

**Davidson Fellow**  
**August Siena Thomas**

(\$25,000 Scholarship Recipient)



**Personal Info**

August Siena Thomas

Age: 17

Montague, Massachusetts

**School, College and Career Plans**

A senior at Commonwealth College, the Honors College at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, August will receive her B.A. in May 2009. She is majoring in Linguistics and “The Ancient World,” a self-created major, with pending minors in Italian, Ancient Greek and Art History. August plans to pursue a Ph.D. to prepare for a career as a historical novelist.

**Davidson Fellows Submission** (*Literature*)

In her portfolio “Rewriting History,” August examines the ways in which personal and political histories are purposefully re-imagined and rewritten. Through a historical novel, literary reflection, drama and historical interpretation, she observes the manners in which interpretation of history remains fluid. August employs themes of power, betrayal, redemption and choice in her compelling stories, and reflects on how writers have used malice, ambition, flattery and imagination through the ages to shape the way history is written.

**Biography**

August has been involved with the Davidson Young Scholars program since she was nine years old. She attended public school until she was nine, and was homeschooled by her mother until she was 13. Her mother, a novelist, has always supported and encouraged August’s study of writing, literature and history, and inspired her to pursue this passion. August has studied and written about all of Shakespeare’s plays, and began writing a historical novel when she was 13.

When she was 11 and 12, August won Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth scholarships to take a courses at Elms College in Chicopee, MA. August received her high school diploma when she was 13, and began college at UMass at 14.

August has a passion for languages and travel that she expects will be a key element in shaping her future. She studies Italian, Latin, Ancient Greek, Etruscan and Turkish. She has just returned from a semester abroad at the Mediterranean Center for Arts and Sciences in Sicily, where in addition to Sicilian literature, art history, and Greek and Roman medicine, she studied Volcanology and Mediterranean Ecosystems.

August loves to cartoon, and adores reading E.F. Benson and P.G. Wodehouse.

*Please see next page.*



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(Cont.)

**Honors/Awards**

- 2008 Davidson Fellow
- 2008 Junior Year Inductee to Phi Beta Kappa
- 2008 Junior Year Inductee to Phi Kappa Phi
- 2007-Presenter, 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Massachusetts State-wide Undergraduate Research Conference (Topic: Unexpected Divinity: A Reinterpretation of the Mount Holyoke College Amphora)
- 2007 Sophomore Year Inductee to Eta Sigma Phi (the Classics Honors Society)
- 2006 - 2008 Commonwealth College International Scholar
- 2005 - 2008 University of Massachusetts-Amherst Dean's List
- 2004 - 2005 - National Merit Finalist
- 2003 - Medusa Mythology Exam - Gold Medal Apollo Award (second highest overall score) and Highest-scoring Essay
- 2002 - Medusa Mythology Exam - Gold Medal Minerva Award (highest overall score)
- 2002 - The President's Student Service Award in recognition of Outstanding Community Service
- 2000 - present – Davidson Young Scholar

**Community Activities**

August received the President's Student Service Award for her work at a local children's center at age 11. In 2006 her essay, *The Impossibility of Making Ends Meet: The Growing Gap between Food Stamps and Food Costs*, was published in *Children of Tomorrow: Cloning and Class*, an anthology of outstanding undergraduate essays at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. For several months in the spring of 2008, under the auspices of Marcello Baglioni, August was a mentor and English language volunteer for highly at-risk 11-to-15-year-olds at a middle school in Siracusa, Sicily.

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