ind.

**School, College and Career Plans**

Irene was valedictorian of this year's graduating class of 816 seniors at Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis. She will begin Harvard this fall and is considering majoring in either American History or Molecular Biology. She is undecided about her career plans but is considering a profession in biotechnology.

**Davidson Fellows Submission** (*Science*)

In her project titled "Model-Based Gene Expression Analysis of Synovial Cells Under Impulsive Shock," Irene analyzed gene expression regulation experimentally and computationally using rheumatoid arthritis cells as model systems. Irene's work provides a deeper characterization of the disease, as well as clues to the treatment and control of rheumatoid arthritis.

**Biography**

Born in Changchun, China, Irene immigrated to the United States with her family at the age of 6. She quickly learned English and succeeded academically, skipping grades 2 and 6. Irene has studied classical piano since age 7. She placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the World Piano Competition and subsequently performed at the United Nations Center and Carnegie Hall.

Irene was co-editor of the *Spotlight*, the sixth-ranked high school newspaper in the United States. She was captain of three academic teams: Brain Game, White River Academic League and Academic Super Bowl. With her friend Ann Chi, she placed third in the Siemens-Westinghouse Competition for a computational chemistry project detailing the catalytic properties of a transition metal.

She was co-captain of her varsity golf team and a state qualifier.

This past summer, she was chosen as one of 54 students internationally for the Telluride Association Summer Program (TASP), an intensive seminar and living experience for gifted humanities students.

In May 2003, Irene was one of 20 in the nation to be chosen for the *USA TODAY* All-USA Academic First Team. Most recently, she was among the select group invited to the 2003 Adventures of the Mind Conference held in Seattle, Washington.

*Please see next page.*

**The Davidson Institute for Talent Development**

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## Davidson Fellow

### Irene Sun

*(Cont.)*

#### **Honors/Awards**

- 2003 Davidson Fellow
- 2003 USA Today, All-USA High School Academic First Team
- 2003 Telluride Association Summer Program (TASP)
- 2003 Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) Winner
- 2003 International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), Second Place
- 2003 Intel Science Talent Search, Semifinalist
- 2003 Zonta Young Women in Public Affairs Award
- 2003 Invited to Adventures of the Mind Conference
- 2003 National Merit Finalist
- 2002 Siemens-Westinghouse Competition, Third Place
- 2002 Advanced Placement Scholar with Distinction
- 2000 World Piano Competition, Third Place
- 2000 United Nations Center and Carnegie Hall Performances

#### **Community Activities**

Irene served as the sole student representative on two community committees that sought to improve education in her township, helping to obtain a \$5.4 million grant in the process.

She volunteers as a pianist at community functions, assisted with Freedom's Answer voter registration drive and has tutored mentally-disabled children through a community program called COOL.

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