



*Alpha Chapter's 2009
Scholarship Recipient...
Ashley Harper*

Our 2009 Alpha Chapter scholarship recipient is Ashley Harper of Chattanooga Center High School. She and her mother graciously accepted our invitation to attend our March Birthday Tea at Betty Fassnacht's home. Our President, Janice Nelms congratulated her on behalf of the chapter and presented her with a gift from the chapter.

Ashley is a member of The National Beta Club, The National Honor Society, STARS, Central High School soccer and softball teams. She has been on the Star Roll for every semester all four years, was voted Most Improved Defensive Award in Soccer and served as captain in her sophomore and junior years. She has received awards in World Studies, English, Humanities Academy Award, and the Forensic Science Award. Her community service includes softball clinic, volunteer assistant coach with Brown Middle School soccer teams, Snow Hill Elementary School Fall Festival, Chambliss Abuse Shelter. She works summer with her dad who is a self-employed paint contractor.

Ashley has a 3.8 grade point average and plans to attend the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga and become a teacher.

The Scholarship Committee wishes to share her essay with the chapter.

"There are several reasons I chose to enter the educational career pathway in college. Since the age of twelve, I have known exactly what I have wanted to do for the rest of my life. Throughout my schooling, I have encountered good teachers and bad teachers, all of which have been influential to my decision to become an educator. Another major influence in my career choice has been athletics, both school and seasonal.

One factor that led to my interest in teaching occurred when I was in the fourth grade. I had a terrible teacher, but I learned two valuable lessons at this early age: 1.) A balanced education is essential to a proper life and 2.) Ignorance did not, in fact, mean bliss. Suffice it to say, fourth grade was a challenge for me, but it was only a small hurdle

I realize now. As I moved on in my educational career, I realized that my fourth grade teacher was put in my life to help me make my decision to become an educator.

Following this fourth grade fiasco, I encountered several intelligent and creative teachers. In ninth grade, my English teacher encouraged me to take up creative writing, a passion I discovered in middle school. With my teacher's support, I enrolled in a creative writing class, and eventually had a short story I submitted published in *Anthology of Short Stories by Young Americans 2007 Edition*. I have been involved in many AP and Honors courses throughout high school, which means I have had the benefit of learning from some of the best teachers my school has to offer. Ms. Barbara Henry greatly influenced me in my decision to enter the teaching profession. She was my tenth grade Honors World Studies teacher, a combination of English and world geography. She made world literature fun. I

distinctly remember her laughing in the middle of one of Shakespeare's plays, while the majority of the class looked utterly bewildered. The enjoyment and wit she brought to the classroom greatly affected me. Mrs. Dorothy Stone, my AP U.S. History teacher also provided me with the

knowledge of history and the will to smile at seven in the morning. She was a vivacious woman who could lecture for hours and make it feel like mere minutes. Ms. Lee Ann Olskey, my eleventh grade English teacher, prepared me for AP English. Ms. Olskey taught me that not every good teacher had to be strict and give homework every day but were the ones that smiled when a student understood.

While these women showed me the knowledge of books, I learned many of life's lessons on the athletic field. I have been involved in athletics since I was four years old and have lettered in varsity soccer and softball since the sixth grade. My softball coach at Central High School, Mrs. Lee Ann Shurette, not only instilled the determination to win in me during the two seasons I have played for her but the desire and faith to succeed. Coach Shurette is an outstanding example of the teacher and coach I hope to be one day. Mr. Jerry Mongar, Coach Shurette's father, has also been very influential in my decision. He has encouraged me to follow my dreams and keep God close in all my plans. Central High School athletics have never been known for record-breaking seasons, but with the dedication of people such as Coach Shurette and Mr. Mongar, I am proud to say I was a Central athlete and a Lady Pounder.

I want to become an educator because I thoroughly enjoy learning and teaching. With the valuable lessons I have learned from these amazing people, I cannot imagine not getting involved in this career. I have been blessed with the support of great teachers, coaches and my amazing family. Without the good and the bad, I would not be the person I am today, and I am glad of the hardships I have overcome, and thankful for all of it."

Comments from the teacher's recommendation letters include: "Ashley is a young woman who has a high set of standards concerning the academic arena as well as the social arena." "I have found her to be a true example of a student-athlete; she strives for success in both the classroom and on the field of play." "She has a true desire to pass on what she has learned in the classroom and on the playing field to the next generation of students."

Congratulations, Ashley!