
Biography of CHRISTINA JO MEKINA

Written by AMA staff (01/03)

Transcribed by JS (02/08)

The following was published in the January 2003 issue of Model Aviation magazine. Christina was a 2002 AMA Scholarship winner.

Christina Jo Mekina, a graduate of Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, has been awarded a Tom Hutchinson Scholarship in the amount of \$800. She is attending Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, studying animal science.

Christina was a member of her school's color guard for four years, accompanying the marching band and complementing the performance with flags and dance. She was chosen to be captain of the guard her senior year. Christina is also a member of the concert band, playing flute.

She was an active member of a student group called Bigs and Littles, whose purpose is to orient new students. She also volunteered her time during study halls and after school to tutor students. One of three sports editors on her senior yearbook staff, Christina was responsible for writing articles, designing page layouts, and editing photographs for the section.

In her sophomore year, Christina participated in the FIRST Robotics Competition (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), an international competition for high school students. Her team designed, prototyped, and built a robot that competed in the regional contest in Chicago and the Nationals in Orlando, Florida. Corporate sponsors of this competition included such names as NASA, General Electric, and Motorola.

Other extracurricular activities included collecting clothing and canned goods for the needy at Christmas, Latin Club, the Antiquitas Club where she attended presentations about historical Roman times, and church youth-group activities and retreats.

Christina has been recognized numerous times for her participation in softball. The starting pitcher her junior and senior years, she boasted a winning record. She was chosen as captain of the team her senior year and received the Scholar Athlete Award for outstanding academic achievement while participating in sports. Christina was also recognized in a district-wide program honoring student athletes for their academic achievements.

Christina's aeromodeling experience has centered around Free Flight, primarily Hand Launched Gliders and Catapult Gliders. Her first airplane was a small version of a Catapult Glider, designed by her father, called *Straight Up*. She graduated to full-size versions of the gliders as she grew, often competing in combined Junior/Senior events with her older sister Elizabeth. "She often beat me, but I continued to fly and have fun," Christina wrote.

As a junior, Christina began to build and fly Hand Launch Gliders. "I found I had a pretty good arm compared to some of the boys, probably the result of my softball activities in school." She has often competed in the Junior/Senior Night Glider Fly at the Nationals in Muncie, Indiana and enjoyed it very much.

“To me, hand-launch and catapult gliders are fun and represent what Free Flight modeling is all about; flying free, hopefully in a thermal, and competing for time, not necessarily against other competitors, but against the clock.”

The Academy wishes you success in your endeavors, Christina.