

All American Newsletter

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American School Holds 78th Scholarship Meeting

The summer edition of the *All American* is one of our favorites of the year because in it we feature the 18 outstanding graduates who earned scholarships at our annual scholarship meeting. This is the 78th year we have awarded scholarships, and in that time, 1,498 students have earned \$844,200 in scholarships to be used to defray the cost of attending an accredited college or university.

Scholarship winners are chosen by a blue ribbon panel of educational experts that includes American School Trustees **John Kemp** (second from left) and **Cher Tufly** (second from right) and this year's guest member, **David Smith** (center), a former public school superintendent, college educator, and executive search consultant, who has worked with internationally relevant school accreditation organizations. Joining them in the picture below are American School President **Gary R. Masterton** and School Counselor **Amanda Giordano**.

Information on 2017 scholarships will be mailed automatically to deserving graduates early next year. For now, turn the page and begin reading about your classmates! Also, look inside for a partial list of colleges and universities which have accepted American School students in recent years.



Henry Buresh Alumni Award Winner

Nicole Houston

Bozeman, MT



Henry Buresh Alumni Award winner Nicole Houston is a success in any language. She is studying close to home at Montana State University but looks to expand her horizons—and vocabulary—and help as many people as possible in the process.

“I so deeply crave the ability to speak multiple languages and to better comprehend cultural differences and similarities,” Nicole wrote. “I hope to study abroad and will definitely be taking several linguistic courses throughout the pursuit of a college degree so that I can develop my knowledge on the inner workings of language and multilingualism.”

Nicole also yearns to help people. She plans to study pre-med and would like to become a pediatrician, but she has already demonstrated her care for others in multiple ways. These include volunteering with local groups such as 4-H, working at a livestock ranch and writing for community events. In her free time, she enjoys art, reading and mountain biking.

R. T. Miller Founders Award Winner

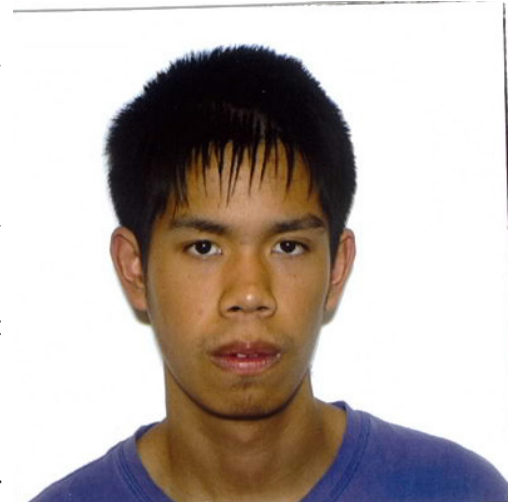
Andrew Huang

Herndon, VA

R. T. Miller Founders Award winner Andrew Huang is the second-generation son of Taiwanese immigrants and an avid learner and educator. He’s currently pursuing degrees in integrative studies and business at George Mason University, and after earning an advanced degree, he plans to teach English in Taiwan. That won’t be the first time he’s visited the country.

“Last summer I was chosen to be an AID volunteer English teacher for disadvantaged middle school students in an underdeveloped county in Taiwan,” Andrew wrote. “For two weeks, I worked tirelessly to plan out and implement engaging and educational lessons. My experience not only reaffirmed, but strengthened my passion for teaching and my love for Taiwan.”

At George Mason, Andrew lives in a dorm with international students and is involved with the Chinese Language Club, Japanese Student Association, the Investment Club and the Asian Pacific American Coalition. His other interests include mechanical engineering, peer tutoring, running and kumdo, which is a modern Korean martial art.



W. L. Wright Presidents Award Winner

Alyssa Valencia

Springfield, IL



Presidents Award winner Alyssa Valencia is currently wild about animals and Lincoln Land Community College, where she is working toward a degree in psychology. Her long-term educational and career goals include earning a degree in sociology from Eastern Illinois University and then helping women and children as a social worker.

“I hope to make a difference with the knowledge I learn in school, and I believe that social work is the perfect fit for me,” Alyssa wrote. “Women’s and children’s services is a field that is vital not only to me but to society as a whole. I want to help better communities and families who are in tough situations.”

Alyssa’s love of animals is manifest through work as a volunteer at the Animal Protection League and job at the Springfield Park District’s Henson Robinson Zoo, where she works in the office and assists zookeepers with various tasks.

OTHER SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Mohammed Abu Ali (*Falls Church, VA*)

Mohammed Abu Ali began his K-12 education in the United States and continued it in Egypt, where he attended an international school and became friends with students from England, Switzerland and Somalia. From there he studied in Jordan, where he became fluent in Arabic. He eventually returned to the United States and enrolled with American School.

"My previous experiences paved the way for me to excel in homeschooling studies as I had learned to be disciplined, study on my own and navigate challenging situations," Mohammed wrote. "By the end of high school, my experiences and education in three different countries made me realize how technology, specifically social media, has made the world smaller and more interconnected."

To that end, Mohammed is taking computer science classes at Northern Virginia Community College and plans to further his education at George Mason. Outside the classroom he enjoys cooking, playing sports and learning about the Japanese language and culture.

Aimon Arshad (*Waco, TX*)

Aimon Arshad entered American School unsure of herself and what lay ahead for her in her desired career path as an elementary school teacher. She left American School with more than just an accredited high school diploma.

"While I obtained an education that would benefit me academically for the rest of my life, I also gained a set of life skills that would benefit my personal life forever," Aimon wrote. "I learned what I was capable of doing, and this gave me what was probably the greatest skill of all, confidence."

That confidence has inspired Aimon to continue her education at Western Governors University, where she is studying elementary education. As a future classroom teacher, she hopes to instill in her students the same confidence given to her by American School. She's gotten a jump on that by tutoring young students, and Aimon also enjoys cake decorating and cooking foods from various cultures.

Rachel Bourne (*Omaha, NE*)

Rachel Bourne didn't start her high school career with American School, but a switch midway through her sophomore year made a huge difference in her education and life.

"The reason I left public school midyear for American School was because I needed more challenges in my education. My inner bookworm needed to be pushed to a higher level," Rachel wrote. "American School provided just that and even more. No longer were the days of dreading an easy day in a desk. My thirst for learning was finally being quenched once again."

When she is not busy quenching others' thirsts as an assistant manager at a local coffee shop, Rachel is interested in saving others' lives. She plans to study respiratory therapy at Metro Community College and hopes to work in a hospital where she can assist people of all ages. Her other interests include baking, reading novels, kayaking, hiking and sewing.

Devahuti Chua (*San Pedro, Laguna, Philippines*)

Devahuti Chua was born in the Philippines, and, as a child, her family moved several times. Because of those frequent moves, her family turned to distance education, and the aspiring songwriter and producer found American School to be music to her ears.

"I learned a lot from American School. My years with American School didn't only teach me on an educational level but instigated my own self-discovery as well," Devahuti wrote. "It helped me build my self-confidence and discover the path I had to take to become who I wanted to be. It helped me realize my dream to write music to help and inspire people all over the world."

Devahuti plans to attend the Academy of Art University in San Francisco as the next step toward reaching her goal. In addition to the playing piano, guitar, bass and drums, she enjoys volunteering, eco-activism and sports such as taekwondo.

Amanda Conrad (*Manassas, VA*)

Amanda Conrad hopes to hit all the right notes as a piano performance student at BYU-Idaho. She has played the piano since age 7, and after a love-hate relationship with the instrument in the beginning, she has come to love the piano and plans a career as a piano performance teacher. Her American School education provided her a solid foundation for college and beyond.

"I am very thankful to American School for giving me the education necessary to get into a good college," Amanda wrote. "I loved almost every minute of the few years I worked on American School courses."

Piano is just one of Amanda's artistic talents. She has taken organ lessons, plays guitar and clarinet and is part of a homeschool theater group. Other homeschool-related activities include helping to plan and run a homeschool convention, but amidst her many obligations, she also works full-time as a nanny for 3-year-old twins.

Jennifer Dawson (*Fort Collins, CO*)

Jennifer Dawson's path to Front Range Community College, and perhaps Colorado State University or after that, has taken several twists and turns. She overcame health concerns and other circumstances to earn her American School diploma and is grateful for both the challenges and the opportunities that have come her way.

"For many, graduating is the very first step up into their pursuits. In my world, however, graduating came far higher up in a line of crucial achievements," Jennifer wrote. "During my years with American School, I unearthed a love of art in the forms of writing, literature, music, psychology and various visual art/design mediums."

Jennifer will continue to study those areas in college, perhaps spending a year in Europe, and hopes to turn those talents into a career. She has a head start toward that goal thanks to a job at a local design firm. Jennifer also enjoys theater, yoga and participating in church activities.

Zephaniah Descartes-Jones (*Miami Gardens, FL*)

Zephaniah Descartes-Jones earned his American School diploma at age 16 and did considerable research finding a career path that matched his personality. He eventually decided water quality and treatment was the best option for him, and he's been learning about that important field ever since.

"I was able to find a university willing to accept me at age 17 directly from American School," Zephaniah wrote of his decision to attend the University of Florida. "As a result of me being a dedicated student, the chief director of water quality and treatment in Miami-Dade County is willing to mentor me."

Zephaniah would like to work full time with the Miami-Dade County water quality and treatment department after college graduation, but in the meantime he is keeping himself busy with his studies and volunteer work. He also enjoys working on cars, reading and recreational photography.

Aszkara Gilchrist (*West Palm Beach, FL*)

Aszkara Gilchrist had a rare retinal cancer at age 1 which left her legally blind, but she clearly sees a bright future for herself. She has a 3.5 GPA at Palm Beach Atlantic University, where she is studying theater en route to an acting career, and considers her memory and happy disposition among her greatest attributes.

"I am unique because I have not let having a disability stop me from accomplishing great things, above and beyond what even those without physical disabilities have done," Aszkara wrote. "I hope to not only keep accomplishing wonderful things and having great experiences in college but also to continue serving as a light to my fellow humans."

Those great experiences in college include being a paid intern at the Young Singers of the Palm Beaches, an award-winning singing group in her community. She also received the Most Spirited Award from Maltz Jupiter Theatre and enjoys speech and debate.

Courtney Houghton (Arlington, TX)

Courtney Houghton showed heart in earning her American School diploma amidst health challenges, and now she is interested in Hill College's echocardiography program so that she can have a career helping others in need.

"The heart is an incredible, complex organ. There always seems to be more I can learn about it," Courtney wrote. "I have a passion for helping others and a strong desire to learn more about the human body itself."

While still an American School student, Courtney took classes at Tarrant County College, where she is currently studying in advance of her planned transfer to Hill. In addition to her academic responsibilities, Courtney is an intern at a local financial firm, volunteers at a local food bank and summer camp, and serves her church congregation in a variety of ways. She also enjoys playing sports, hiking and taking family camping trips.

Min Ji Jung (Palisades Park, NJ)

Min Ji Jung was born in South Korea and moved to the United States at age 6. She took her love of learning with her and is currently studying at Bergen Community College. From there she plans to attend either Montclair State University or Yale and study liberal arts and medicine.

"From the time I was a little toddler I've always loved learning. I would read store signs and English children's books, even though Korean is my first language," Min Ji wrote. "I am the first person in my family to go to college and the first to even pursue becoming a doctor. I cannot think of anything else to do with my life other than healing and saving people."

Doing cognitive research is another of Min Ji's interests, along with training her dog and traveling to new places. She also works at a local swim club and is involved with several leadership and volunteer groups at Bergen.

Najah Mateen Atlanta, GA

Najah Mateen is a commuter student at Spelman College, where she is majoring in international studies en route to a career in international law. Although she is still exploring all the possibilities associated with that career path, she is inspired by her college and its staff and students.

"It was exciting to be able to attend classes where professors had such passion for what they taught and such great expectations for all of their students," Najah said, echoing how American School instructors feel about their students.

Najah's work in the classroom placed her in the top 10 percent of her class and earned her a spot in the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society. She also enjoys participating in clubs and activities with her classmates, including AUC Poetic Justice, which is focused on social justice, poetry and spoken word, and the Muslim Student Association and enjoys volleyball, volunteering and singing when she needs a break from school.

Cameron Mayer (O'Fallon, MO)

Cameron Mayer was barely 17 when he graduated from American School, but that was just one step in his planned education. He is completing a degree at St. Charles Community College this spring and plans to earn degrees in religious studies and business administration from BYU starting this fall. From there, he hopes to earn a doctorate from Yale and then return to BYU to teach seminaries and institutes in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

"Obtaining knowledge is among my highest priorities because I understand the value it will serve me in my life both now and in the future," Cameron wrote. "(At SCCC) I began to learn more about people and the world around me more than I ever had before. This plethora of knowledge came because I took the initiative with my American School work at a young age."

Besides obtaining knowledge, Cameron's other priorities include sports, chess and scouting projects.

Jeanette Phillips (*Holden, MO*)

Jennette Phillips was homeschooled from kindergarten through high school and is now has a 4.0 GPA at Longview Community College. She plans to transfer to Kansas State University and major in communication sciences and disorders before becoming a speech pathologist.

"I have a great love of sign language and sincere desire to work with the deaf culture," Jennette wrote. "This love and desire began for me when I was four years old, after I viewed a movie called Mr. Holland's Opus in which the central character had a son who was born deaf. Ever since then, I have wanted to learn sign language and assist deaf people."

Jennette is already helping the deaf community through her volunteer work at a local deaf cultural center. She also works as a cashier a local market and enjoys painting and solving puzzles when she has free time.

Samuel Ratigan (*Hayden, ID*)

Samuel Ratigan is the last of five siblings to earn his American School diploma, and he is continuing his education at BYU, where he plans to major in biology en route to a career as an orthodontist. Coming from an American School family, he values the many things he's learned and been able to do as an American School student.

"American School has been such a valuable part of all of our lives, and for me I have so appreciated the flexibility the program has offered me," Samuel wrote. "I also learned from speaking with some of my American School instructors that this program really cares about the success of its students."

Samuel listed communication and additional math and science skills as important things he learned during his high school career. He's put those and other skills to good use as an Eagle Scout, pianist, rock climber and in his part-time job as a cashier at a local supermarket.

Nada Shalabi (*Lansing, IL*)

Neda Shalabi currently lives in the same town as American School, but she earned part of her education in Palestine, where her family lived for three years, and is currently in the dental hygiene program at Prairie State College after being inspired by a caring dental hygienist who cared for her as a child.

"As someone who has been enrolled in a number of diverse schools, I can say that American School is unique because it has instilled values in me that have prepared me for my future career and life," Neda wrote. "A few of these values include responsibility, creativity and time management. I'm grateful for the opportunities American School has given me not only to achieve my academic goals, but to evolve as a well-rounded individual."

Volunteer work at her local school and church help make Neda a well-round individual, as do her other interests which include cooking, reading, sewing and being outdoors.

Graduate Johnathon Davis Visits American School

Earlier this summer American School welcomed graduate **Johnathon Davis** and his mother. Johnathon toured our building, met with instructors and other staff members, and, most importantly, received his American School diploma. He is grateful for the opportunity to attend American School and thankful to all American School staff members who helped him earn his diploma.

If you are in the Chicago area and wish to tour our building or, better yet, receive your diploma in person, let us know. We love meeting our students and their families and would be happy to welcome you to American School!



Partial List of Colleges Which Have Admitted American School Students

One of the many benefits of earning a high school diploma from American School is that it has the ability to open doors for your future. Because we are accredited by MSA-CESS, NCPSA and Ai and recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education, our diploma is recognized at colleges and universities all across the United States.

The following are just a few of the colleges and universities which have admitted our students. Please keep in mind that admission depends on many factors such as coursework, grades, ACT or SAT scores, leadership, volunteer, and extracurricular activities, and more. Early in your high school career, you should check the admission requirements of colleges which interest you so that you may plan the rest of your studies accordingly. Our school counselor, **Amanda Giordano**, is available to help with your college planning needs.

Alabama

Auburn University

Arizona

Arizona State University
University of Arizona

California

Stanford University

Colorado

Colorado Mesa University
Colorado Mountain College
Colorado State University

Connecticut

Trinity College
Wesleyan University

Florida

Florida National University
Florida Southwestern State College
Keiser University
Polk State College
St. Petersburg College

Georgia

Clark Atlanta University
The College of Coastal Georgia
Spelman College

Idaho

University of Idaho

Illinois

College of DuPage
Columbia College Chicago
Greenville College
Illinois Institute of Art
Joliet Junior College
Lewis University
Lincoln Land Community College
Northeastern Illinois University
Rock Valley College
University of Illinois

Indiana

Indiana University Northwest
Marian University
Purdue University Calumet

Iowa

University of Iowa

Kansas

University of Kansas

Kentucky

Murray State University
University of Kentucky
Western Kentucky Community
and Tech College
Western Kentucky University

Louisiana

Louisiana State University

Maine

University of Maine

Maryland

Maryland Institute College of Art
University of Maryland

Massachusetts

Lesley University
Massachusetts College of Art &
Design
School of the Museum of the Fine
Arts

Michigan

Henry Ford Community College

Minnesota

Empire Beauty School
University of Minnesota

Mississippi

Mississippi Gulf Coast Comm.
College

Missouri

Missouri State University
Truman State University
University of Missouri
Webster University

Montana

Montana State University

New Jersey

Rutgers University

New York

Columbia University
Eugene Lang College
University of New York - Purchase

North Carolina

Warren Wilson College

North Dakota

University of North Dakota

Oregon

Linfield College

Pennsylvania

Arcadia University
University of Pittsburgh
University of Scranton
Widener University

Rhode Island

Rhode Island School of Design

South Dakota

South Dakota State University

Tennessee

Miller Motte Technical College
Southern Adventist University

Virginia

George Mason University

Graduates Mabelle Davison and Marcus Freeman Make Their Marks

In closing, we wish to share two stories of American School graduates who are fulfilling their dreams after earning their diplomas.



Mabelle Davison, pictured above, has been entertaining people her whole life, first in the circus, then as a unicyclist and most recently as a hula hoop expert known as the Texas Tornado. She is currently studying at the Institute for American Musical Theatre in New York City and is excited to live and work near Broadway.

Marcus Freeman, pictured at right, recently was featured on the "Windy City Live" television show in Chicago, where he showed off some of the delicious desserts he creates as owner of Signature Sweets Factory in South Holland, Illinois, which is just west of American School's offices.



We congratulate Marcus and Mabelle on their outstanding achievements and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

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