



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of BRITTANY GILLOW



Written by AMA staff (04/2007); Transcribed by JS (02/2008), Reformatted by JS (08/2009)

The following was published in the April 2007 issue of Model Aviation magazine. Brittany was a 2006 AMA Scholarship winner.

Brittany Gillow of Christiansburg, Virginia, is the recipient of a Charles Hampson Grant scholarship for \$4,800. A graduate of Christiansburg High School, Brittany had a 4.18 grade-point average (out of a possible 4.25). She is attending Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, majoring in biomedical engineering.

Brittany was a member of the National Honor Society, Beta Club, Quill and Scroll Society, Women in Science, was the treasurer of the Environmental Club, and was in the Drama Club. She was the editor of *The Demon's Voice*, her school's newspaper, participated in the Science Olympiad, and worked as the activity director's aid at the Port City Plantation Assisted Living facility.

Brittany attended educational summer programs including North Carolina's Legislative School for Youth Leadership Development where she received the Howard B. Chapin Award for excellence in leadership. She participated in North Carolina's School of Science and Mathematics Summer Ventures program where she studied abstract methods to mathematical problem solving and archeology.

Recreational and competitive soccer have played a large part in Brittany's life. She began playing when she was seven, and at age 14, she began refereeing youth soccer matches and was the captain of the varsity soccer team in high school.

She participated in the Mountain Academic Competition Conference for three years. "MACC involves a healthy academic competition between local schools in an amiable environment," she wrote, "where students and coaches alike may interact on a high intellectual level. MACC has been the highlight of my past two years in high school, for to me MACC symbolizes a love for academia as well as for working as a team to achieve a common goal."

In addition to refereeing soccer, Brittany has worked at Ben and Jerry's as a "scooper" and at Sheetz in Radford, Virginia.

As a young girl, Brittany went with her father and brother to the flying field. "When the size of my hands caught up with my interest in flying and I could hold the transmitter on my own," she wrote, "I joined the AMA and occasionally accompanied my father to the Wilmington Model Flying Club's (WMFC) site where he flew. One day I remarked to my father there were no 'girl' planes, which led him to building one for me: an old *Falcon 56*, complete with Disney character

co-pilots and a lilac color scheme.” That was when Brittany tried her hand at flying for the first time.

She became involved in the WMFC-sanctioned fly-ins, operating the concession stand to help raise funds for the club. When her family moved to Virginia, she joined the Montgomery County Model Airplane Club. The club participates in indoor flying during the blustery winter months and she flies an E-Flite helicopter.

Brittany has experimented with rocketry, building her own engines from scratch and developing her own propellants.

“I crafted two types of propellant for the engines, the first was composed of sulfur, potassium nitrate, and charcoal, and the second of sulfur, potassium nitrate, and powdered sugar,” she wrote. “When tested, the black powder failed but the white powder worked phenomenally. I packed two more charges using the white powder, adding an ejection charge to the engine. During the first launch, my rocket had a great flight, reaching approximately 1,200 feet. However, the ejection charge failed and the rocket took a nosedive straight into the ground.”

She created a 3D replication of an Edge .40 for a CAD drafting course, after constructing the model.

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