



# Davidson Institute eNews-Update

"Supporting our Nation's Brightest Young People"

**November 2014**

[What's New in Gifted Education](#) | [Davidson News](#) | [Legislative & Policy News](#) | [On the Web](#) | [In the News](#) | [In the Spotlight](#)

## What's New in Gifted Education



### Davidson Fellows Award Ceremony in Washington D.C.

On September 26, 2014, 20 young people were honored at the [Davidson Fellows](#) award ceremony for their work in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, literature, music and the category of outside the box. Davidson Institute for Talent Development co-founder Bob Davidson presented the awards at the 14th annual ceremony held at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. In recognition of their remarkable achievements, each of the [2014 Davidson Fellows](#) received a \$50,000, \$25,000 or \$10,000 scholarship.

### 2015 Davidson Fellows Scholarship

If you are a student who will be 18 or younger as of Oct. 1, 2015 and are working on a graduate-level project in any field of study, please consider applying for the 2015 Davidson Fellows scholarship. The Davidson Institute for Talent Development offers high-achieving young people across the country the opportunity to be named a 2015 Davidson Fellow, an honor accompanied by a \$50,000, \$25,000 or \$10,000 scholarship in recognition of a significant piece of work in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, music, literature, philosophy or outside the box. Applicants must submit an original piece of work recognized by experts in the field as significant and that has the potential to make a positive contribution to society. The scholarship may be used at any accredited college or university. The deadline to apply is Feb. 11, 2015. For additional information, please visit [the Fellows website](#).



### Broadcom MASTERS semifinalists and finalists announced!

The Broadcom Foundation and [Society for Science & the Public \(SSP\)](#) announced the [2014 Broadcom MASTERS award recipients](#). Awards include the Marconi/Samueli Award for Innovation, first and second place STEM awards that include funds for a summer camp experience, and the Rising Star awards, which include an all-expenses paid trip to 2015 Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Pittsburgh, Penn. Holly Jackson, 14, of San Jose, Calif., won the \$25,000 Samueli Foundation Prize in honor of overall STEM excellence, and for her study on the strength and

best application of stitches in sewing.

### Siemens Competition

The [Siemens Foundation](#) established the Siemens Competition in math, science and technology in

1999. This competition is for high school students and seeks to promote excellence by encouraging students to undertake individual or team research projects. It fosters intensive research that improves students' understanding of the value of scientific study and informs their consideration of future careers in these disciplines. Congratulations to the 2014 Siemens Competition [semifinalists](#)!

## Davidson News

### The Davidson Academy of Nevada - Apply for 2015-2016 School Year

The Davidson Academy of Nevada, a free public day school for profoundly gifted pupils on the University of Nevada, Reno campus, is now accepting applications for the 2015-2016 school year. Unlike many traditional school settings, the Academy's classes are not grouped by age-based grades, but by ability level, providing profoundly gifted young people an educational opportunity matched to their abilities, strengths and interests. To be eligible to attend the Davidson Academy, students must be at the middle or high school level across all subject areas, and score in the 99.9th percentile on IQ or college entrance tests, such as the SAT or ACT. For admission details, please visit [the Davidson Academy website](#). Applications are reviewed on a monthly basis with a final application deadline of April 1, 2015. Interested families can meet current students and parents, faculty and staff, network with others and ask questions at one of the Academy tours and information sessions. To RSVP for upcoming tours (**Nov. 21** and **Dec. 12**), visit [the tours page](#) of the website.



### Davidson Young Scholars Application Available

The national Davidson Young Scholars program provides FREE support, information and resources to families of profoundly gifted students. Through an online community and

annual event, Young Scholars have the opportunity to meet others with similar interests and abilities, utilize their talents to maximize their educational potential and make a difference in the lives of others. Parents collaborate with a team of knowledgeable Family Consultants who provide individualized services based on each family's unique needs, most often in the areas of educational advocacy and planning, social and emotional development and enrichment opportunities. Read [Young Scholar Success Stories](#) about how the Young Scholars program has helped make a difference in the lives of these students. The Davidson Young Scholars application deadline is the first of each month. Please visit the [website](#) to learn more.

### 2015 THINK Summer Institute

The Davidson Institute is seeking gifted teens who are interested in attending the 2015 THINK Summer Institute.

THINK is a three-week residential summer program on the campus of the University of Nevada, Reno where students can earn up to six college credits by completing two university courses. The 2015 THINK Summer Institute will run from July 11 through Aug. 1. Tuition is

\$3,400 and covers course credits, books and materials, room and board and the cost of planned activities. Need-based scholarships are available. To qualify, students must be 13 to 16 years old during THINK and must meet or exceed a composite SAT score of 1130 (excludes writing portion) or an ACT score of 26. The application deadline is April 1, 2015. Due to limited space availability, it is strongly encouraged that applicants submit their application before the deadline. Homeschooled students are eligible to apply. To learn more about THINK, please visit the [THINK website](#).



## Legislative & Policy News

**CALIFORNIA** - Parents in Turlock have started an online petition drive requesting junior high school honors or accelerated tracks for their students. Parents are concerned that the lack of challenging courses is stifling the academic and intellectual progress of gifted students. Source: [The Modesto Bee](#)

San Diego Miramar College is partnering with Mira Mesa High School to provide college credits to local high-achieving students. The college courses available will include calculus and political science. Source: [Times of San Diego](#)

**CONNECTICUT** - The College Regents are asking for \$75.6 million to reinforce security, start a scholarship program, and strengthen academic advising in the college and university system during the next two fiscal years. Of the \$75.6 million, \$8 million will go towards the expansion of early college programs. Source: [Hartford Courant](#)



**FLORIDA** - The Orange County school board expressed support for a policy that would allow new magnet school programs to launch as soon as 2017. The policy aims to increase the number and type of magnet programs available from elementary to high school. Source: [Orlando Sentinel](#)

**GEORGIA** - The Dougherty County School Board heard a proposal to relocate the middle school gifted program from Merry Acres Middle School to Robert Cross Middle School. The move would place gifted students in a magnet school environment and allowing both schools to better utilize space on school grounds. Source: [Albany Herald](#)

**MASSACHUSETTS** - At the state of the schools address, Worcester Superintendent announced plans to present a plan for an academy at Doherty Memorial High School for advanced learners. Source: [News Telegram](#)

**MICHIGAN** - In the fall of 2015, the Academically Talented Youth Program based at Western Michigan University, will begin offering math and English language arts classes to seventh and eighth grade students in the Kalamazoo region with qualifying ACT and SAT scores. The program will allow middle school students to begin high school level work. Source: [MLive](#)

**MINNESOTA** - Makato Public Schools' new talent development program has been awarded a \$300,000 grant under the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education program. This grant will be used to enhance the talent development program, including expansion of services to diverse student populations, serving twice exceptional students and providing teacher training. Source: [Mankato Free Press](#)

**NEW JERSEY** - Cedar Grove school board is discussing changes to their Gifted and Talented Program by lowering the eligibility scores in order to increase the number of students participating in the program. Source: [NorthJersey.com](#)

**NEW YORK** - In an effort to increase diversity in city gifted programs, 28,000 postcards with information on how to apply to gifted kindergarten programs were mailed to families in The Bronx and Brooklyn. Source: [Daily News](#)



**PENNSYLVANIA** - The Pennsylvania State Board of Education, as reported by PAGE, has passed recommendations such as having more instruction for gifted learners as well as increasing the resources that are put into gifted programs throughout the state. Source: [PAGE](#)



**TEXAS** - DeSoto Independent School District has received a \$7.8 million U.S. Department of Education Gear Up grant to serve a group of sixth- and seventh-grade students during the next seven years as they move through high school and their first year of college. Source: [Dallas Morning News](#)

Parents in the Lake Travis school district have formed a group to advocate for the needs of gifted students. At a recent Board of Trustees meeting, this advocacy group expressed concerns regarding a decrease in services for gifted students. Source: [Statesman](#)

**VIRGINIA** - A group of business leaders in South Hampton Roads is urging local school officials to create a Governor's School for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Currently, there are 19 governor's schools in Virginia that instruct gifted students throughout the academic year on specialized topics, such as art, government, science and technology. None of these schools specifically focus on teaching students how to innovate through engineering or turn their ideas into successful companies. Thus, the newly proposed school would be the first of its kind in the state, offering students a full-time experience. Source: [The Virginian-Pilot](#)

**WYOMING** - A group of parents in Natrona County are advocating for the development of a charter school for high-achieving students with the goal of creating a K-8 option structured to accommodate students at their current ability levels. Source: [Casper Star Tribune](#)



How gifted-friendly is your state? Find out on the [Davidson Gifted Database State Policy Map](#).  
If you know of new legislation, please contact the [Communications Team](#).

## On the Web

### Gifted Exchange Blog

Read Laura Vanderkam's take on all things gifted. One of her recent posts, [Screen Everyone](#), discusses how schools screen their students for giftedness.

### Featured Articles and Resources

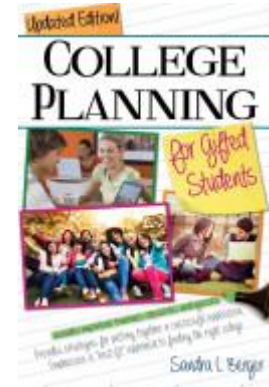
The Davidson Gifted Database at [www.DavidsonGifted.org/DB](http://www.DavidsonGifted.org/DB) is a gateway to resources for and about gifted students. [See what's new!](#)

## Articles

In this Tips for Parents, Catherine Gruener discusses [Executive Functioning - what it is, why we need it, and how parents can support their children's development](#).

The Davidson Institute team wrote this book review of [College Planning for Gifted Students](#) by Sandra L. Berger.

This article is a book review of [Up From Underachievement: How teachers, students, and parents can work together to promote student success](#) by Diane Heacox.



## Resources

[Center for Talented Youth \(CTY\) Cogito Research Award](#), established in 2013 by Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth and Cogito, is for middle- and high-school students who conduct research in science, technology, engineering and math.

[Enhancing and Practicing Executive Function Skills with Children from Infancy to Adolescence](#) provides activities suitable for students of different ages and can be completed in sections focused on specific age groups.

[Fund for Teachers](#) recognizes and supports teachers as they identify and pursue opportunities around the globe that will have the greatest impact on their practice, the academic lives of their students and on their school communities.



The [James Dyson Foundation](#) focuses on improving problem solving skills for young engineers through the use of design and hands-on experience. The James Dyson foundation also offers an award that celebrates, encourages and inspires the next generation of design engineers.

The [Montage Memory Makers Scholarship](#) is for students ages 13 to 17 who are providing creative solutions to community needs.

In [Why Smart Kids Worry: And What Parents Can Do to Help](#), author Allison Edwards guides readers through the mental and emotional process of where children's fears come from and why they are so hard to move past.

[Suggest a Resource](#)

[Suggest an Article](#)

## In the News

- November 5 - *The Washington Post*, [Wild ideas for fixing gifted education](#) (Jay Mathews)
- October 28 - *Huffington Post*, [Open Invitation to Lisa Ling and CNN](#) (Erin Zahradka)
- October 21 - *Washington Post*, [How to expand who gets gifted services](#) (Jay Mathews)
- October 20 - *The Hechinger Report*, [More AP courses slated for major overhaul](#) (Emmanuel Felton)
- October 20 - *Lynchburg News and Advance*, [Early college sparks students' intellects, but cost can be a barrier](#) (Michael Neary)
- October 20 - *Picayune Item*, [Defining Your Children's Intelligence](#) (Susan Spiers)
- October 17 - *Purdue Exponent*, [Purdue education researchers look for ways to challenge gifted students](#) (Haley Checkley)
- October 17 - *Hometownlife.com*, [Potential grows in children through nurturing interests, strengths](#) (Deirdre Brady)
- October 17 - *DNAinfo*, [How to Get Your 4-Year-Old Ready for Gifted and Talented Admissions](#) (Amy Zimmer)
- October 16 - *New York Daily News*, [Nurture the gifted, don't resent them](#) (Sabrina Truong)
- October 13 - *Washington Post*, [The value of gifted education programs](#) (Jay Mathews)
- October 10 - *USA TODAY College*, [Bachelor's degree before driver's license: The life of a child prodigy](#) (Bria Granville)
- October 10 - *Gifted Challenges Blog*, [Stop misrepresenting gifted education research](#) (Gail Post)
- October 8 - *Washington Post*, [Why gifted education doesn't make sense](#) (Jay Mathews)

October 7 - *Washington Post*, [The actual value of a college education](#) (Richard Cohen)  
October 7 - *Huffington Post*, [Are We Missing the Mark If We Support Our Children's Passions?](#) (Daniel B. Peters)  
October 6 - *Indianapolis Star*, [Why separate classes for gifted students boost all kids](#) (Stephanie Wang)  
October 3 - *The Atlantic online*, [When Anxiety Hits at School](#) (Lucy Dwyer)

Discuss these stories and more on the [Gifted Issues Discussion Forum](#).

## In the Spotlight

### **Romi Yount A 2014 Davidson Fellow Making a Difference**

*Romi Yount is the first person named a Davidson Fellow for playing the guzheng. She feels performing music has been an essential part of her bilingual, bicultural upbringing. Romi hopes that people can walk away from her performances feeling open to new possibilities, and more closely connected to Chinese culture.*

#### **Tell us about your Davidson Fellows Portfolio and what kind of impact it has on society.**

"Mountain and Water" is a Chinese classical music masterpiece composed more than 2,000 years ago about the deep friendship between a musician and his friend. It was also the first piece in my Davidson Fellowship portfolio, played on the guzheng, (Chinese table harp), which I have been studying for 10 years. Ancient instruments are proof that music can transcend time. Stories like "Mountain and Water" resonate with all of us, but someone must play them for the music to stay alive. That's what I do. My portfolio included musical pieces throughout China's history, from the Warring States period to the 21st century, as well as my improvisation. Last year after a performance, an American audience member asked, "Why isn't Chinese music catchy for me like Western music is?" I think that was a great question, and I can see why someone who's never heard a guzheng before may not be used to its sound and style. It's like being exposed to a foreign language or food for the first time. I believe that preserving diversity in music is just as vital as in everything else. By telling the stories about the guzheng, its music and my journey of studying it, my work excavates and preserves sounds whose origins lie deep in the past and far away from the Western music world. I hope to introduce more people to new artistic possibilities, promote musical diversity and connect with audiences across cultures.



#### **Please describe your academic setting and some positive experiences with mentors.**

I study the guzheng at the Chinese Art and Music Center in San Francisco. It's a little hole-in-the-wall music shop/studio sharing the space with an auto parts store (now also a curtain store). It's a cramped non-conventional place but I love going there because of my incredible teacher, Ms. Gangqin Zhao. I first saw her play the guzheng at a concert when I was 7 years old, and I was instantly hooked. She has been teaching me since then. Her kindness and patience have been the rock that supports me through my artistic journey. She made learning guzheng so enjoyable that I always strive to do the best I can. I am also very grateful to my Western music teacher, Ms. Susan Kennedy at the Chinese American International School. She taught me the fundamentals about music in a very holistic way, always tying music to a story, a tradition, a culture, or a place, and integrating it with dance movements, poetic expressions, colorful costumes, and calligraphy. Her approach shaped my understanding of music, and inspired me to tell stories through my project. Both of my mentors were instrumental in helping me develop the passion for music, pursue it and get lost in it.

## Closing Thought

*"Yes, we need to focus on our children's strengths and interests, and yes, we want our children to live without excessive hardship and pain, but we also need to focus on developing resilience, persistence, perseverance, and what is being called grit by many experts. Grit means not giving up in the face of adversity -- an essential skill for being successful in life."*

~ [Daniel Peters, Ph.D.](#)

[Are We Missing the Mark If We Support Our Children's Passions?](#)

Author of [Make Your Worrier a Warrior](#)

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**Davidson Institute for Talent Development**

*Supporting our nation's brightest young minds.*

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