

# FHHSAA

FHHS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
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**FAIRMONT HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

[www.fhhsaa.org](http://www.fhhsaa.org)

**March 2011**

## ***The President's Message***

***John J. Williams***

Last year about this time, we asked for prayers for Haiti in the wake of the disaster of its devastating earthquake, and also the snow blizzards that shut down our schools, government, and business in Prince George's County and the Metropolitan area.

### SCHOOL BUDGET CUTS

This year, we are praying that public education and services will not become the scapegoat to budget cuts proposed by our leaders in Annapolis and Prince George's County.

Buses with students, parents, Prince Georgians, and your truly, for the past weeks have lobbied in Annapolis, and Prince George's for full funding of the following:

- Restore \$85 million to Prince George's County FY2012 Education Budget;
- Proposed \$155 million deficit would cause the following cuts or furloughs:
  - 1100 positions
  - 200-400 classroom teachers
  - Increase in class size
  - Reduction in the following:
    - JROTC (\$20 million cut)
    - Middle School athletics
  - Switching pre-kindergarten programs from full-day to half-day and eliminating Reading Recovery, which is highly effective, for low achieving first graders, according to Reading Recovery Council of North America.

It is said that "funding cuts will hurt Prince George's County more than any other school district in the state." Can we afford this?

2012 CUTS AFFECT Fairmont Heights High School.

## **President Obama Salutes FHHS 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

December 2, 2010

FHHS Alumni Association  
Post Office Box 2727  
Landover Hills, Maryland 20784

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to send my heartfelt congratulations to everyone celebrating the 60th anniversary of Fairmont Heights High School.

Over the course of your history, Fairmont Heights High School has prepared countless young minds to face the world's challenges and build a better tomorrow. Generations of students, educators, and staff have passed through your doors and made your school a valued place of learning for all who celebrate this milestone.

I hope you take pride in your many contributions and achievements, and look ahead to those sure to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be Barack Obama's signature, written over a white background.

## **FHHS 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Rated "One Of The Best"**

The alumni sponsored celebration at Martins Crosswinds in Greenbelt for Fairmont heights high School's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on October 22, 2010, in the words of more than 400 participants, "it was the best!!"

Hosted by former Senator Tommie Broadwater, a Fairmont Heights graduate and first African American senator from Prince George's County, the affair brought back memories of Fairmont Heights High School since 1950. It was the second of only two high schools in the county for Black students. The first was Frederick Douglass High School in

Upper Marlboro. The school remained segregated until 1973.

Many said the school was “an outstanding place to be” and held Fairmont’s first principal, Mr. G. James Gholson, in High esteem as a “visionary educator” who, like a second parent, brought order and discipline to the learning process.

A roll-call was made by year, and almost every school year was represented by alumni attendants. True excitement filled the room after a solo entitled “Memory” by alumnus, Joseph Parker, Sr. Past memories were recalled by keynote Speaker, James W. Dyke, Jr., 1964 alumnus, Secretary of Education under former Virginia Governor, L. W. Wilder, and graduate of Howard University School of Law, JD, cum laude, in 1971. Dr. Dyke is presently a law partner with McGuire Woods in McLean, VA., who has received five Honorary Doctor of Law degrees.

Many former faculty and staff members attended the celebration, including Mrs. Lorenza Robinson, and Mrs. Rosemary Brinkley, who introduced the Keynote Speaker, and present Principal, Mrs. Nakia Nicholson, who sang a solo, “ I Won’t Complain”.

**Two Alumni Receive Presidential Awards**



Among the many awards made, special presentations were made to alumni Michael Marshall and Thelma Spriggs-Battle. Both received President Obama’s Volunteer Service Awards, which included a certificate and Life Pin for volunteering more than 4,000 hours of service to the school and community. A surprise award was also presented by alumnus Joseph M. Parker, Sr. from FHHS Alumni Association to Alumni President, John J. Williams for his service to the alumni and

the school for the historical preservation of Fairmont Heights High School, approved in 2009.



The 60<sup>th</sup> Celebration ended with line-dancing and picture-taking that helped all who attended to “Remember the Past and Welcome the Future”, which was the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme.

**Bernice Crisp Family Award  
Among 2010 scholarships**

The number and amount of scholarships awarded each year is determined by individual financial support and the participation of our Annual Reunion Dance in April. We thank all of our faithful alumni, friends, and the family of the late Bernice Crisp(1909-2009), a former Social Studies teacher at Fairmont Heights High, for making it possible to award the following students a total of \$5, 000.

Matthew Kelliebrew .....	\$1,000
Salisbury University	
Tishanda McCown .....	\$1,000
Stratford University	
Toni Thompson .....	\$1,000
Bowie State University	
Eric Edwards .....	\$1,000
Morgan State University	
Keishana Wright .....	\$500
Univ. of MD – Eastern Shore	
Susan Jeward .....	\$500

Visit us at: [www.fhhsaa.org](http://www.fhhsaa.org)  
Email us at: [fhhsalumni@comcast.net](mailto:fhhsalumni@comcast.net)

## Simon Alsop and Elizabeth Gordon Honored At FHHS Annual Memorial

On the first Saturday in December of each year, Fairmont Heights High School Alumni Association pays tribute to deceased members of the current year. The service is hosted by Reverend Robert R. Johnson, Sr., class of '57, Pastor of New Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, 7501 Walker Mill Drive, Capitol Heights, Maryland.

Among the 25 departed alumni and veterans, special tributes were paid to former faculty and administrator, Mr. Simon L. Alsop, who transitioned this life on June 15, 2010, and Elizabeth Gordon, '52, who dedicated her life to her church and alma mater until her transition on December 10, 2009. Both lives were testimonies of love, service, compassion, dedication and concern for children, especially students at Fairmont Heights High School. "Liz", as she was called, was pivotal in planning annual dances for Fairmont Heights Alumni and was looking forward to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration scheduled for October 2010. Having worked at Fairmont Heights High and Crossland High School as an administrator until his retirement in the late seventies, Mr. Alsop was not only a dedicated educator, but was also a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Following the presentation of the colors by Fairmont Heights High School JROTC and a rendition by the Messengers of Zion Youth Choir, Thelma Spriggs Battle, Program Chairperson, introduced Ricky Black, '63, as Worship Leader.

The guest preacher was Reverend Joseph A. Robinson, '55, pastor of Royal Oak Pentecostal Church. He delivered the message for this occasion. Following a candlelight ceremony for departed members of FHHS faculty, staff, alumni, and veterans, special remarks and presentations were given by alumni president, John J. Williams. The memorial program ended with the singing of the Alma Mater, led by Eleanor Traynham, '53. Refreshments were served after the conclusion of the program.

Visit us at: [www.fhhsaa.org](http://www.fhhsaa.org)

Email us at: [fhhsalumni@comcast.net](mailto:fhhsalumni@comcast.net)

## Newly Organized Fairmont Heights Veterans Growing



A newly organized group of veterans, called Fairmont Heights Veterans Association, not to be confused with the Veterans of Fairmont Heights Town, whose members go back as far as World War II, was launched by four Fairmont Heights graduates in October 2009.

James Staggs, a 1966 graduate of Fairmont Heights High School, served in Vietnam from 1967 to 1970. He knew that most veterans were not as lucky as he, who suffers from hypertension, as a result of post-traumatic stress disorder. His concern was that many men who returned still suffer from combat-related illnesses. His dream has been to do something for the other veterans in the area. The group is designed to act as a support group to local veterans who are unaware of available benefits.

The group of four has increased to twenty-eight, including four women. The group was immediately recruited as a member of the Fairmont Heights High School Alumni Association. FHHS has been officially designated as a historic site by the Historic Preservation Commission and approved by the Prince George's County Council as of June 08, 2010. The veterans association will be a part of the new site. Members are not limited to Fairmont Heights graduates. The group meets temporarily at 2:00PM on the last Saturday of each month at the Glenarden American Legion Post #275 at 8201 Martin Luther King Jr. Highway.

Highlights of recent Activities Include:

- \*Honoring deceased veterans at FHHS Alumni Memorial
- \*Presenting a certificate to a 98 year-old Army Veteran on his birthday at the Prince George's County SCLC MLK Banquet
- \*Testifying before P. G. County Historic Preservation Commission to have the World War II Memorial restored
- \*Speaking at Fairmont Heights Town meeting
- \*Co-sponsoring a Black History Month Essay Contest at FHHS

