



## Biography of Samantha Kirk

Samantha Kirk, a gifted writer and aspiring folklorist from Frederick, Maryland, will stay close to home this fall when she enters the University of Maryland: College Park as a freshman. Her college choice was guided by her passion for folklore and her aspirations of researching and cataloging tribal religions as a folklorist after she completes her studies. Considering some of her recent achievements, she may also have a promising future as an essayist and poet.

“I chose University of Maryland because of its strong programs in folklore and anthropology, and because two of my favorite high school teachers are Maryland graduates,” said Samantha. She plans a double major: English with a focus in folklore, and anthropology.

Samantha spent her first two years of life in Fallon, Nevada, before her family moved east and settled in Maryland. She attended North Frederick Elementary School, Monocacy Middle School, and Governor Thomas Johnson High School.

During high school Samantha took the most rigorous classes available to her, including honors classes, five Advanced Placement courses, and dual-enrollment classes at Frederick Community College. While in high school, Samantha’s favorite classes were in the humanities—she was especially fond of English and philosophy. Her love of reading and writing blossomed when she began to read at age 3, and has continued to this day.

Samantha took the PSAT/NMSQT® twice and qualified as a National Merit Scholar. The PSAT/NMSQT, along with her lifetime of reading and an SAT® study guide, prepared her for the challenges of the SAT. Knowing that she wanted to pursue an English major, Samantha was satisfied with her scores of 800 on the verbal section of the SAT I, and 770 on the SAT II: Writing Subject Test. Samantha is pleased about the new writing section on the SAT.

“Many of my friends returned from their first year in college and told me they realized they couldn’t write after taking Composition 101. A writing section on the SAT will help to reshape the high school curriculum with a focus on writing, and I think that’s important,” said Samantha.

She has explored her passion for writing outside the classroom as well. She was selected for a weeklong poetry workshop at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania, where she spent her days learning about and writing poetry, and her evenings at readings by national writers. Samantha recently won a Lions Club writing competition about patriotism, for which she received a savings bond and recognition at an honors dinner.

Samantha is also a talented orator. She was a member of the local debate team throughout high school, and was honored as a state quarterfinalist in Maryland’s Lincoln–Douglas Debate during her junior year. She also competed for three years in the American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest, making it to the national quarterfinals during her junior year.

In her spare time, Samantha participates in the Japanese martial art of bujutsu, which she says she likes because “I’m not sports-inclined, but I’m good at this. With martial arts you have to use your head. You also have to learn some basic Japanese and basic philosophy.”

Throughout high school and during summer breaks, Samantha worked part-time as a receptionist at her local church. She also volunteered through a school-based Big Brother/Big Sister program as a mentor to students at a local school for developmentally disabled students.

Samantha is an only child to parents Heidi and William Kirk, who originally hail from Maryland. For eight years, her father served as an aviation electrician’s mate for the United States Navy. He currently works as a computer programmer/analyst for a company that makes ceramic parts for wireless communications products. Her mother “has done everything,” according to Samantha. “She’s worked as a car salesman, a freelance journalist, and a veterinary technician.” Today she focuses on her fiction and poetry writing.