



Alexandria Old School Alumni Association, Inc.



“AOSAA”

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QUARTERLY DECEMBER 2025 4TH and Final Edition



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GIVING

Giving during the holidays
involves sharing time, items, or
money to help others, focusing
on supporting local
communities, and families in
need.

Linda Reed Howard, President

Gwen Brown Henderson, Founder



**DONATE WITH
JOY & CHEER
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

Greetings,

Welcome alumni members and friends. I pray all is well with you and your family.

On behalf of the organization, it is with intense pleasure and enthusiasm that I extend this heartfelt welcome to you.

Thank you for your continued support for the last 25 years. We have strived to make the Alexandria community a city we can be proud of. We tried to serve with grace, friendship, and pride.

"Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve." Martin Luther King, Jr. "This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in." "I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver."

It was a delight to serve you and this community over the years. With your support and taking this journey with us, we have been able to accomplish many achievements that benefit the city of Alexandria, VA.

It has been our vision to serve and bring the community together with our support to our children, our young adults, our senior citizens, and our aid to the less fortunate.

We pray we have served the community well over the last 25 years.

Once again, we thank you and we are grateful you took this journey with us.

God bless each and every one of you.

"I will not say "Goodbye" I say, see you around."

My love to you all!

Linda Reed Howard,

President

“GIVING and SHARING”

(Ways to give and share all year round)

Giving during the holidays involves sharing time, items, or money to help others, focusing on supporting local communities, families in need (like through "Adopt-a-Family"), food banks, and seniors, while also enjoying personal benefits like increased joy and purpose, with options ranging from volunteering at shelters to simple acts of kindness for neighbors, boosting mental well-being.

Ways to Give

- **Volunteer:** Donate time at food banks, senior centers, hospitals, or soup kitchens.
- **Donate Items:** Give non-perishable food, warm clothing (coats, gloves), toiletries, toys, books, or create care packages for the homeless.
- **Adopt a Family/Sponsor:** Provide gifts and essentials for families struggling to provide for their children during the holidays.
- **Support Local:** Help neighbors with chores (shoveling snow, hanging lights) or deliver homemade treats.
- **Shop with a Cause:** Support businesses that donate a portion of their profits or use donation platforms like Amazon Smile.
- **Give Experiences:** Gift experiences or donate to causes in someone's name for a meaningful present.
- **Repair & Reuse:** Fix old items or donate refurbished electronics for a sustainable gift.

Benefits of Giving

- **Mental Health Boost:** Triggers endorphins, dopamine, and oxytocin, reducing stress and increasing happiness and feelings of purpose.
- **Community Connection:** Fosters a sense of belonging and reinforces that we are all interconnected.
- **Reduces Loneliness:** Volunteering and helping others combat feelings of isolation common during the holidays.

How to Start

- **Research Charities:** Find reputable organizations (like Feeding America) that align with your values.
- **Check Guidelines:** Always verify visitor or donation rules for places like hospitals or shelters first.
- [The Best Ways to Give Back This Holiday Season | About Town](#)

[The Best Ways to Give Back This Holiday Season * Support Local Food Banks.](#) Food insecurity is a challenge for many faces, especially giving during the holiday season.

[Giving during the holiday season \(often called "Giving Season"\) is.](#)

[a time when individual generosity peaks, with 62% of U.S. adults planning to donate in November and December. In 2025, typical donors are projected to double their monthly contributions to approximately \\$100 compared to previous years.](#)

Ways to Give Back

- **Volunteer Time:** Many organizations, such as Feeding America and the Salvation Army, rely on volunteers for food distribution, gift wrapping, and "bell ringing".
- **Donate Goods:** Local shelters and toy drives, such as Toys for Tots, accept new, unwrapped toys, while food banks seek non-perishable items like canned proteins and whole grains.
- **Financial Contributions:** Monetary gifts provide nonprofits with the flexibility to meet immediate needs. Some platforms, such as [Give Directly](#), provide cash directly to those in poverty.
- **Support Local Businesses:** Purchasing from small shops or artisans boosts the local economy and often includes unique, handmade gifts.
- **Acts of Kindness:** Simple gestures, such as shoveling snow for a neighbor, writing cards for nursing home residents, or paying for the coffee of the person behind you in line, can significantly impact someone's day.

Meaningful Giving Strategies

- **Gifts "In Honor Of":** Instead of a physical item, make a donation in a loved one's name to a cause they support.

- **The "Four-Gift Rule":** To reduce consumerism, give one item the recipient wants, one they need, one to wear, and one to read. Some families use a five-gift rule by adding "something to experience".
- **Adopt-a-Family Programs:** Provide specific items from a family's Wishlist, including clothes, food, and toys, through organizations like the Salvation Army.
- **Employer Matching:** Many companies offer matching programs, doubling, or tripling the impact of employee donations.

Personal and Community Benefits

- **Mental Health:** Giving triggers the release of "feel-good" chemicals like dopamine and oxytocin, which can reduce holiday stress and anxiety.
- **Teaching Values:** Involving children in giving—such as choosing toys to donate or volunteering together—instills empathy and the importance of community service.
- **Community Strength:** Acts of generosity create a ripple effect that fosters a more compassionate and connected community.

**ALEXANDRIA OLD SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATION (AOSAA, INC.) GIVING BACK TO THE
COMMUNITY FROM 2001 THROUGH MARCH 2026.**

(25 years of service)

2000, A community social gathering for the community to reunite their friendships, schoolmates and to catch up on community events.

2000, First community cookout. Alexandria community was invited to share in a community project and enjoy food, fun and sharing.

2001, The AOSAA Inc. was formed by its founder, Ms. Gwendolyn Brown-Henderson.

2002, Teacher's appreciation (First one). Our first salute to our teachers held on Saturday, April 20, 2002. "Honoring the Bridges Who Brought Us Across." Former principal and teachers of the segregated schools of Alexandria were honored by their students at this special reception to say, "THANK YOU" Those teachers were tough, no nonsense who demanded and inspired the best from their students. We selected Mr. Alfred Carter as recipient for the first Foundation Award for distinguished service as a teacher and coach at Parker-Gray and George Washington High Schools retire in 1991 as chairperson of the Physical Education Department at George Washington Middle School. A few years later Ms. Christine Howard, teacher and principal of Jefferson Houston Elementary School, was awarded for her service in teaching and in the community. Ms. Howard was instrumental in getting the Head Start program in Jefferson-Houston School and the Alexandria Community YMCA It is still one of the most outstanding Head Start Program in the country.

The teachers' appreciation awards were held for several years honoring our old schoolteachers and new schoolteachers.

2004, We become incorporated and became a 501 © (3) Tax-exempt non-profit organization, The AOSAA, Inc. is organization exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. Our vision is to promote positive changes and reach out to the community in Alexandra, Virginia delivering service through community-based activities, and programs for our senior citizens, scholarship programs and aid to help the less fortunate individuals in the Alexandria community and honor those past and present individuals who made a difference in the city of Alexandria.

In spite of having very little teaching material compared to other schools in the city, those teachers turned out some great students, who went on to become doctors, lawyers, nurses, life coaches, politicians, mayor, military leaders, government and city workers, judges, ministers and entrepreneurs to name a few.

2012, We started our Scholarship Program and later renamed after the passing of one of our board members Donald R. Allen, Attorney at Law, Alexandria, VA, the “Donald R. Allen Scholarship Program”. This program was started to help supplement well-deserving students with their future education. To date we have awarded over \$37,000.00 to inner city students. Many of these students have gone on to successful careers. With community support, we can continue to award our Alexandria students for their excellence. We will be ending our scholarship program in March 2026.

2013, Senior Outing (*free lunch and play*). Seniors were treated to a day outing to a play and lunch. This outing gave the seniors opportunity to get out and socialize with others, helping them with their physical, social, and mental care. Other senior activities were bus trips, (where select seniors went for free), holiday gift baskets, toiletries bags and gift cards given out annually to our seniors and less fortunate community.

Our outreach program to present: 2005 to 2026.

- Jefferson Elementary school was awarded one hundred toiletries bags to be awarded to students in need.
- Backpacks were given to students in the community at our annual picnics.
- Field trip and lunch with our community teens to the Black African Culture Museum. They got a chance to be exposed to our past and present culture. Senior and youth got a chance to community with each other over lunch.
- We adopted a family and awarded them with gift cards, gift baskets, and coats. Partnering Alexandria Social Service, we were able to help this family during the holiday season.
- We donated forty-five bags of Toiletries to Beulah Baptist Church Missions Ministry to aid in their mission.
- A fashion show was held as a fundraiser and award program to honor our teachers. Teachers were treated to the fashion show, dinner, and awards for their service to the community. Proceeds from this program went toward our scholarship and outreach programs.
- Donations to Camp Angels, Church AWANA Program) and bereavement donations to our members who lost a loved one.
- Our annual gift cards continue to be awarded to individuals and churches.
- We sponsored a Turkey drive for the community where we gave out several free turkeys to the community.
- Gift cards continue as we get support from our community.
- Our coat drive for kids continues.

Our last contribution to the community will be in March 2026.

With our 25 years of service to the community, we wholeheartedly **THANK YOU.** These accomplishments and services would not have been possible without your support. “KIDDOS TO YOU.”

He Leave His Legacy:



McArthur Myers dies at 73

McArthur Myers, a Black history advocate in the City of Alexandria for many decades, died on Dec. 4 after a lengthy illness. The South Carolina native moved with his family to the DMV shortly after his birth. Myers attended Alexandria City Public Schools, graduating from T.C. Williams High School, now Alexandria City High School, in the early 1970s.

Myers worked for the Washington, D.C. Department of Mental Health for more than 40 years before retiring in 2015. But he was best known for his civil rights activism, especially in helping get historical markers to commemorate Black history in the city. Myers was best known for saying: “Alexandria: One city, many stories. Tell them all.”

City Councilor John Taylor Chapman, a fourth-generation Alexandrian, echoed Bah, saying Myers was part of a generation dedicated to preserving the city’s Black history.

Audrey Davis, the Office of Historic Alexandria’s African American Division director, said a lasting memory of Myers is their 2022 pilgrimage to Montgomery, Alabama, where the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project delivered soil in honor of McCoy and Thomas.

I, Linda Howard, was chairperson for this project, and I worked side by side with McArthur on this project. He worked tirelessly on this project to make it happen and it was a tremendous success. I learned a lot about our history working alongside him. We became friends as well as a mutual respect for each other.

Chapman and Davis said his work preserving the history at African American Heritage Park in Carlyle was a monumental project. Myers worked closely with Alex Renew in redesigning the park and preserving the Black Baptist Cemetery.

Bah, Davis and Chapman affectionately described Myers as an ambassador for Alexandria, a citizen extraordinaire and “glue guy” for the city, respectively.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU, HAP-PY BIRTH-DAY!

OCTOBER

Raymond Anderson 10-02
 Horace Williams 10-09
 Richard Diggs 10-10
 Deborah Martin 10-12
 Fred Dogan 10-18
 Sandra Walton 10-21
 Vivian Tyler 10-30

NOVEMBER

Michelle Teel 11-05
 Vanessa Goodman 11-06
 Rufus Dancy 11-08
 Verdella Jennings 11-08
 Mary Smith 11-11
 Maria Turner 11-14
 Deborah Hall Greene 11-24
 Carolyn Williams 11-29

DECEMBER

Gwen Brown-Henderson 12-08
 Donna Cross 12-09
 Donna Pegues 12-09
 Colena Turner 12-16
 Linda Burton 12-20
 Callie Terrell 12-22
 Myron Contee 12-25
 *LINDA HOWARD 12 25
 Linda Dogan 12-26
 Hubert Avery 12-30
 Williams Coates 12-31
 LaDonna Williams 12-31



EDUCATION



[Alexandria City Public Schools](#) ·

[November 20 at 7:00 PM](#) ·

One [Alexandria City High School](#) alum, Hadi Kamara, is making history on the world stage! This senior at Princeton University has been awarded the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship, which will allow him to study at the University of Oxford next year. With a strong passion for global affairs and a dedication to making a meaningful impact, Hadi exemplifies what it means to lead with character. Congratulations, Hadi, on receiving the Rhodes Scholarship!

DID YOU KNOW?

The Alexandria City School Board approved a stricter cell phone and personal mobile device policy in an 8-1 vote, with former member and now-City Councilor Abdel Elnoubi casting the lone opposing vote. The vote means that ACPS students must store their personal devices – including cellphones, smart watches, and laptops – from “bell-to-bell,” meaning they are not allowed to use the devices during lunch, for example. Students, parents, and teachers raised concerns about the new ban to the Times and School Board. The policy followed a July 2024 executive order from Gov. Glenn Youngkin and guidance from the Virginia Department of Education to adopt the policy, though the VDOE said the decision is up to each school board. A bell-to-bell rule was already in place at ACPS’ elementary and middle schools but was not yet in place at ACHS. A teacher expressed concerns about enforcing the ban and parents said they were worried about being unable to contact their children about security concerns or during an emergency.



REMINDER:

Get your flu shot!

Get your COVID shot!

Get your pneumonia shot!

Get your yearly checkup!

Eat healthy!

Get in your exercise!

***Drink plenty of water**

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**Missing from this picture: Michael Ashton, Donald Allen
and Ted Smith**

**We thank you for all the love and support you have given to this
organization We would not have been successful without you.
Take care and we are still around supporting our community.**

**Love you all!!
Linda Howard,
President**

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