

DHS Friends awards final scholarships

Dunn High School Alumni group ceasing operations this year

DHS Friends, an organization for alumni of the former Dunn High School, has announced the scholarship winners for the college school year 2020-21. Two DHS Friends scholarships have been awarded to graduates of local schools.



Brandon Bernard Cousar of Midway High School: was awarded \$1,000 by the DHS Friends Scholarship Endowment in honor of DHS Friends Board Member David Hobson, Dunn High School Class of 1962. Cousar will be attending UNC Charlotte in the fall with plans to pursue studies in physical therapy services. His ultimate goal is to own an in-person and virtual therapy business. Brandon's parents are Sherry and Ritchel Cousar, Dunn High School Classes of 1985 and 1982, respectively.



Calli Jon Massengill of South Johnston High School: was awarded \$1,000 by the DHS Friends Hilda Crocker Wilson Scholarship Endowment. Massengill will be attending East Carolina University's Honors College, majoring in special education, adapted curriculum. Her goal is to pursue a Master's degree in education administration and become a principal. Massengill's parents are Shannon and John Massengill of Benson. Her grandparents, Donna Lucas Godwin and Mike Matthews graduated with the Dunn High School Class of 1968.

These will be the last scholarships awarded directly by DHS Friends. In 2021, the administration of all three DHS Friends-sponsored scholarships will be conveyed to the Harnett County Community Foundation, a local affiliate of the North Carolina Community Foundation.

According to DHS Friends Board Chair Donald Hobson, the group is in the process of ceasing operations, to be completed in 2020. He issued the following statement to The Daily Record regarding the issue:

“We organized in 2001, simply as a ‘social’ organization, but soon after, we adopted an agenda to fund local schools — specifically, to provide scholarships for Dunn High School legacies. The years have taken a toll on our membership, the youngest to attend DHS is now about 53 — average age is 73; consequently, we no longer have the support and interest we enjoyed for so many years. So we have made the difficult decision to close the doors — notwithstanding recognition of all we have achieved.”

DHS Friends scholarships are awarded annually and are funded by three endowments under the auspices of DHS Friends: the Alice Tart Butler Baggett Scholarship Endowment, the Hilda Crocker Wilson Scholarship Endowment, and the DHS Friends Scholarship Endowment. To date, the three endowments total over \$160,000. Moreover, DHS Friends has sponsored more than \$155,000 in scholarships to students in 19 years. In addition, the organization has funded local school’s special needs programs, school improvements, and contributed \$5,000 to the Tyler Park Renovation Project.

In sum, DHS Friends has funded over \$490,000 in its 19 years of existence.

The DHS Friends Alice Tart Butler Baggett Scholarship Endowment was established in 2010 to perpetuate the memory of Alice Tart Butler Baggett, a 1933 graduate of Dunn High School, by her children and their spouses Martha Butler Goff (DHS 1954), Cliff Butler (DHS 1964) and wife Linda Lynch Butler (DHS 1963), and Robie Butler (DHS 1968) and wife, Lynda Daniel Butler. The scholarship is awarded each year to a graduating high school senior whose immediate family members attended, taught at, or were employed at Dunn High School and who will be attending Barton College, Campbell University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill or Western Carolina University. To date, the endowment has funded \$15,000 in scholarships to graduates, both in-state and out-of-state. At the time of publication, the annual \$1,500 scholarship had yet to be awarded for 2020 enrollment.

The DHS Friends Hilda Crocker Wilson Scholarship Endowment was established in 2016. This endowment was created and named in memory of Hilda Crocker Wilson, a beloved faculty member at Dunn High School from 1954 through 1969. She taught courses in office and business skills. In addition to her role as a teacher, Wilson was active in church and community affairs, and was named Dunn Woman of the Year in 2001. She was loved and admired by all who knew her. The scholarship is awarded each year to a graduating high school senior whose immediate family members attended, taught at, or were employed at Dunn High School and who will be pursuing studies in education. 2020 marks the fourth year of the scholarship award.

The DHS Friends Scholarship was established in 2001, the inaugural year of the organization. The scholarship is awarded each year to a graduating high school senior whose immediate family members attended, taught at, or were employed at Dunn High School. DHS Friends scholarships are awarded in memory of or in honor of former teachers, staff, outstanding alumni or graduating

classes. To date the organization has funded \$92,500 in scholarships to graduates, both in-state and out-of-state.

Dunn High School existed from 1926 until 1985, at which time the building, located at the intersection of Orange Avenue and Vance Street, was converted into Dunn Middle School. It was demolished in 1996 to make way for Harnett Primary School. There is a permanent memorial marking the location of the old school.

“Dunn High School may be gone, but it’s not forgotten!” Hobson said.