

THE SAMUEL HUNTINGTON PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

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The Numbers Tell a Wonderful Story

Dear Friends of the Sam Huntington Award,

If the Samuel Huntington award were a mathematical equation it might look like this: $x + y + z =$ our wonderful story.

x = a college student with a dream, a public service project and the energy and grit to make it come true.

y = The Samuel Huntington Award, which gives all winners the wherewithal to start their project and the knowledge that we believe in them.

z = generous donors like you!
 $x+y+z =$ thousands of lives changed for the better all around the world, all in Sam's name, and that is a wonderful story.

Here are some of the products of those equations:

In 1994 Matthew Meyer (Brown University) went to Nairobi, Kenya to work with street kids, who simply hung around, didn't go to school and often got

into trouble. Together they founded *Eco Sandals*, making sandals out of used tires and getting an education. Today Eco Sandals has sold 20,000 pairs of sandals, which have been shipped to 17 countries on 5 continents! This has kept 5,000 tires out of landfills and made them into durable footwear that lasts 10 years or 10,000 miles! In addition, workers have the chance to invest in the company, which has generated over \$100,000 of shareholder value for unskilled shantytown workers to invest in the Nairobi Stock Exchange. Today, a former street kid is now the head of the operation, and owns his own house!

In 1998, Jeannie Lang Rosenthal (Harvard College) founded *Let's Get Ready*, an SAT tutoring program for underserved high school students. Today the program, which now focuses on getting high school students both to and through college, helps 4,000 students



**Jennifer Huntington
Chair**

per year prepare for the SAT and fill out the daunting college applications at no cost. LGR then mentors 9,000 graduates of the program, while they are at college, to make sure that they graduate and get worthwhile jobs.

In 2009 Sadiqa Basiri (Mount Holyoke College) founded the first women's community college in her native Kabul, Afghanistan. She called it the *Youth Capacity Building Initiative*, or ORUJ. Using the Award money, Sadiqa hired teachers who trained the first graduating class of 36 young Afghan women, giving them skills in English, technology and business. All 36 immediately got jobs! Sadiqa courageous-

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2015 Award Winners

Jennifer's magic equation adds more value, and the wonderful story continues this year. In 2015, we selected three more outstanding young people for public service here and around the world.

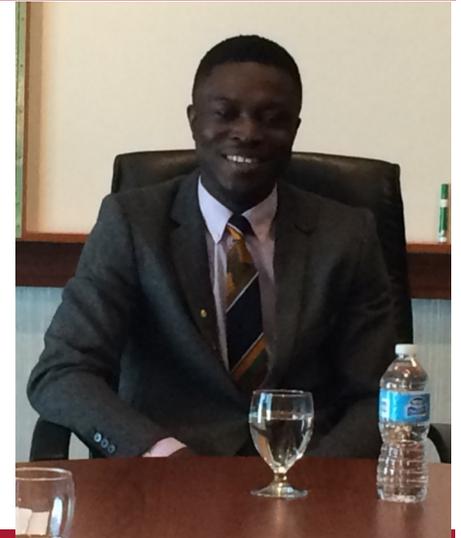
Help for Children with Incarcerated Parents



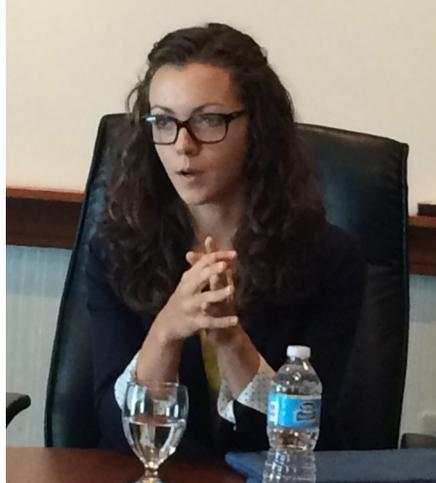
Yasmine Arrington, a graduate of Elon University, started ScholarCHIPS when she was in high school. It was then she first realized that potential college students with incarcerated parents had a special need for mentoring, support, and financial aid. Yasmine, a child of an incarcerated parent, not only went on to attend and graduate from college, but started ScholarCHIPS to help others in the same position. ScholarCHIPS began in the Washington DC area, and she now wants to expand its reach and breadth. Specifically, she wants to include 50 students in a annual life skills workshop, increase the number of scholarship awards by six to eight students, expand to other states by creating a model and manual, and raise awareness of the challenges faced by children with incarcerated parents. Yasmine has identified a critical need and is a shining example to those who will participate in her program. She is a valuable addition to our equation.

School for Girls in Ghana

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, **Shadrack Osei Frimpong** returned to his village in Tarkwa-Breman, Ghana to start a tuition free girls' school. He has not only convinced the Huntington Committee of the value of the project, he has convinced his village. To this point, harsh poverty in the village forced parents and community leaders to focus their resources on male-child education. Shadrack proposes to build a school to enroll 100 girls aged 5-17. The school will be a three classroom block with a library and a bio-latrine. The village has donated over 50 acres for the school and has agreed to donate time and labor to build the school. Most of the 50 acres will be used by students and parents for a farm to cover the school's ongoing costs of operation. Shadrack's colleagues at Penn are collecting the books for the library, and the Huntington Award will help pay for the cost for the materials to build the school. Shadrack's project demonstrates how a creative idea and cooperation compounds value to the community. When asked, "Why a girls' school," he explained that the brightest student in his primary school was a girl, who had no place to go to high school. Shadrack has doubled the talent and opportunity in his village. Good equation.



Vocational Training in Pune, India



Kathryn Amelia Watts' proposal actually adds a new component to a public service project created by a former Huntington Public Service Award winner. In 2005, Elizabeth Scholtys started the Ashraya Initiative for Children, which now provides education and healthcare to more than 200 children from nomadic tribes in Pune, one of India's poorest slums. After graduating from Florida State University, Kathryn will add a new element to the Ashraya Initiative. She will implement a pilot program for the vocational training of ten to twenty young people. The program will support the students for one year of training in job skills, personal development, and money management. If successful, Kathryn's program will lead the children over a critical hurdle, allow them to reach self sufficiency, and break the cycle of poverty in their community.

Reflections From a Prior Award Winner

Nestled in a dense thicket of greenery basking in the tropical heat, the Sundari tree firmly stands in the Sundarban forest. Nearby, Asma, 15, lives in one of the poorest slums in Khulna, Bangladesh. I came to know Asma, and the women in her village, through a summer internship at a community-based health program supported by a local non-governmental organization (NGO). Over four weeks, we became like sisters. Asma, like many young mothers of the slum, was forced into marriage, becoming a mother of three. As my internship drew to a close, I told her: "I must leave to go home." Asma asked me to come back.

Social customs lead women to avoid visiting doctors, the majority of whom are male. This can cause mild illnesses to become life threatening. Remembering these patterns, I returned to Bangladesh once more to work for the same NGO. This time, I helped provide free diabetes screenings and health-education seminars. Checking blood glucose levels and counseling individuals, I doubted my efforts would yield much impact. The love and gratitude of people showed me otherwise. I came to realize that to help is to nourish hope, a hope that I needed to rekindle. It gave me a greater appreciation of my life in the United States; more importantly it spurred me to further action. In 2010 as a junior at Wesleyan University, with the assistance of my peers, I founded a nonprofit organization, Brighter Dawns (BD), to improve slum conditions and reduce health disparities in Bangladesh. I began with the water and sanitation crisis, training women to become community health workers. While BD was in its nascent stages, I wrestled with apathy from many corners, including people who told me the problems in the slums are simply too big and too entrenched for me to handle. I took this as a challenge. Determined to forge forward, I mobilized young people locally and abroad to join this cause. Although it had been conceived in a moment of curiosity and spontaneity, making BD a reality required determination, perseverance and planning.



BD has taught me a great deal about myself, working with others, patience, and collaboration. While it means long nights of wading through piles of paperwork, and endless meetings, it also means that at the end of the day I have made a difference. Through the generosity of the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award in 2012, along with other grants and support from generous donors, to date we have personally facilitated the installation of 16 wells and 18 latrines, led 17 seminars, and empowered 10 women to become leaders in and advocates for their communities, impacting over 7,000 people both locally and abroad. These victories make all the sacrifice worthwhile, and they are why I take joy in BD as it reaffirms my belief that bold and innovative decisions are needed to effect the change we want to see in the world.

My work with BD is often unexpectedly limited by the cultural differences between Bangladesh and the U.S. Such issues have made me passionate about the nexus of religion, culture, spirituality, and health. I also take great interest in infectious diseases that stem from water, sanitation, and hygiene practices. As such, I have taken an interest in research on disease vulnerability of populations and identifying practices which contribute to the morbidity and mortality of that population in order to determine the best treatments. Recently, we have been working with The International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research in Bangladesh to determine next steps as we want to ensure our actions are informed by data. Little drops of water can truly make an ocean. This was even more evident after being invited to the White House once in 2012 and then again this past summer in 2015 to have dinner with President Obama. No action should be considered too small when it comes to making progress and pushing for change. President Obama honored several social entrepreneurs and organizations doing work across the globe and Brighter Dawns was one of them.

Being a Samuel Huntington Public Service Award Recipient has truly been an honor. Through our work, we were able to bring about harmony within the community. While before there was much strife in the area regarding access to a basic human right, now dignity, time, and energy would be saved. Due to the diversity of religions within the region, with the inception of the project, we were able to bring together Muslims, Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists, some of whom were from India and Pakistan—not just Bangladesh. Living in the same area, they realized how, despite what they thought to be differences, access to safe sanitation does not discriminate among religions. This newfound joy among the children, the middle-aged, and the elderly was simply spectacular. From the twinkle in their eyes to the sparkling tears of gratefulness, I could not have been happier for what was accomplished. It made me realize how privileged Brighter Dawns was to effectuate such a change; most importantly, it made me feel grateful. Saima Akther, 58, says, "We may be poor, but we had faith and prayed for a solution and God provided us Brighter Dawns."

On behalf of my team and all the beneficiaries in Bangladesh, I want to thank all the board members for their willingness to invest a cause when others doubted our abilities. One day when I have the financial capacity, I hope to give back to this Fund to encourage other young people that no idea is too daunting to tackle. Please support the Samuel Huntington Fund shape the future of our world.

Tasmiha Kahn
November 2015

THE SAMUEL HUNTINGTON PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Greetings from the Chair, continued

ly continues her work in Kabul despite increasing pressures against educating women.

In 2010 Mark Arnoldy (University of Colorado) went back to Nepal where he had spent part of his junior year abroad, and built a health care clinic in the western part of that country. Before this clinic was built, sick people often walked two days to get medical attention. Today, *Possible Health* has served 296,000 patients, and employs 324 people.

In 2013 Alex Fried (University of New Hampshire) started *PLAN - Post Landfill Action Network*, a non-profit network of student leaders on campuses across the country working towards zero waste in their campus communities. In the last two years, PLAN has grown to have 5 full-time staff, and they've signed on over 50 member campuses, helping students create and sustain programs that have kept over 200 tons of waste out of the landfills. This past fall PLAN held their 2nd annual "Students for Zero Waste" conference, convening over 300 students from around the US.

In 2014 Michael Long (New College of Florida) started *Sail for Justice*. Himself a product of the justice sys-

tem, Michael started his program to provide leadership training, team building, counseling and physical challenges for young men whom the system has deemed 'dangerous'. Michael and his team are currently sailing 2,700 miles across the Atlantic Ocean with five of these young men. Michael, and his team, want to prove that there are alternatives to incarceration.

In 2014 Alex Epstein (Trinity College) took two abandoned city blocks in Philadelphia and converted them into vegetable gardens calling his project *Philly Urban Creators*. Working with their neighbors, they now operate 4 urban gardens in north Philadelphia, and provide organic produce to over 12 neighborhood families on a regular basis. In addition, this summer they successfully organized a Summer Hoodstock Festival, which was a great platform for dozens of local artists, musicians, entrepreneurs and community leaders. Now they are running a pilot program: "Restorative Justice" which provides transition jobs for 12 formerly incarcerated young men from the community, giving them workforce training, leadership development and entrepreneurial incubation!

I could happily go on! Since 1989 we have given 65 awards and about one third of those projects have proved to be both sustainable, and which, if you do the math above, have affected thousands of lives positively. Of course these stories are just a few examples of the work being done by our winners, but I hope you will agree that the numbers do indeed tell a wonderful story. One final number: this year we had applicants from almost 40 colleges across the USA!

However, we couldn't do this without the 'z' factor in the equation I mentioned at the beginning: **z = YOU**, our generous donors. Without your support the numbers in the 'x' and 'y' part of the equation simply would not exist. Each of our winners attributes these numbers to the generosity of the Samuel Huntington Fund. Sam would be very honored to be remembered in this way. So, on behalf of our winners; the people whose lives are changed; and the members of the Committee, who love meeting these extraordinary young people and seeing their projects come to fruition, **THANK YOU!**

Jennifer Huntington

Thank you to our Supporters!

The Samuel Huntington Fund was established in 1989, and has now granted 65 Public Service Awards. As noted in Jennifer's letter, the Fund depends on your financial support to continue its mission of assisting recent college graduates that want to devote a year of their life to public service activity anywhere in the world. Typically, we make three \$15,000 grants per year. Our financial year runs from July 1st to June 30th. In our most recent year, ended June 30, 2015, we received 94 contributions for a total of \$38,810. These contributions ranged for \$35 to \$5,000, with the average contribution being \$413. In our next Newsletter we will individually recognize all donors since our last Newsletter was issued last Spring. Please keep the Huntington Fund in mind as you consider year-end charitable giving. For your convenience, a pre-addressed envelope is enclosed with this newsletter. You can also make a contribution at any time by sending a check to: The Samuel Huntington Fund, c/o Ms. Amy Stacy, National Grid, 40 Sylvan Road, Waltham, MA 02451. Thank you for your consideration!