



Alston-Pleasants
Post-Graduate Scholars Fund

NEWSLETTER

Alston-Pleasants Community 2014 Spring Event



Springtime is in the air in Halifax County! In keeping with tradition, the Trustees met with members of the Alston-Pleasants Community during the Spring Event at Bellamy Manor & Gardens in Enfield, NC on April 5, 2014.

Pictured (Left to Right) – Front Row: Spencer Scott, Blair Stephenson Kuplic, Maria Aguilar Noyola, Helen N. Parker and John Parker.

Back Row: J. Gilbert Stallings, Patricia Scott, Melanie-Lark Benning, Josefina Aguilar, H. Lawrence Armstrong, Jr. and W. Turner Stephenson, III.

Congratulations to
current Alston-Pleasants
Post-Graduate Scholar

Blair Stephenson Kuplic
from Halifax County
Class of 2011
for recently completing a
Law Degree at UNC



Welcome to the newest
Alston-Pleasants Scholar

Patrick Oliver Fiorilli
from Halifax County
Class of 2018

*"Intelligence plus character -- that
is the goal of true education"*
-Martin Luther King, Jr.



TRUSTEE UPDATE

By Debbie A. Daniel, Trustee

The vision that Miss Missouri had in 1958 for students from Franklin, Halifax and Warren Counties continues to expand as we welcome Patrick Oliver Fiorilli to the Alston-Pleasants Community as the 86th Alston-Pleasants Scholar.

We also congratulate Blair Stephenson Kuplic, our 5th Alston-Pleasants Post-Graduate Scholar, on the recent completion of her Juris Doctor degree (see article below for more details).

We continue to encourage connections across the entire Alston-Pleasants Community and have recently updated our website,

www.alstonpleasants.org. Please visit this website for the latest news and browse our repository of information about the Alston-Pleasants Community.

It is our pleasure to announce that the Honorable Richard E. Hunter, Jr. has reappointed Trustee Helen N. Parker to a three-year term that expires in 2017.

In April of this year, we returned to Halifax County with a spring event at Bellamy Manor & Garden in Enfield, NC. It was a wonderful location for the event. Many thanks to Blair Stephenson Kuplic for sharing insights about her experiences as an Alston-Pleasants Scholar with the participants.

We plan to hold a Fall Meeting in Chapel Hill to which current Scholars, whether attending UNC or another school, will be invited. The tentative date is October 25, 2014 and final event details will be posted on our website.

As you know, all recipients of the undergraduate Alston-Pleasants Scholarships are eligible for our post-graduate and professional studies scholarships. Please let us know at

alstonpleasants@aol.com on or before June 1st about your summer school plans and by July 31st about your fall term plans.

We will need to know the course of study, the institution, applicable accreditation and the amount of your tuition. If an award is made, you will need to send us a transcript grades report each semester.

While fund assets are limited, we do try to provide meaningful financial assistance. If you would like to contribute to this very worthwhile undertaking, the Fund is an Internal Revenue Service tax-exempt 501(c)(3) private foundation so that your gifts of cash, stock or cash value life insurance can be deductible currently for income tax purposes.

If you have questions or wish to make a contribution, please contact us at alstonpleasants@aol.com or Alston-Pleasants Post-Graduate Scholars Fund, P.O. Box 101 Bayse, VA 22810-0101.



ALSTON-PLEASANTS POST-GRADUATE SCHOLAR UPDATE

Blair Stephenson Kuplic, a 2011 UNC graduate, from Halifax County, is the 5th Alston-Pleasants Post-Graduate Scholar.

On May 10, 2014, she received the Juris Doctor degree from the UNC School of Law.

Blair received Professional Recommendation into the Navy JAG Corps and following commission this summer will attend Officer Development School followed by the Basic Lawyer Course in Newport, RI before relocating to her first two-year assignment.



In her spare time, Blair enjoys camping with her husband, Kyle, and their two dogs.

When asked about her Alston-Pleasants experience, Blair stated, "It has greatly enhanced my experience as both an undergraduate and in law school. I appreciate the Alston-Pleasants community and look forward to remaining involved."

Blair offered the following advice to our current Alston-Pleasants Scholars: "Take advantage of every opportunity during your undergraduate years! The time goes by quickly and there are so many chances to experience something new while at UNC."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Tasha Dickinson, a 1990 graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School, was the Alston-Pleasants scholarship winner of that year. She earned her bachelor's degree in international studies at the University of North Carolina in 1994 and three years later her law degree, also at Carolina.

She now practices law in West Palm Beach, Florida in the firm Jones, Foster, Johnston, & Stubbs, the oldest such enterprise in Palm Beach County. Her specialty is estate planning and trust and estate planning for high net-worth families.

In 2010, Tasha was cited by the Lupus Foundation as one of the "Best and Brightest" lawyers in South Florida. She was recognized by comparable legal organizations and publications as a "Rising Star" in 2009-11 and subsequently as a "Super Lawyer" in 2012-13. The South Florida Legal Guide describes her as one of the "Top Lawyers" in that region," and Florida Trend Magazine dubbed her one of the "Legal Elite." (I should note that I learned of most of these honors online, not from her.)



*Alston-Pleasants Scholar
Tasha Dickinson*

Asked what she thought and felt when informed that she had won the undergraduate Alston-Pleasants Scholarship, she replied "Almost as ecstatic as my parents!" The financial boon for her parents goes without saying, but her own thoughts had to do more with the vindication of hard work and determination. This, she says, then became her "mantra" and continues to drive her toward her goals, not just in her career, but in other aspects of her life as well. And she reports that now she works "each day to instill this same principle in her children, aged 10 and 8."

Receiving the Alston-Pleasants scholarship also boosted her self-confidence, such that she continues to feel that she can accomplish whatever she sets her mind to.

Tasha has also "passed it on" in her involvement with the Alston-Pleasants Graduate Scholars program. She was one of the original trustees of the program and, according to Gil Stallings, "effective in helping to get the fund underway." She has extended that involvement by agreeing to serve as the first Alston-Pleasants Counselor.

When I asked Tasha what her involvement in these roles means to her, she quoted William Butler Yeats: "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." That flame shows no sign of flickering in what she achieves in her work and contributes in her service to others.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU



The Trustees of the Alston-Pleasants Post-Graduate Scholars Fund would like to send special thanks to **Dennis Organ** for interviewing and authoring the article on Tasha Dickinson.

WELCOME
PATRICK
OLIVER
FIORILLI
THE 86TH
ALSTON-
PLEASANTS
SCHOLAR



Superior Court of Warren County, and Patricia B. Chastain, Clerk of the Superior Court of Franklin County, who oversee these scholarships, in congratulating Patrick on his outstanding accomplishments and in welcoming him to the Alston-Pleasant community.

The 2014 Alston-Pleasant Scholarship for undergraduate studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been awarded to Patrick Oliver Fiorilli of Halifax County.

Patrick, son of Dr. Mario G. and Mona Fiorilli, is a resident of Roanoke Rapids and Valedictorian of his Roanoke Rapids High School graduating class. Patrick earned an array of academic honors while participating in a variety of student organizations and activities, including membership on the 2011 Conference Championship Tennis Team and recognition as the 2013 Superintendent's Nominee for North Carolina Governor's School.

At the University, Patrick will participate in the University's Honors Carolina Program and plans to major in the study of physics.

In 1958, as a perpetual memorial to her Grandfather, Willis "Congress" Alston, Missouri Alston Pleasant established the Alston-Pleasant Scholars Fund to recognize and encourage selected high school students from Franklin, Halifax and Warren Counties. Patrick is the 86th recipient of the Alston-Pleasant Scholarship.

The Trustees of the Alston-Pleasant Post-Graduate Scholars Fund, which provides graduate studies scholarships for Alston-Pleasant Scholars, join with Rebecca C. Spragins, Clerk of the Superior Court of Halifax County, Richard E. Hunter, Jr., Clerk of the



Please visit the Facebook page and "Like" us to stay informed of what's going on and to connect with others in our community!
(www.facebook.com/alstonpleasantscholars)

The Alston-Pleasant website (www.alstonpleasants.org) is a great resource for information.

If you have suggestions for our Facebook page or website, please email Melanie-Lark Benning at mbenning09@gmail.com.

MORE ON MISS MISSOURI



Did you know?...

- She was active in Colonial Dames and in the Daughters of the American Revolution.

We Want To Hear From You!

If you have any news that you would like to share with the Alston-Pleasant community, please type up a short announcement, including your name and UNC class year, and send it to the Trustees at alstonpleasants@aol.com. Feel free to attach photos as well. We will do our best to include the information in a future newsletter.

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