



★ ALTON BLACK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ★

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Inside This Issue

- 1 Mission Statement
- 1 Message from the President
- 1 Health Corner
- 2 Alumni Highlights
- 2 Scholarship Scoop
- 2 A Black Soldier's Letter Home
- 3 All Class Reunion Highlight
- 3 Upcoming Events/Activites
- 4 Events/Activites (*continued*)
- 5 ABAA Reunion FLYER
- 5 Support Your Organization

ABAA Board of Directors

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

James (Jimmy) Killion

VICE PRESIDENT

David Patterson

RECORDING SECRETARY (ACTING)

Toi Williams

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Michele (Killion) Keeper

TREASURER

Karen Webster

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Staci Herron

MEMBERS

Lee Barham

Eve Booth

Forrest Booth

Bonnie (McLemore) Fox

David Frye

Stanley Henderson

Carol (Killion) Hudson

Patricia (McGowan) Ingram

Pam Portee

Latasha LeFlore-Porter

Marquato (Spann) Rattler

Minnie (Caffey) Robinson

ADVISORY MEMBERS

Denise Frye

Wendy (Cox) Gray

Darla Killion

NEWSLETTER TEAM

David Frye

Staci (Westfall) Herron

Jimmy Killion

Michele (Killion) Keeper

David Patterson

Latasha LeFlore-Porter

Marquato (Spann) Rattler

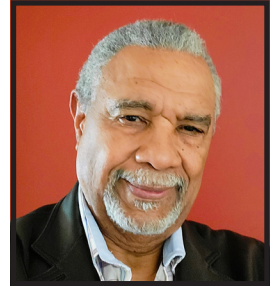
★ Mission Statement

To reunite colleagues who attended Alton area schools and to utilize their life and career experiences to lead, strengthen, and mobilize the Alton community to prepare our youth for productive adulthood.

Message from the President

Fellow alumni and friends:

I want to start off this message by expressing my hope that all of you, and your families, are safe and healthy. For the past three years the world has seen wave after wave of the COVID-19 virus. There have been difficulties and challenges that we could have never imagined and, probably, will never forget. It is not just the pandemic. Across the nation we have also seen so many members of our communities take on the extra labor of engaging in anti-racist work and community organizing.



Through everything happening, we have managed to carve out moments of joy and connection. Starting a new year, it is a good time for a deep exhale and to put aside some time to reflect on the three years that have passed and acknowledge that our lives have been forever transformed. It is also a time to reconnect and return to greater degrees of normalcy. We want to do our part in making that happen.

We need your support and active participation in helping the Alton Black Alumni Association work towards these 2022 annual goals:

- Develop and maintain longer, sustainable relationships with partner organizations to promote service and start new initiatives to further our mission
- Create opportunities so that each of you feels that your participation and contribution is crucial to the community
- Participate and engage actively in local events and projects to exemplify Alton Black Alumni Association as a leader of our community

In this edition we are announcing several of our signature events that will enable folks to come out, reunite, and just have fun!

Health Corner Statement

National Minority Health Month is observed every April by the Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH). This observance highlights the importance of reducing disparities and improving the health of racial and ethnic minorities.



The theme for April 2022, "**Give Your Community a Boost!**" will focus on the continued importance of COVID-19 vaccinations, including boosters, as one of the strongest tools we have to end the COVID-19 pandemic which has disproportionately affected communities of color. The theme supplements the CDC recommendations to prevent COVID transmissions, such as physical distancing, use of well-fitting masks, adequate ventilation and avoidance of crowded indoor spaces.

Contributing factors of experiences with racism and discrimination lead to mistrust of the healthcare system among racial and ethnic minority groups, which in turn leads to mistrust of factual information on vaccines and boosters.

This theme supports the U.S. Surgeon General's recommendations on combating COVID-19 and vaccine misinformation at the individual, community, and organizational levels.

For more information: www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/nmhm

Alumni Highlights

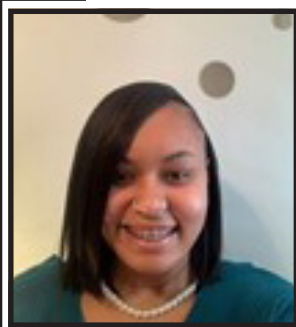
Congratulations to the following Alton High Alumni on their induction into the Alton High Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2021!

- **Troy Washpun** (Basketball - 1980)
- **John "Main" Smith** (Basketball - 1980)
- **Bryan Hudson** (Basketball - 2015)
- **LaJarvia Brown** (Track & Field - 2016)

Congratulations to **Rosetta "Rosie" Brown**, 4th Ward Alderwoman, for being selected by Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs to receive the 2022 Outstanding Achievement in Education Award!

Kudos to these outstanding alumni!

Scholarship Scoop ★ Catching up with Dajia Robinson!



It's always good to see what our past scholarship winners are up to. Dajia Robinson was our Leo C. Cox Memorial Scholarship Awardee of 2019. It's hard to believe that Dajia will be entering her senior year this upcoming Fall semester of 2022.

ABAA: How are things, as you prepare to enter your senior year, next August?

Dajia: While entering my fourth year at SIUE, I tend to think about how far I've come and how close I am to earning my degree. Although courses are becoming more rigorous, I continue to work hard and remain positive. Overall, I am enjoying my college experience!

ABAA: How has the scholarship benefitted you each year?

Dajia: The scholarship has benefitted me each year financially and academically. Each year it pushes me to earn good grades.

ABAA: What will your degree be named?

Dajia: I will earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Medical Biology and Minors in Black Studies and Chemistry.

ABAA: What are your plans after graduating?

Dajia: After graduation I plan to attend dental school. I'm not sure of which school I will be attending, just yet.

ABAA: What organizations have you joined, since attending SIU-E?

Dajia: My organizations serve as a huge support. I am currently a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Black Student Union, Black Girls Rock, and Pre-Med Association.

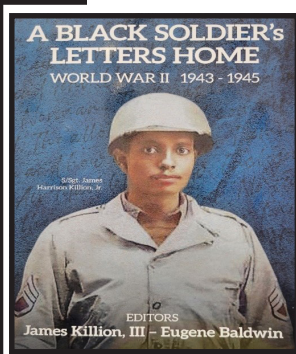
ABAA: What are your plans on giving back to the community?

Dajia: I really want to focus on giving back to the minority youth. I feel as if we are not informed enough about further schooling after high school. Eventually, I want to create a program that allows high school students to work towards getting into college, trade schools, etc. I want to help them apply for scholarships and grants and work on resumes and applying for colleges. I want our community to be filled with successful African-Americans!

ABAA: Dajia, we could use younger members to support us. How would you encourage Alton High Alumni to support the Friends of the 60s/Alton Black Alumni Association?

Dajia: I would encourage alumni to support by keeping up with events, supporting fundraisers and consider joining. Joining this association could allow more opportunities and chances to network.

A Black Soldier's Letters Home



During Black History month, the St. Louis CBS affiliate, KMOV-4, aired a feature story on the father of ABAA board members - James 'Jim' Killion III, Carol (Killion) Hudson, Dr. Cheryl Killion, and Michele (Killion) Keeper. Their dad, **James Killion, Jr.**, was one of 1.2 million Black soldiers serving overseas during World War II. An Alton native, he left behind a detailed account of his time in the military in the form of 47 letters which Jim III put together in book form, "A Black Soldier's Letters Home".

Now, the National World War II Museum in New Orleans will add them to its history archive. "Our mission is to collect stories of the American experience in WWII," said Kim Guise, Senior Curator of the museum. "There is a much larger story than just that of the white soldiers. Black Americans are and always have been part of that story. Letters from Black servicemen are quite rare within our collection."

Because of Mr. Killion's legacy of service to the community, breaking of several inhibiting color barriers and general spirit of leadership, the former Salu Park was re-named, James H Killion Park and dedicated in his honor.

ALL CLASSES/HOMECOMING REUNION WEEKEND | Sept. 2 & 3

“Get ready” (sung in your Eddie Kendricks, falsetto voice) because the party’s going down this Labor Day Weekend. Start packing your bags and dropping those extra pounds that you promised to lose. Plans are in the works for the best reunion ever. The pandemic shut us down in 2020, but we’re coming back with a vengeance. We’re singing **“Ain’t no stopping us now”**.

We’re going to kick it off with the Friday Night Meet and Greet. The evening’s theme is Black and White, so dress accordingly and don’t forget your dancing shoes.

Saturday morning, all Golfers, bring your clubs and get ready to tee off. Get ready to see who will get the prize for the longest drive and that coveted hole-in-one. I’m sure there will be some side ‘pots’ as well.

Saturday evening, let’s get dressed in our best and get ready to see and be seen. There will be a dinner and dancing and a short program.

Reunion
Flyer on
Page 5

Mark your calendars – September 2ND and 3RD!

Upcoming Events ★ What’s Going on Around A-Town

- April 22** **Kids Night Out: Earth Day Party**
The Nature Institute - 2213 South Levis Lane, Godfrey, IL.
Ages 6-10 | 5:00pm - 8:00pm (3 hour drop-off)
- May 13** **Kids Night Out: Survive**
The Nature Institute - 2213 South Levis Lane, Godfrey, IL.
Ages 6-10 | 5:00pm - 8:00pm (3 hour drop-off)
- May 28** **1st Annual James Killion Day Celebration**
James Killion Park - 2400 Washington Ave, Alton, IL 62002
Time: TBA | A tribute to the veterans, Food, Bounce houses for the kids & much more!
- June 11** **St Louis Mega Car Show 2022**
Liberty Bank Amphitheater- 1 Riverfront Dr., Alton, IL.
1:00pm - 7:00pm
- June 11** **An Evening in a Dark Place: *In Search of Sinister Hauntings***
The Mineral Springs Hotel and Banquet Center
301 E. Broadway Alton, IL. | 7:00pm - 10:00pm
- June 17** **Juneteenth Gospel Fest - Church of the Living God**
101 West Elm Street Alton, IL. | 6:30pm - 9:00pm
- June 18** **Juneteenth Celebration - Killion Park**
2400 Washington Avenue Alton, IL. | 11:00am-5:00pm
- June 24-25** **Haunted America Conference**
Best Western Premier Hotel - 3559 College Ave. Alton, IL.
- July 16** **SIMA Annual Car Show - Roberts Motors Inc.**
4350 N. Alby St. Alton, IL. | 8:00am - 4:00pm
- August 27** **Alton Food Truck Festival**
Liberty Bank Amphitheater - 1 Riverfront Dr., Alton, IL.
4:00pm - 8:00pm
- Sept 2-3** **‘Reunited’ Reunion** (*Flyer on page 5*)
★ Hosted by the Black Alumni Association Founders ★
All classes/alumni welcome
- Sept 3** **Leo C. Cox Memorial Golf Event – hosted by Alton Black Alumni Association**
All are welcome to join in on the fun - Individual/Group entries
Cost: \$40/per person; Time - TBA
- Sept 17-18** **Mississippi Earth-tones Festival**
300 E. Broadway, Alton, IL.
9/17 - 5:00pm | 9/18 - 3:00pm

Events
continued
on pg. 4

Upcoming Events ★ What's Going on Surrounding A-Town:

- April 8** **Howlin' Fridays featuring Marty D. Spikener's On Call Band**
National Blues Museum- 615 Washington Ave. St. Louis, MO.
Friday | 6:30pm
- April 9** **Patti LaBelle/Gladys Knight/Stephanie Mills/Howard Hewett**
Chaifetz Arena- 1 S. Compton Ave. St. Louis, MO.
Saturday | 7:00pm
- April 23** **Snoop Dog/Warren G**
The Family Arena- 2002 Arena Parkway St. Charles, MO.
Saturday | 7:00 - 11:00pm
- April 24** **April Macie at St. Louis Funny Bone St. Charles**
1520 S. 5th Street Suite 107 St. Charles, MO.
Sunday | 6:30pm - 8:30pm
- May 14** **Lupulin Carnival- The Big Top**
3401 Washington Ave. St. Louis, MO.
Saturday | 1:00 - 4:00pm
- May 15** **Annie Malone May Day Parade 2022**
2340 Market St. @ Jefferson Parking Area St. Louis, MO.
Sunday | 1:00pm - 4:00pm
- June 1 - 19** **Disney's Lion King @ The Fabulous Fox**
527 N. Grand Blvd. St. Louis, MO.
- June 11** **Chris Rock Ego Death World Tour 2022**
Stifel Theatre- 1400 Market St. St. Louis, MO.
Saturday | 8:00pm
- June 15 - 16** **Anita Jackson sings Nina Simone - Legacy**
Jazz St. Louis - 3536 Washington Ave., St. Louis, MO.
Wednesday | 7:30pm OR Thursday | 7:30pm
- Sept 24** **Kevin Hart**
Enterprise Center - 1401 Clark Ave. ,St. Louis, MO.
Saturday | 7:00pm
- Sept 17 - 18** **Mississippi Earth-tones Festival**
300 E. Broadway, Alton, IL.
9/17 - Starts at 5:00pm | 9/18 - Starts at 3:00pm



Alton Black Alumni Reunion

LABOR DAY WEEKEND ★ SEPTEMBER 2-3, 2022

SCHEDULE OF SIGNATURE EVENTS

9/2 - FRIDAY pm: *Meet & Greet*

9/3 - SATURDAY am: *Golf Outing (Individual/Group Activities)*

9/3 - SATURDAY pm: *Evening Gala*

Flashback Photos - Great Memories!



Lets create & enjoy new memories!!

★ TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EARLY REGISTRATION: APRIL 1-30 ★

More details to follow. For updates check our Facebook page and website.

www.facebook.com/AltonBlackAlumni

www.altonblackalumni.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

ALTON BLACK ALUMNI REUNION - 2022

c/o Alton Friends of the 60's

PO Box 1033, Alton, IL 62002

Email: info@altonblackalumni.org

Support Your Organization

This is a **REMINDER** that we need your help through donations to carry out the Mission of this organization. It is through your generous donations during our Donor Campaign that we help deserving graduates with college tuition through renewable scholarships. Additionally, we offer gift cards at Christmas to underprivileged students in the Alton School District and give financial support to other organizations in the community.

Please help us so that we can help others.

Donations Options: Check, PayPal or Cash App (\$FOSAB)

Remit checks to: FOS/ABAA Donor Campaign

P.O. Box 1033, Alton, IL 62002

FOS/Alton Black Alumni Association is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization under IRS section 170(b)(2)(iii) for both federal and state tax purposes.

Our federal tax identification number is 81-1244704.