

News from aspire: assisting single parents in realizing education

ASPIRE of Green Country Oklahoma awards its first scholarship recipients

ASPIRE of Green Country Oklahoma is pleased to announce they have awarded their first scholarships for the Fall 2011 semester. The first recipient, Katie, is attending OSU Tulsa and will graduate in December 2011 with a degree in accounting. Katie, the proud mother of a 6 year old, deeply moved the scholarship committee members as she told her emotional story of being a single mom. After receiving the award, Katie said, "You have no idea how far it went to help me get caught up on everything that I was behind on. It gave me a little bit of peace for a couple months. I just really appreciate it." The second recipient, Tina, the single mother of a wonderful 6 year old boy, is attending Oklahoma State University. She works full-time for a nonprofit organization while completing her accounting degree. Tina anticipates graduating in 2014 with a double major in finance.

ASPIRE of GCOK looks forward to helping other single parents achieve success through higher learning. They salute Katie, Tina, and all single parents who strive to enrich their lives through higher education. They are excited to interview potential recipients and award 3-5 additional scholarships for the Spring 2012 semester. Congratulations and best of luck!



ASPIRE of GCOK Board member Carey Haynie, right, presents scholarship to Tina and her son Shamus

ASPIRE of North Delta Mississippi establishes affiliate

We welcome ASPIRE of North Delta Mississippi, as they became an ASPIRE affiliate on November 30. ASPIRE of North Delta is located in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Board members include Charles Butler, Patti Howell, Jean Duff, Dorothy Prestwich, Bernice Sykes, and Wayne Orr.

The affiliate was established through the efforts of The Delta Bridge Project, which is a targeted geographic approach that integrates Southern Bancorp's rural economic development strategy with local, state, regional and national programs for the Delta with involvement of residents of the communities.

Congratulations North Delta!



L to R – ASPIRE of North Delta Mississippi - Jean Duff, Charles Butler, Sanford Johnson, Dr. Dorothy Prestwich

ASPIRE of Metro Atlanta Georgia establishes affiliate

Congratulations to ASPIRE of Metro Atlanta Georgia for establishing an affiliate on December 5.

Susan Reid, pictured on the right, was inspired to start an affiliate after her mother, Pat Reid, witnessed firsthand the transformations experienced by single parent families sponsored by the Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Benton County, AR (SPSF/BC). Susan's mother has mentored scholarship recipients and chaired SPSF/BC committees for the past 25 years.

The Metro Atlanta Board members are Sandy Klarer, Janelle Perrilliat, Janeine Williams, Wendy Reiss, Susan Reid, and Brian Vaughn.



L to R – Susan Reid, Thea Williams, and Janelle Perrilliat sign the ASPIRE of Metro Atlanta affiliate agreement

Many Thanks to COO Pete Metzger

Pete Metzger accepts a congratulatory plaque from Christine Zini, Executive Director of ASPIRE, upon his retirement. Pete and Christine co-founded ASPIRE in January 2009, modeling the national program after Arkansas's proven successful scholarship program for single parents. Pete served as Chief Operating Officer and Affiliate Development Officer for ASPIRE. A retired Wal-Mart executive, Pete's second retirement will allow him time to travel with his family and also continue his philanthropic endeavors. The Board honored Metzger, his wife, Marj, and daughter, Tracey, at a retirement luncheon November 15 at Crabby's restaurant in Rogers.



Pete Metzger accepts congratulatory plaque from Christine Zini



Welcome to our new Program Coordinator - Jennifer Miller



Jennifer Miller joined the ASPIRE staff in September 2011 as the Program Coordinator. She moved to Northwest Arkansas four years ago from Baton Rouge, LA to be closer to her family, especially her grandparents. Jennifer attended LSU, where she earned her master's degree from the School of Human Resource Education and Workforce Development.

Jennifer will be working closely with each affiliate to provide training support after the establishment phase. She will use her instructional design skills to enhance the current affiliate materials and also develop educational workshops for new and established affiliate board members, personnel and volunteers.

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Jennifer Miller
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

Ghandi

A Message from our Board President

Marjorie Marugg-Wolfe

For many years, as I traveled around the country, people marveled as I talked about my passion -- scholarships for single parents. Invariably they said, "We need a program like that in our state." I would agree and would return to Arkansas where our scholarship program was truly changing the lives of single parent families through education.

In 2011, this dream of taking a unique scholarship program to other states is being realized. There are now ASPIRE affiliates in Missouri, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi and Georgia! ASPIRE also administers an inspiring scholarship program for widows of servicemen killed in Afghanistan and Iraq, with recipients in Texas and Colorado. With the recent addition of a Program Coordinator to better serve our members, we are on our way!

We express special thanks to Christine Zini and Pete Metzger who stepped out in 2008 to co-found the program; to the Walton Family Foundation for the original seed grant; and the other donors and supporters who have made this progress possible.

The first year was foundation building, developing the 501(c)3, bylaws, and organizational and developmental materials for affiliates. The first affiliate, ASPIRE of Southwest Missouri in Joplin, awarded scholarships in 2010, and despite a devastating tornado, also awarded scholarships in Fall 2011. Oklahoma's first affiliate in Tulsa (GCOK) has awarded scholarships as well. As we approach the end of 2011, the dream of a nationwide program is becoming a reality. Thank you donors, staff, Board members and most of all, community leaders who are giving leadership, time, energy and finances to develop local programs to enhance communities by changing the lives of single parent families through education.

News and Cues

Affiliate Information

ASPIRE AFFILIATES

ASPIRE of Southwest Missouri

ASPIRE of Northeast Oklahoma

**ASPIRE of Green Country
Oklahoma**

**ASPIRE of Northshore
Louisiana**

**ASPIRE of North Delta
Mississippi**

**ASPIRE of Metro Atlanta
Georgia**

Newly forming affiliates benefit from having a diverse board of directors from the outset. Educators, accountants, lawyers and clergy have a vast field of expertise that can be advantageous to your success. ASPIRE recommends 6-8 board members in order to cover many fields of knowledge.

ASPIRE provides a useful Toolkit that includes all the materials an affiliate will need to become established, as well as online training modules once a Board is elected. Starting in 2012, we will also offer educational workshops on interviewing applicants and awarding scholarships, on successful fundraising, and on how to use our new database.

Want more information about establishing an affiliate in your area? Want to be on our email list? Visit our website at **www.aspireus.org** or call us at 866.973.0805. We look forward to hearing from you.

The ASPIRE scholarship award can be used toward tuition and books, but more importantly toward any expense such as home costs, car repairs or emergencies that may otherwise cause a single parent student to drop out of school.

A website will be created for each new affiliate. Scholarship applicants can apply through your website, supporters can easily and securely donate, and you can share information about ASPIRE with the community. The website administrator will work with ASPIRE to make it unique to your affiliate -- include board of director bios, links to useful resources in your area, and helpful information for single parents.



Surviving Spouse Recipient... Donnice Roberts

May 7, 2008 was the day my life changed forever. My husband, SSG Kevin Casey Roberts, was killed in Afghanistan during his third tour of duty. At the age of 28 I became a widow. With two young kids, I began worrying about the future immediately. I was a homemaker and my life had been taking care of my family, but now the dynamics of the situation had changed. When looking to the future, the only option I had was that I would need to go back to school and get a college education. Failure would not be an option! With the rising cost of education I was unsure of how I was going to be able to achieve this dream without going into debt with school loans.

Luckily, I am one of the recipients of the ASPIRE and BAE Systems, Inc. scholarships for military widows. Without this scholarship I would not be able to attend school and further my education. This scholarship has given me hope that I can accomplish anything and that there is a good future to be had by myself and my children. Now my kids will know that even through tragedy you can rise above and persevere. I am setting a good example for them while carrying on the legacy of my husband. With my education, which is made possible by the Surviving Spouse Scholarship, I plan on working with Veterans and their families as well as Gold Star families. Giving back to our military community will be in honor of my husband and will fulfill my educational goals. Thank you to ASPIRE and BAE for walking hand in hand on this journey with me and believing in me and my dream to succeed.



Donnice Roberts with fallen husband Casey, daughter Caehlen and son Keeghan



Sincerely,

Donnice Roberts

Proud Wife of SSG Kevin Casey Roberts, KIA 5-7-08, Afghanistan

Support ASPIRE this Holiday Season and Throughout the Year

We've just made it easier for you to support ASPIRE. We registered ASPIRE assisting single parents in realizing education with GoodSearch.com, a company that helps nonprofits like ours raise funds through the everyday actions of our supporters. ASPIRE can earn a donation every time you search the Internet and shop online. Here's how you can help:

Download the GoodSearch toolbar, the search engine with a unique social mission, powered by Yahoo!, so you get great search results. Each time you search the Internet, GoodSearch makes a donation to ASPIRE.

Register with and use GoodShop.com when you shop online. It is a new online marketplace that donates a percentage of your purchase to ASPIRE. Enter ASPIRE assisting single parents in realizing education as your favorite charity and begin shopping with more than 2500 popular online merchants.



Seasons Greetings

*With joyful gratitude, we thank and recognize our supporters.
ASPIRE wishes you and yours a very Merry Christmas.*

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By investing in ASPIRE, you will be providing hope to real people who will be empowered through education, thus bringing significant change to the under-served and oppressed single parents in our nation. Your gift will live on in transformed and grateful individuals. As we have witnessed over and over, when single parents become financially stable, they wholeheartedly give back to the communities that made their dream of education a reality.

Yes! I want to help ASPIRE provide single parents the opportunity of an education.
 Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____.

Name on Account (Please Print) : _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Payment Options: ☐ Check Enclosed ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date: _____

Security V-Code (3 digit number on BACK of card): _____

Authorized Signature: _____

_____ Please contact me to arrange for a donation of stock.

_____ Please contact me to arrange for a regular bank draft donation.

_____ I prefer my donation remain anonymous.

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Your contribution can be mailed to:
ASPIRE - 20 E. Center Street - Fayetteville, AR 72701

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