

Adam Kormushoff, a 2001 recipient, submitted the following essay:

The Macedonian culture is one filled with a rich past and a struggling, but unified present. The Macedonians are currently at war, but so far, the war looks promising for them. Macedonia has always struggled to gain its pride and individuality from others. The Macedonian people have overcome this and have found individuality with themselves and their country. I have always prided myself in being a Macedonian. My brother and I have shirts that have the Macedonian flag and symbols on them. We love our heritage and deeply respect it. What makes me even more proud is that some of the most prominent people ever have been of Macedonian descent, such as Alexander the

“I AM TRULY PROUD OF MY HERITAGE”

Alexander the Great, Cleopatra, Mother Teresa These people is read about in books that tell of all their accomplishments and all their successes. They are known throughout the world and have impacted the world in numerous ways. Alexander the Great was one of the greatest and most charismatic leaders ever. He almost took over every country and all the land that was known of back then. Also, we have Mother Teresa, perhaps one of the most omniscient persons ever to live. She was a wonderful person and considered to have healing power unheard of. Growing up, I had always been told that I was 50% Macedonian. Hearing this throughout the years has made me want to learn more about my heritage. None of my friends are Macedonian, but some are Greek. So therefore, whenever I was asked about my cultural background, no one had heard of Macedonia. Every time someone would ask me, I would tell him or her everything I knew about it until they told me to stop. I wanted people to know about and respect my culture. I was in a way, a messenger of Macedonia throughout my middle school and high school years. I am truly proud of my heritage and hope that Macedonia is strong and continues to be rich in pride and culture. Hopefully, my family and I will soon get a chance to visit our many cousins over in Macedonia.

Kelly Theodore a 1998 recipient, submitted the following essay:

I never realized the intricacy of Macedonian heritage until emerging myself into the literature. It is hard to believe such a strong and influential culture is tied to my existence. The heritage of Yugoslavia is complex and the Macedonia was founded in the 7th century BC. With the accession of Philip II to its throne, the kingdom entered a period of growth and expansion, reaching its height during the reign of Philip's son, Alexander the Great: During the latter reign, Macedonia held sway not only over Greece and Egypt, but practically the entire Middle East and parts of western India. The power of Macedonia was broken by the Romans in three wars between 215 and 168 BC. in 148 BC., the country was constituted a Roman Province. During the early Christian period, it was an important field for the missionary labors of St. Paul, the Apostle. After the final division of the Roman Empire in AD 395, Macedonia formed part of the Byzantine Empire.

Macedonia continues to remain tied to its heritage today, as active clubs and organizations strive to unite fellow Macedonians. It is important for the younger generation to remain tied to their culture and the derivation of their being cultures vary considerably. However, major cultural influences in Macedonia have been Hellenic and Turkish. Their language is spoken in southern Yugoslavia and in adjacent areas of Bulgaria and Greece. The youngest of the Slavic literary languages, it became official only in 1944.