

# Wilton student campaigns for Obama

**Date:** January 24, 2008 **Section:** News

*Hewon't be able to vote in the November elections, but that doesn't mean his voice will be silenced. "Just because I can't vote, doesn't mean I can't influence others," Thomas Dec, age 16, said on Jan. 14. "I still feel like I can contribute, and ultimately, I'm still going to be represented."*

*Thomas, a junior at Wilton High School, is the Connecticut High School state coordinator for Students for Barack Obama. He's been to Iowa and New Hampshire, and with Super Tuesday approaching on Feb. 5, Thomas has his eyes set on helping Mr. Obama win Connecticut.*

*"We're focusing on Connecticut's primary," Thomas said, adding he wants to see his candidate emerge victorious in his home state.*

*"What I'm trying to do right now... is to help mold the strategy and move forward," Thomas said. "We're trying to get more student involvement."*

*Thomas worked for a time for Congressman Christopher Shays, Republican of the 4th District, in 2006, but said it was "nothing significant" compared to the work he's done for Mr. Obama.*

*These days, Thomas says his ideology tends to align more with the Democrats. He feels like Mr. Obama's "different type of politics" and "new blood" will be a welcomed change and bring hope to America.*

*"The things I personally agree with align with his ideology," Thomas said, adding that Mr. Obama is about bringing people together, moving forward and getting things done.*

*"I think he means what he says," Thomas said. "He seems genuine, and not artificial."*

*Mr. Obama "talks about including independents and Republicans, getting them involved in the process," Thomas said. "It shouldn't be one party dominating the other."*

*It's about compromise, rather than one party suppressing the other and getting nothing done, he said.*

*While Mr. Obama's critics say his lack of experience in politics on a national level is a detriment to his campaign, Thomas said, "you've got to look at everything he has to offer. I don't think experience outweighs everything he has to offer."*

*Thomas traveled to New Hampshire on Tuesday, Jan. 8, for the state's primary, the first of the year. Although polls showed Mr. Obama to have a commanding lead, Hillary Clinton won the state, while Mr. Obama finished second.*

*"It wasn't disheartening," Thomas said. "Obviously, we'd like to have come in first."*

*"It was crazy," Thomas said of his experience in New Hampshire, where he canvassed in Rochester and then went to Nashua to attend Mr. Obama's rally.*

*"There were thousands of people stuffed into the fieldhouse of one of the high schools there," he said.*

HealsowenttoIowainOctober“discussingstrategiesasthe**campaign**movedforward”

“Iwastherewithawholebunchofothercoordinators”hesaid“Iwasonlythere**for**threedaysbecauseI didn’twanttomisschoolbutitwascoolbecauseIgottomeeteveryoneelsethatworksonthe**campaign**”

Thomassaidhisinterestinpoliticsdevelopedonhisown

“Ijustthinkit’sfascinatingthatyoucanreallyhaveaninfluenceonpeople”hesaid“adding“there’s neveradullmoment”inpolitics”

Thomas“whoisamemberof**StudentsinPolitics**theDebateTeamandModelUNatWHS“saidthe interestinpoliticsamongyoungerpeopleisnotashighashe’dlikebutaddedMr**Obama**pollswellinthe youngerdemographic

“EveryoneshouldplayaroleinelectingthenextPresident”Thomassaid“notjustyoungpeoplebut middle-agedpeopleolderpeopleandeveryoneinbetween”

ThomassaidanyoneinterestedinhelpingMr**Obama**’s**campaign**mayemailhimat [tdc@studentsforbarackobama.com](mailto:tdc@studentsforbarackobama.com)