



## The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DAMON L. MCMILLAN



Written by AMA staff (01/1995); Transcribed by JS (06/2008), Reformatted by JS (10/2009)

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*The following was published in the January 1995 issue of Model Aviation magazine. Damon was a 1994 Charles Hampson Grant Scholarship winner.*

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Damon L. McMillan of Redwood Valley, California, received \$7,000 to help with expenses at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He plans to major in aerospace engineering. As a student at Ukiah High School, Damon graduated with a 3.9 grade point average (GPA) and ranked fifth in a class of 318. He obtained scores of 630 verbal and 760 math on the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT).

While attending high school, Damon was a member of the California Scholarship Federation for three years. He was fourth in the State Science Olympiad, and his was the second-best project in the summer science program. He won letters for academics and music.

Other school activities included the Academic Decathlon for one year; the Carpe Diem Society, a literary club, for three years; jazz, concert and marching bands for seven years; and aviation ground school plus a few flying lessons. Damon was a National Merit Finalist and his school's highest scorer in the American Mathematics Competition.

He held down a part-time job as a computer filer and package shipper for a costume company. Usually he worked for 10 hours a week.

A well-rounded individual, Damon has interests in backpacking, gardening, fixing up cars, and building things like boats. He even gave a go at building his own full-size airplane a while back, though he says he did not come close to finishing it. He attended a summer science/engineering program at the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in 1993 and the International Aerospace Camp in 1992.

In community activities, he has worked backstage for the local ballet company for many years; he has been in some of the company's performances, and he has tutored other high school students in the past four years. Damon was involved in the 24-Hour Relay, a fund-raiser for sports programs, and he has played in a trombone quartet for the community.

Damon has been flying model aircraft since the seventh grade, during which time he has built more than 15 models. In the past three years, he has built the Goldberg *Extra*, *Pole Star* flying wing from plans, *Robinhood 63*, *UltraSport 60* from plans, *Bumble Vee 49*, *Junior 50* helicopter, *Silhouette* slope sailplane, *Talon* slope sailplane, *Chuperosa* thermal sailplane, *Jouster* thermal sailplane from plans, and a flying wing sailplane of his own design. In this time, his interests have changed from mechanically sophisticated aircraft, such as the helicopter, to aerodynamically sophisticated sailplanes. He also has built a few hovercraft of his own design.

While Damon was building powered models, he belonged to the Ukiah Propbusters club. He won the first fun-fly he entered and placed second in Sport Scale in the club's annual Scale competition.

The award of the AMA/Charles Hampson Grant Scholarship to Damon is important in his being able to attend MIT, which offers one of the best aeronautics/astronautics programs in the country, as a full-time student. He notes that his dreams have been molded by model aviation.

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