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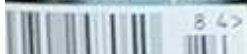
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adators' Dan Ellis

CLASS ACT

AnnaSophia Robb

Freshman year can be hard enough without balancing an acting career with school, but AnnaSophia doesn't plan on slowing down.

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A portrait of AnnaSophia Robb. She is sitting on a white, modern-style chair, leaning back with her right hand behind her head and her left arm resting on the chair's back. She is wearing a black long-sleeved top, blue jeans, and black and white Converse sneakers. She has long, wavy blonde hair and is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is a solid orange color with several large, white, concentric circles of varying sizes scattered across it. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting her features and the texture of her clothing.

AnnaSophia
Robb

by laura edwards
photos by wayne armstrong



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//coverstory//

annasophia robb

Just 15 years old, actress AnnaSophia Robb has already starred in some big movies, but her contributions go way beyond the big screen. This summer AnnaSophia visited India and learned that even the smallest actions can make a big difference.



"I remember my first high school moment," said 15-year-old actress AnnaSophia Robb.

She, like thousands of other freshmen around the country started out the school year in a new school with new people, feeling kind of like a small fish in a big pond.

"I was walking through one of the hallways after school and all the football guys were there. They're all huge and they had their shoulder pads on," the 5'1" (and a half) blonde explained. "I felt so intimidated because here I am this little freshman just trying to get out of the hallway because they're all messing around and being rowdy and stuff. I didn't want to get crushed by them!"

In many ways, AnnaSophia is your average high school student. She does her homework each night, hangs out with friends and runs on the cross country team. But when AnnaSophia decided to pursue acting at the age of 9, she added a whole new element to her life. Now she has to balance school with everything that comes with being a rising star.

"[I have to balance] going to school, trying to do homework, trying to read a script and do interviews on the phone and all that," AnnaSophia said. "It's hard to balance but it's worth it."

For AnnaSophia, it's all worth it because she loves acting so much. Even as a small child, she enjoyed using her imagination and being in front of people.

"I'd always play pretend and I loved being in the school plays and musicals even though they were for older kids," AnnaSophia said.

All that imagination comes in handy as AnnaSophia takes on each of her movie roles. Whether she's playing gum-chomping

Violet in "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," adventure-seeking Leslie in "Bridge to Terabithia," or super-powered alien Tia in the upcoming "Race to Witch Mountain," AnnaSophia pours all she can into each character.

"Probably one of the hardest parts, but most satisfying too, is just trying to find and create a character that's real and then just put on that character's clothes and really get into the mind set," AnnaSophia said.

All her hard work is paying off and everyone from producers and critics to fans and moviegoers are starting to take notice. AnnaSophia has been nominated for several awards and won the Young Artist Award for Best Leading Actress in 2008. But while it may be her big smile that captivates people on the silver screen, it's AnnaSophia's big heart that really stands out.

AnnaSophia is actively involved in volunteering and giving back. She realizes the impact we all can have on the world, no matter how big or small our actions.

"Show people that you care about them because we really need to start welcoming everybody around us not just our friends and family," AnnaSophia said. "We need to start opening up to the world and become one community."

One of the organizations AnnaSophia is most involved with is the Dalit Freedom Network. She and her family had the opportunity to travel to India last summer on behalf of the organization. Though she had seen pictures of and read about India before, actually visiting the country was an amazing experience for AnnaSophia.

"I remember the first time I got off the plane, I just felt the humidity and this interesting smell," AnnaSophia said. "It's kind of spicy, sweet, also mixed with trash."

"Show people that you care about them because we really need to start welcoming everybody around us not just our friends and family."

It's great and not so great at the same time.”

The contrasting sides of India continued to make an impact on AnnaSophia throughout the trip. So many things she saw had good and evil, beauty and ugliness, joy and sadness.

“India has such history and such beauty next to such devastation and complete poverty,” AnnaSophia said. To her, this contrast was nowhere more evident than at India's most famous landmark, the Taj Mahal.

“The Taj Mahal is so beautiful. It's gorgeous — sort of white and golden, and it's practically glowing with inlaid semi-precious stones,” AnnaSophia said. “Then you walk right out and there's kids running around without any clothes and there's trash everywhere and it smells. It's really sad.”

One of the highlights of AnnaSophia's trip was getting to visit some of the schools that the Dalit Freedom Network has built. Compared to schools in America, these schools were small, bare and under-supplied, but as AnnaSophia witnessed, the Indian children are delighted with their schools.

“The kids when we got [to the school] had these brightly colored flags and they were all wearing their little uniforms and they were so proud of their school and happy and welcoming,” AnnaSophia said. “We thought we were coming to help them and to help out and they just shared so much of their spirit with us and were so hospitable.”

So why would a girl who already has so many things going want to take the time to help children halfway around the world? For AnnaSophia, the answer is simple — you never know what kind of difference you can make.

“[My family and I] sponsor a couple of children in India and you never know, if those children get a good education and grow up, they could become the prime minister of India. They could create a cure for cancer,” AnnaSophia said. “Who knows what the potential of our world is, but we all need to help each other.”

“Who knows what the potential of our world is, but we all need to help each other.”

