



ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Alumni Highlights

Tracy M. Webster - Cooley wrote a book called "31 days of What could be Mental Anguish"

Alumni Roy R. Weber (1959 AHA graduate), returned to Alton after an absence of 60 years. Roger served 26 years in the United States Force and is happy to be reunited with friends and relatives of Alton.

1965 Grad - Dr. Cheryl Killion was inducted into the SIUe Alumni Hall of fame.

1981 Grad - Veronica Felton Armouti- Has been elected as a Madison County Judge.

1984 Grad - Jesse Jemison, appointed first African American Fire Chief for the city of Alton.

1988 Grad - Dr. Wendy Adams received her EdD. Wendy is Director of Human Resources for Alton Community School District #11.

1992 Grad - Angel Gray finished her second book last month addressing anger issues and attitude problems among young girls.

Alton High School graduate, Angela Gray, looks to aid that process with her new book, "Help! I Have An Attitude Problem," released last month. She said the book, written for girls with attitudes that threaten their current and future social health, addresses the root of anger, rejection and pain and how these can affect a person's attitude.

This is her second self-published volume since December 2018. Her first work, "Girl, Check That Attitude!," was designed to help educators understand what young girls may be going through at home and at school, the second book is geared more toward young girls.

Both of the self-published books focus on strategies and activities to help young girls open up about their feelings in healthy and productive ways, rather than focusing on the behavior alone.

1995 Grad - Yvonne Campbell took over the reigns as owner of My Just Desserts Restaurant

Trivia Questions:

1. Who was Alton Highs 1st African American drum major?
2. Who was Alton Highs 1st African American football quarterback?
3. Who is the oldest living African American school teacher from the Alton District?
4. What name was the name of the old Salu park change to?
5. Where is Robert Wadlow buried?
6. What was the name of the Military school located on Seminary Road?
7. Who was Alton Highs 1st African American Homecoming Queen?

(Answers to the Trivia Questions will be in the next edition of the ABAA Newsletter)



★ IMPORTANT DATES ★

November 9, 2019

FOS/ABAA Trivia Night

December 28, 2019

Black Alumni Assoc
Holiday Dance

January 2020

2020 ABA Reunion
"Early Bird" Registration

September 4-6, 2020

2020 ABA Reunion Weekend

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Highlights ★ What's Happening in A-Town

ABAA Involvement: Activities/Major Events of the Past 12 Months

- Aug 31 - Sept 2, 2018 ★ 8th Biennial Alton Black Alumni Reunion
- November 8, 2018 ★ FOS/ABAA Old School Dance Party:
- December 18, 2018 ★ Tree of Lights in Rocks Spring Park: ABAA volunteer event
- December 2018 ★ Xmas Donations \$50(5) Gift Certificates/Gift Cards: working with elementary schools to donate to needy families of students
- April 25, 2019 ★ AHS Scholarship Award Night 2019 Alton High graduate Dejia Robinson was awarded this year's Scholarship of \$1,000
- May 18, 2019 ★ NAACP Banquet
- June 8, 2019 ★ Miles Davis Jazzfest - support the Alton Arts & history
- June 15, 2019 ★ Juneteenth
- July 13, 2019 ★ NCNW Jazz 'N Harambee Brunch
- August 3, 2019 ★ NAACP Back to School Backpack event
- August 10, 2019 ★ Back to Mexico - community event
- August 17, 2019 ★ Parent Advocacy Forum - collaboration with Clayton & Virginia Williams (CVW) Foundation
- September 7, 2019 ★ Alton's Jazz and Wine Festival: in support of Alton Museum Of History And Art
- September 10, 2019 ★ Launch of Alton Middle School Project: Joint venture with ABAA & CVW

Killion Park Beautification Project

An effort is underway to help beautify the city of Alton...one brick at a time. James Killion Park (formerly Salu Park) was once a beehive of Alton Parks Department-funded activity. That was especially true in the summer, with organized sports teams and tournaments of every description overseen by off-duty Alton schoolteachers.

Currently, the J.K. Beautification and Enhancement Committee is promoting community ownership of the park. They seek to restore that prestige by honoring its namesake with a fundraising campaign that will go towards beautification of the grounds. You can contribute to this effort by purchasing a brick on which a family or individual name will appear; and thus, become part of the history of this city park. Bricks can be purchased online at www.prideincorporated.org.

FRIENDS OF THE 60'S/ALTON BLACK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (FOS/ABAA) DONATION:

I am donating \$_____ in support of the FOS/ABAA community involvement and Leo C. Cox Scholarship programs.

Please check your method of payment: Check Credit Card PayPal

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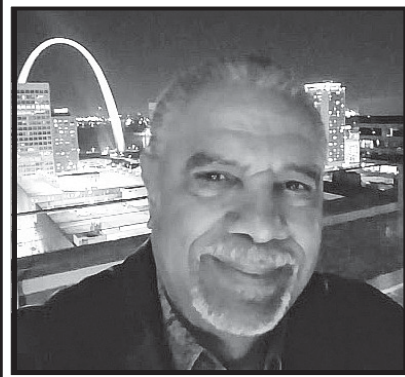
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Please return slip & donation to **FOS/ABAA Donor Campaign | P.O. Box 1033 | Alton, IL 62002**

Message from the President



Welcome to the first edition of the Alton Black Alumni Association (ABAA) Newsletter. Our aspiration is to continue evolving as an organization...shaping the future by preserving our heritage and sharing our knowledge and resources with the community. The newsletter's intent is to keep you, alumni association members, informed of our progress...our journey.

Please take a few minutes to peruse this inaugural edition. Make sure that you review the highlight articles:

- **2020 Reunion** – Save the date...Spread the word...Register early
- **Scholarship** – See how your financial support helps deserving high school graduates
- **Community Outreach** – check out our community projects/programs
- **Donor Campaign** – help support our programs by donating today

To enhance our progress with existing and emerging programs, we need your financial support. During our 2018 reunion weekend I announced a donor challenge...\$100 (tax deductible) donation from each alumnus by yearend 2019. If you are unable to meet the \$100 challenge, we appreciate whatever you are able to donate.

Although we have 800+ alumni in our database, we acknowledge that we are missing many former classmates in our mailings. Please spread the word...share the newsletter with fellow alumni within your contacts list. Encourage them to submit their contact info to us so that we can include them in future distributions. Additionally, we are expanding our database process to include profiles of alumni members. This will enable us to recognize/share your major lifetime achievements, family highlights, etc. Please help us by providing your personal profile information. You can complete your profile online at our website, <http://www.altonblackalumni.org>.

We should all be very proud of where we are today and excited about where we are headed. With your support we will continue to develop and refine ABAA's program offerings. We are always looking for innovative ideas and input. Please let us know if you are interested in working with our leadership team...either as a member of the board of directors...or...as an advisory member.

Community Outreach



From the beginning, our two major areas of community involvement were: 1) targeted volunteerism, and, 2) selective financial support to charitable organization and special cases of individual need.

We continue to expand our footprint with focus on Alton's black community, in particular...as well as the broader Alton community, in general. This is a daunting task and we realize that we cannot go it alone. As a result, we have spent the past couple of years working on building relationships and potential partnerships with other community organization that have similar missions (e.g., NCNW, CVW, 100 Black Men, NAACP). Our goal is to optimize our efforts by collaborating on areas of common interest.

We have a special focus on youth. This school year (2019-20) we are in a collaborative project with the Clayton & Virginia Williams (CVW) Foundation [www.cvwfdn.org]. The Alton School District asked for our help in addressing challenges with students of color. The big question: What do students who have difficulty in school need most to be successful? At first, our answer to this question was clear. We wanted to serve students who had disciplinary issues. However, we also realized that our approach should serve other students as well—students who were disconnected, disaffected, maladjusted, and more. Academia and public schools are spaces where people of color often feel underrepresented, unwelcome and unheard. After numerous workshops with school administrators and faculty, we reached consensus on an overarching problem: Students of color **do not feel connected** to the school or the Alton community.

We have agreed to work with the Alton Middle School focusing on three major areas to address the **connection** issue: **1)** working with 'average' (unmotivated...underperforming) students with noticeable upside potential...helping prepare them for career and/or college and university entrance requirements, **2)** cultural awareness (for students as well as teachers)...i.e., providing exposure to black history (local, national) that is not included in the standard curriculum, **3)** self esteem...i.e., pathways to man/woman-hood. We are reaching out to organizations and individuals who have the programs and expertise to address each of these areas. A major part of our approach is to invite alumni models of success to visit specific classes to share their stories. This is just one example of helping the students make the 'connection' that is missing.

For more specifics about the programs, contact Jim Killion at jkill3@aol.com.

Scholarship News

Dajia Robinson ★ 2019 Leo C. Cox Memorial Scholarship Awardee

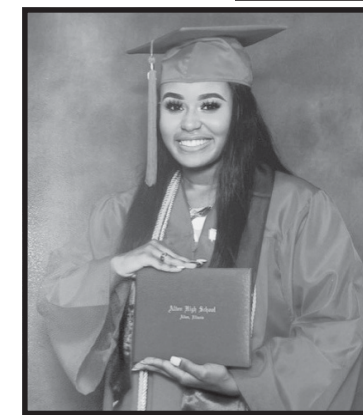
Dajia Robinson treasures Maya Angelou's quote..."do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." As our 2019 scholarship awardee, it appears that this particular quote is keeping Dajia focused on her goals.

Dajia Robinson is a 2019 graduate of Alton High School. Dajia graduated with a 4.0151 grade point average. While a student at Alton High School, Dajia was a member of many clubs and organizations (Chemistry Club, Spanish Club, Zoology Club, National Society of High School Scholars, National Honor Society and The Black Student Union).

Her accountability to her peers and the citizens of the Alton Area included being a math tutor, dance teacher and community volunteer.

Dajia is currently a freshman at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, majoring in Medical Biology with a minor in Black Studies.

Dajia has seized her first year with a strong start. She was recently accepted into a program encompassing an African-American based English class. This program only accepts 30 African American females and Dajia was awarded this honor as a freshman student.



Save the Date ★ 2020 Reunion

In less than a year from now, many of you will make the trek to Alton to join in the celebration of the ninth biennial Friends of the 60's/Alton Black Alumni Association Reunion. The Planning committee is filled with excitement in anticipation of seeing all of you and hearing what's been going on in your lives.

The Weekend will kick off on Friday, September 4th with registration, food, fun, dancing, games and prizes. There will be something for everyone...the young and the young at heart! You get to choose! When the evening is over, go home, put on some Bengay and prepare for Saturday night.

On Saturday, September 5th let's get dressed up and be noticed! As the saying goes... "show up and show out!" We will let you know the attire. It will be based on the theme that's chosen, so stay tuned. If you remember, in 2018 we celebrated The Black Panther movie as we donned our African attire as we journeyed to Wakanda. It was a beautiful sight to see!

Sunday, September 6th is all about the family. This will be a community/family affair. The day will begin with church service, followed by food, games and lastly, the sweet goodbyes. No boo hoos are allowed.

Now, something that you can do to enhance this exciting weekend is to spread the word and contact people who you haven't seen at past reunions. Pass along our post office box number and/or our email address. We need your help! Please add and share these important dates to your calendars and social media outlets!



Support Your Alton Black Alumni Association



FRIENDS OF THE 60's
ALTON BLACK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

We ask for your assistance in helping us achieve...on your behalf...greater things for the organization and the Alton community. Your generosity makes it possible for us to provide scholarships to college bound Alton High graduates and to continue with the development and enhancement of our community outreach programs & projects. THANK YOU!

Donation options: Check Credit Card PayPal

- **Donate by check:** Please enclose your check with the remittance form on the opposite side.
- **Donate by credit card:** Visit our website www.altonblackalumni.org. Go to the Donate tab & follow the PayPal instructions for credit card payment.
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