

1998 Academic All-Stars



Eric M. Allen
Harrison



Elena Spencer
North Farmington



Anjali Shah
Plymouth Canton



David Weldendorf
Harrison

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family and community. "I see us returning to the religious values of our ancestors, while learning to respect diversity of interests and opinions without compromising what is right. I hope that our generation will strengthen its families. This will lead to stronger moral values and communities that are focused on improvement and service."

Martin said her parents have been her most influential teachers. "They have supported me by listening to my thoughts and questions and helping and encouraging me to accomplish what I want to do."

"They have shown their faith in me by never letting my childish questions go unanswered or believing that because I am young, I cannot be wise. They have made me first in their lives, and I want to thank them."

She is the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth (B.R.) King.

Afia Ofori-Mensa
Plymouth Canton High School
Canton

Afia Ofori-Mensa of Plymouth plans to major in management and English or Spanish at the University of Michigan.

She is a National Honor Society member whose academic honors include: National Achievement Scholar, LEAD Program (Leadership, Education and Development), National Recognition Program, INROADS, Presidential Scholars Candidate, and WXYZ-TV Brightest and Best.

Ofori-Mensa is a member of the school's brass quintet, a member of the Law Club, and a former drum major and section leader in marching band. She also co-directed a community theater production.

She expects her generation to "advance technology and society with our wealth of individuality and creativity."

She said her math teacher, Tom Cotner, influenced her life positively. "He taught me that it's good to think for myself, and he has shown genuine con-

cern for my success in and out of the classroom."

Ofori-Mensa is the daughter of Agnes and Charles Ofori-Mensa. Her siblings include Akua, 20, and Panin and Kuma, both 11.

Matthew Bright
Plymouth Salem High School
Canton

Matthew Bright of Plymouth will major in electrical engineering at either the University of Michigan or Stanford University.

His academic honors include: National Merit Finalist, Hoby Youth Leadership Delegate, and placing second in the state in the Calvin College German Competition. Bright also has enjoyed the honor of being named Student-of-the-Month.

He will not forget teacher Susan Schneider after he graduates. "She taught me that good literature has value in almost every part of life."

Bright has great expectations for members of his generation. "I expect both great improvement in technology and communication and also a return to more traditional family and community values."

Bright is the son of Ken and Linda Bright.

Robert D. Shereda
Churchill High School
Livonia

Robert Shereda of Livonia will study biology and biochemistry "most likely" at the University of Michigan. However, he is also considering Duke University, Northwestern and Notre Dame.

Shereda is a National Merit Scholarship Finalist, an Advanced Placement Scholar, a University of Michigan Regents-Alumni Scholarship recipient, Top 100 in the 1997 Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition, and a member of the Bentley Society upon acceptance to U-M.

He also has received the Livonia PTA's Outstanding Youth Award and is a three-time recipient of Churchill's Scholar-Athlete Award.

He is senior class treasurer for Student Council, treasurer of the National Honor Society, secretary for Students Against Driving Drunk, past president of French Club, and captain of the swim team. He is also a member of marching band and Churchill's Big Sibling Program and Spirit Club.

Shereda believes his generation will contribute significantly to society in the areas of high-technology science. "Great advances will be made with biological engineering, communications devices, and alternative energy sources. All of this will be accomplished with the mistakes of the past in mind; unlike our predecessors, we will make our advances in a moralistic and prudent fashion."

He says his 10th-grade Advanced Placement United States History teacher, Michael Hughes, was his biggest influence during high school. "He taught me the importance of working hard consistently rather than sporadically. He also showed me that the classroom becomes more interesting and actually more effective when approached with a sense of humor."

Shereda is the son of Daniel and Ellen Shereda and brother of Laura, 16, George, 13, and Mary, 9.

Joseph N. Novell
Clarenceville High School
Livonia

Joseph Novell of Farmington Hills will attend Wayne State University or the University of Michigan-Dearborn this fall. He has not decided upon a course of study.

Novell is a National Merit Scholarship Finalist and has been ranked first in his class. He said his generation's most important contribution to society would be "accepting people for who they are."

About English teacher Bobbi Gutman, Novell said: "She actually cared about kids and their education. She got involved in your personal life. She didn't nag you but said you had to get this done. She cared on an individual basis."

Novell is son of Richard and Nancy Novell and brother of Thomas, 15.

Eric M. Allen
Harrison High School
Farmington Hills

Eric M. Allen of Farmington Hills will major in computer science at Michigan Technological University after graduation.

He is a member of the National Honor Society and placed in the Top 100 in the Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition. He also earned three academic letters.

Allen was co-captain of the Quiz Bowl, participated in the Science Bowl and was a member of the State Champion TEAM March 1998. In addition, he did cross country and track.

He hopes his generation "introduces world peace and a cure for cancer."

Of his fifth-grade teacher, Allen says: "Mr. Stafiej had the biggest influence on me because he taught me the importance of good organizational skills."

Allen is the son of Clay and Patricia Allen and brother of Paul, 11.

Elena Spencer
North Farmington High School
Farmington Hills

Elena Spencer of Farmington Hills plans to study biology at the University of Michigan.

She is the recipient of the U-M Regents-Alumni Scholarship and departmental awards in Spanish and chemistry. She also earned three academic letters.

Spencer's expectations of herself and her generation are all-encompassing. "I expect that my generation will contribute an increase in open-mindedness to our society that will allow for changes that can improve our world in all aspects."

She credits teacher Carl Gippert, her high school's band director, with teaching her more than an appreciation for music. "He not only taught me how to excel as a musician but how to excel in

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