



HOUSTON-HARRIS COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

UNIT NEWSLETTER - APRIL 2022 (ISSUE 2)

Scholarship Recipients

History of Vivian R. Bowser Scholarships

The H-HCRTA is a group of caring people who have worked in education on all levels. Even though we are retired, we still strive to touch and honor our children as they prepare themselves for the future. We have been awarding scholarships for over twenty-five (25) years to local high school seniors. One of our well-known fellow educators and former H-HCRTA president, Vivian R. Bowser, left money in her will to our organization to help students. The scholarships became known as The Vivian R. Bowser Scholarships in honor of such a great person.

The organization started sponsoring an annual Luncheon honoring people in our community from all walks of life. These luncheons have generated over fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) and awarded scholarships to over sixty (60) recipients. We owe a special thanks to our dedicated members who spent countless hours planning the luncheons and publishing the Souvenir Program

The scholarship recipients have made us really proud by using the money to pursue some of their life's endeavors. Our recipients have earned undergraduate degrees as well as master degrees in many academic areas, and are doing well in society. We are extremely delighted that our retired teachers are still reaching out and making an impact on our children. The old saying "Once a Teacher, Always a Teacher" remains true.

We thank all of the ones who provided information to the Newsletter Committee to give us an update on the scholarship recipients.

Dorothy Wiggins, Scholarship Chair
Margaret Foy and Connie Anglin, Committee Members

All of the scholarship recipients expressed their gratitude to H-HCRTA for the financial assistance.

Naomi S. Wiggins, Dorothy Wiggins's granddaughter, was a 2014 graduate of Alvin High School. She graduated from University of Houston Clearlake in December 2019. She majored in Computer Science. She has a very good job as a computer Software Developer.

Jalen Jones graduated from Dawson High School in 2018. He will graduate from the University of Texas in San Antonio in May 2022. He is majoring in Business (Finance).

Trenton Moore graduated from Milby High School in 2020. He is attending Houston Community College with expectations of going to Prairie View A& M in the fall. He plans to major in Agriculture Engineering.

Craig "CJ" Gilmore, Jr., grandson of Lena Gilmore, is very appreciative of the Vivian Bowser scholarship and thanks the members of H-HCRTA for the award. He is a junior at the UH Central campus studying Mechanical Engineering. He has been consistently on the dean's list and recently accepted an intern position at a local sales corporation for his senior year.

Mia Rochon, granddaughter of Rita Smith, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Education with a minor in Spanish from Baylor University. She continued her educational journey at Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine with a concentration in infectious diseases. Mia is currently working on her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing at Louisiana State University. Her future plans are to work as a travel intensive care unit nurse and eventually obtain a Doctorate of Nursing to become a nurse anesthetist.

Essence Warren, 2016. She graduated from Dillard University, majoring in Communication. She is now teaching at New Orleans Academy. She is the granddaughter of Helen Turner.

DeArbea Walker, granddaughter of Drs. Darnell and Daisy Walker, graduated from Syracuse University with a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and Business

Administration. While earning her degree at Syracuse, she began her journalism career with the Philadelphia Pennsylvania Inquirer. Currently she is a reporter and digital journalist for the Inquirer Magazine in New York City. DeArbea wishes to express her sincere thanks to H-HCRTA and her grandparents for their financial support during her college years.

Godfrey Walker, grandson of Drs. Darnell and Daisy Walker, is a graduate of Strake Jesuit College Preparatory High School, and graduated from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana with a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and a minor in English. While in undergraduate school he served as a tutor. Upon graduation, Godfrey began his professional career working as a field engineer at Eaton Corporation in Southfield, Michigan where he is currently employed. He wishes to express his utmost gratitude to H-HCRTA, and his grandparents for their financial support during his college years.

Sheridan Milan Labbe, granddaughter of Dorothy Gabriel, and graduate of John Dulles High School, received a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration/Marketing from Sam Houston State University; and a MBA with a concentration in Leadership from the University of Houston-Downtown. Sheridan has worked with the Harris County Department of Education as a Client Engagement Coordinator and presently is a Creative Strategy Manager of Credit Founder of Untamed Lingerie. She is a member of the American Marketing Association and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

DeAsia Douglas, the granddaughter of Ruth Ferguson, is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and is currently pursuing a Master's in Accounting.

Avery Elise Harrison, granddaughter of Vivian Harrison, is a graduate of Houston Episcopal High School, and is now matriculating at Howard University. Avery loves Howard and is progressing well as a sophomore. She has received a certificate of congratulations for making the Dean's list during the 2020-2021 school year. Being a Jack and Jill Debutant has been another highlight in her life.

Jordan Dora, grandson of the late Doris Huey, is a graduate from Lamar High School. He earned a bachelor's degree in Exercise and Sports Science (Summa Cum Laude), and is currently pursuing a master's degree in Athletic Training at

the University of Tulsa. Jordan will be the first African American to graduate from the Master's Degree program. Jordan serves as Vice President of the mid-Atlantic Athletic Trainers Student Leadership Committee, and is board member for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. His future includes working in the secondary setting in Tulsa with athletic training and teaching.

Jordan A. Black, granddaughter of Zerlene Black, is a 2019 H-HCRTA scholarship recipient. She enrolled in Savannah College of Arts and Designs in Savannah, Georgia, and because of the pandemic transferred to the SCAD Atlanta campus to take in person classes. Jordan is on the Dean's List. She has made (written, filmed, and edited) several short films for her classes, one of which her professor suggested she put in her repertoire to make into a feature film. Upon her projected graduation in the fall of 2023, Jordan wants to produce short and feature films, as well as television shows.

Brie Merchant, granddaughter of Betty Earl, is a student at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. She is scheduled to graduate May 14, 2022 with a double major in Psychology and Health and Society and a minor in Math. After she receives her undergraduate degree, she plans to seek a master's in Occupational Therapy or Language Pathology. Brie also received a scholarship to play volleyball at SMU. She played for four years while maintaining a 3.4 GPA..

Cleveland Shepard, IV, grandson of Maxine Shepherd, is currently a junior at the University of Oklahoma. He is studying Environmental Design with a minor in Business. Cleveland is involved in an activism group on campus, is a campus tour guide, and a member of the Black Student Associations. .

George Curry, III, is the grandson of Erma J. Smith. He graduated from Jack Yates High School, and is a 2013 graduate of Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi. George's major was Interdisciplinary Studies. He is a Hotel & Restaurant Hospitality Professional/Entertainment.

Winston Curry, grandson of Erma J. Smith is a graduate of Jack Yates Senior High School. He is also a 2014 graduate of Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi. Winston's major was in Mass Communications. His career is in the Film Industry; camera and drone operator for HGTV's Home Tome (Erin & Ben Napier). Also, he has been a contracted cameraman by other cable network reality shows, as well as freelance employment.

Titus E. Bryant, grandson of Charlotte Bryant, is a graduate of Prairie View University, and is currently a second-year student at Washington Seminary. He was recently assigned as The youth minister at Rising Sun Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

Jonathan P. Hill, Jr., grandson of Ella M. Hill, graduated from Yates High School and is now a student at Haverford College in Pennsylvania. Jonathan completed his first year, made the honor Roll, and earned an additional scholarship from Haverford. As a second-year student, he will declare a major in computer science, political science or economics. He is a member of the track team, participates with the Haverford Street Outreach program which offers assistance in the Philadelphia area, and is an Access Diversity and Initiative Intern in the Admissions Office. Jonathan will work this summer in California or Texas.

Tela C. Bryant, granddaughter of Charlotte, is a 2015 HHCRTA scholarship recipient. She attended Prairie View A&M University and Houston Community College. Tela is an International Sports Sciences Association (ISSA) Certified Fitness Trainer. Currently, she teaches Fitness classes and offers both virtual and personal training. Tela's fitness company is named ChallengeFit.

Christian Kyle Burgs, grandson of Willie Burgs, is an award winning musician composer, and public speaker. His drumming expertise has afforded him the opportunity to play with Ellis Marsalis, Al Jarreau, and many other notable artists, and has toured with several well-known musicians. He has played at prestigious venues and festivals including the Essence Festival, Houston's House of Blues, and the Hobby Center. Christian has given speeches on Good Morning America, the Early Show on NBC and was a TEDx finalist. He is a graduate of Kinder High School for Performing and Visual arts, studied at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Belmont University. Christian currently leads an independent life insurance brokerage, and serves as the Director of Basketball Operations of the Fit Movement Academy.

ELECTED 2022-2024 OFFICERS

President – Debra McDonald

1st Vice President – Muriel Jackson

2nd Vice President – Dr. Barbara Punch

Secretary – Dr. Doris Delaney

Assistant Secretary – Cynthia Bello

Corresponding Secretary – Carolyn Davis

Treasurer – Georgia Traylor

These officers will be installed at our May 26, meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

Una Topps, Chair



We would like to encourage members to begin mailing their dues; State and Local members \$45, payroll deduction members \$10.00 and Life Members \$10.00. Our dues should be paid between March 1, 2022 and June 1, 2022.

We all know that there are advantages to being a TRTA Member. Our dues help TRTA speak on behalf of our organization before the Texas Legislature. The Texas Legislature decides on how much money is allocated for pensions and healthcare.

Don't forget, units can earn extra money for bringing in the most NEW members. Also, we have a prize for the person recruiting the most members. We will also have a drawing from the names of renewing members between March 1 and June 1, 2022 to win a gift card. So please begin renewing and recruiting your H-HCRTA and TRTA membership. Send your checks to: H-HCRTA, P. O. Box 311383, Houston, Tx. 77231-1383

NEWSLETTER TEAM

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