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## Lehigh Student Receives Thornton Tomasetti Scholarship

August 12, 2008 - Elizabeth Bava is the first recipient of a \$15,000 Thornton Tomasetti Foundation scholarship at **Lehigh University** in Bethlehem, Pa. She will formally receive her scholarship at an awards dinner on November 7, at the Candlelight Inn in Bethlehem.

Elizabeth, a first year student in the new concentrated 10-month **Master of Engineering program**, began her graduate studies in July and expects to earn her degree next May.

She was chosen for the scholarship because of her high academic standards and was considered a good match because of her deep interest in building design, said Jennifer Gross, director of the Master of Engineering in Structural Engineering Program at Lehigh University.

Elizabeth was also one of four students selected for a week-long "externship at Thornton Tomasetti;" she and two other engineering students are scheduled to shadow engineers in our New York office next week. Another Lehigh student has been "externing" in the Newark office this week.

"Each of the students listed where they wanted to go and Thornton Tomasetti was Elizabeth's top choice, so that was another match," Gross said.

Elizabeth, a native of Denver, Colo., earned her bachelor's degree in civil engineering at the **University of Arizona in Tucson**, where she graduated summa cum laude. "I wanted a change of scenery," she said. At college, she solidified her interest in structural engineering through structural research on cast components for hollow structural steel, truss connections using a finite element computer program; the design of a three-manhole sewer system in collaboration with a surveying team and engineering internships.

"I love big buildings and figured there would never be a boring day as a structural engineer," she said. "You have to use your head and think about what you're doing."

In volunteer work, she has coached and aided athletes at the Special Olympics events and tutored elementary school students in math and reading.

The Thornton Tomasetti Foundation, a tax-exempt, non-profit organization established in February, has two primary missions including funding fellowships, scholarships and internships for undergraduate students, and those planning to pursue graduate studies in

building engineering, design or technology and providing financial support for individuals and organizations pursuing philanthropic activities related to building engineering, design or technology. Key elements of the program are college scholarships, traveling internships, and grants to, and partnerships with nonprofit organizations.