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**RIDGEWOOD TEEN AWARDED \$25,000 FOR INVESTIGATING COMMON TREATMENT FOR
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AND OSTEOPOROSIS
Deena Shefter to be Named a 2018 Davidson Fellow**

Ridgewood, N.J. – The Davidson Institute for Talent Development has announced the 2018 Davidson Fellows. Among the honorees is 17-year-old Deena Shefter of Ridgewood. Shefter won a \$25,000 Davidson Fellows Scholarship for her project, *Modeling the Effects of Vasoactive Intestinal Peptide on Pre-Osteoblast Differentiation*. She is one of only 20 students across the country to receive this honor.

“I am honored to have been named a Davidson Fellow and to be a member of this extraordinary group of accomplished people,” said Shefter. “Receiving this award is the best culmination of my research that I could have asked for. To me, Davidson Fellows are people who are able to not only think innovatively, but also make their ideas a reality and push past the boundaries of existing knowledge.”

Shefter’s fascination with diseases of the nervous system inspired her to investigate the connection between multiple sclerosis (MS) and osteoporosis, conditions that affect millions of people globally. Considering that osteoporosis and MS impact different organ systems, Shefter decided to study their commonalities. She discovered that peptide natural transmitter of nervous signals can be used as a potential treatment for patients diagnosed with osteoporosis and MS.

At Bergen County Academies, Shefter was a member of the National Honor Society and the National Spanish Honor Society. She was also involved in Health Occupations Students of America, and has played piano competitively for 12 years and has performed at Carnegie Hall. Shefter was the captain of her high school tennis team and enjoys watching tennis in her spare time.

In the fall Shefter will attend Columbia University to study neuroscience.

“We are thrilled to recognize the 2018 Davidson Fellows not only for their incredible projects, but also for the journey they forged to reach this point,” said Bob Davidson, founder of the Davidson Institute. “Every year I am amazed by the depth of the Fellows’ accomplishments. Through encouragement and recognition, the Davidson Institute for Talent Development anticipates that gifted students like these will be among the pioneers who will solve the world’s most vexing problems.”

The 2018 Davidson Fellows will be honored at a reception in Washington, D.C., on Friday, September 28.

The Davidson Fellows Scholarship program offers \$50,000, \$25,000 and \$10,000 college scholarships to students 18 or younger, who have completed significant projects that have the potential to benefit society in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, literature and music. The Davidson Fellows Scholarship has provided more than \$7.5 million in scholarship funds to more than 300 students since its inception in 2001, and has been named one of the most prestigious undergraduate scholarships by [*U.S. News & World Report*](#). It is a program of the Davidson Institute for Talent Development, a national nonprofit organization headquartered in Reno, Nev. that supports profoundly gifted youth.

About the Davidson Institute

Founded by Bob Davidson in 1999, the Davidson Institute for Talent Development recognizes, nurtures and supports profoundly intelligent young people, and provides opportunities for them to develop their talents to make a positive difference. The Institute offers support through a number of programs and services, including the Davidson Fellows Scholarship and the [*Davidson Academy of Nevada*](#). For more information about the 2018 Davidson Fellows, please visit www.DavidsonGifted.org/Fellows-Scholarship.

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High-resolution photos are available at www.DavidsonGifted.org/Fellows-Scholarship.