

# The Scholarsheet

Newsletter of the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund

Spring 2004 - Volume 10, Issue 2

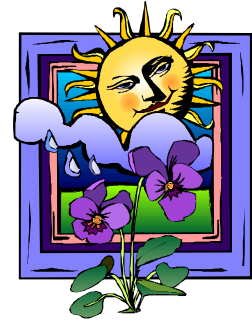
## Sparking Future Greatness

**C**elebrating Past Success, Sparking Future Greatness is the 2004 Affiliate Leadership Conference (ALC) theme. This theme reflects two realities: twenty successful years of single parent scholarship fund activity in Arkansas and the desire to set lofty goals for the future. When representatives gather April 23 & 24 at the Wyndham Riverfront Little Rock, they will be preparing for this future by participating in the conference program while taking time to appreciate how far the organization has come.

Background: In 1984, Single Parent Scholarship Funds were initiated in Washington and Benton Counties. Four years later, the concept spread state-wide as the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund and since that time, sixty-seven (67) counties have established programs. These county affiliates have in turn distributed more than five million dollars worth of incentive scholarships to single parent students. Quite an achievement to celebrate!

As we look at the challenges ahead, the ASPSF staff and board appreciates more than ever the vital importance of this annual leadership train-

ing conference as an occasion to come together, share, learn and build relationships. ASPSF county affiliates range from fledgling groups to well established organizations with



- **HIGHLIGHTS OF CONFERENCE AGENDA:**
- Lori Holyfield, UofA professor and author of *Moving Up and Out*, is the featured speaker at the opening luncheon on Friday.
- Talks by current and former scholarship recipients.
- Learning about board leadership and membership through a fun-filled plenary session. Our staff has created original dramatic skits to illustrate real life situations that may occur on volunteer boards.
- A Kaleidoscope session will permit participants to choose from a room full of relevant topics and learn about a lot of things in a short period of time.
- Ms. Betty Turner, a motivational speaker and performer will educate and entertain participants Friday night with her one-woman show, *Sitting on the Thin Edge of a Dime, Swinging My Legs™*
- Saturday morning plans include: a workshop on marketing and the use of a newly created generic brochure; a fundraising panel; and training session about ASPSF websites.
- Presentation of the first annual Bernice Jones Memorial Award for Excellence in Philanthropy. Details about this award can be seen at:

## News & Cues!

### News:

#### ? BIG NEWS!

The Willard and Pat Walker Charitable Foundation has awarded the ASPSF a \$500,000 challenge grant with which to implement our 2004-2006 Business Plan. A major goal of the Plan is to increase matching grant support of affiliates and boost yearly scholarship totals to over one million dollars. The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation has also approved a \$60,000 grant toward implementation of the Business Plan. More details on this will be forthcoming.

### Cues:

? Displays Wanted! Affiliates which are sending representatives to the ALC are invited to bring a display. Displays should demonstrate recent affiliate activities, sample brochures, newsletters or other items that might be of interest to others. Scrapbooks are also welcome.

The Scholarsheet is published quarterly by the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Comments & suggestions can be addressed to: Lani Froelich, Editor, 614 E. Emma, Ste. 119, Springdale, AR 72764. Phone (479) 927-1402, FAX (479)751-1110, Email: lfroelic@jtlshop.jonesnet.org ?

# MUSING

Ralph H. Nesson  
Executive Director

Each year at this time, final reports on the performance of all of our affiliated Single Parent Scholarship Funds are tallied. A summary picture of how well everyone did in raising money for scholarships comes into focus, but this is hardly the whole story. We do know from the reports that 1,464 scholarships worth \$827,034 were awarded in 55 counties during 2003, a wonderful record of selfless giving by donors and persistent fundraising by board members.

Yet, what of the lives of those who received the scholarships? What of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers who ask their communities for support? And how about those who each day encourage, advise, and support single parents in their quest to complete their education?

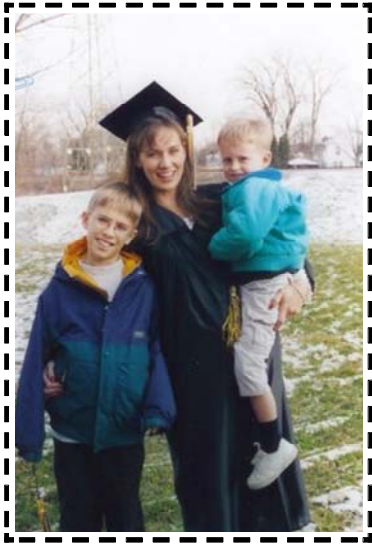
There are stories to be told of professional graphic designers and printers who produce our brochures without charge. There are electronics technicians who repair computers for students who cannot afford this cost. There are members of civic clubs who decorate tables at award ceremonies, and businesses which provide mentors to students preparing for skilled positions in the enterprise field.

*“...how easy it is...for impoverished single parents to give up on themselves...how impossible...for them to give up on the lives of their children...”*

Indeed, there are *so many* members of our communities who want to see single parents succeed. They know from their SPSF board service that parenting while attending college and working is three jobs wrapped into one. They know how easy it sometimes is for impoverished single parents to give up on themselves, but how impossible it is for them to give up on the lives of their children...and this is what keeps parents in school. The motivation for volunteers is to see single parents in a cap and gown, receiving their diplomas. And the motivation for single parents is to experience that same day.

So, when you look at our statistics and see that we, as a network of scholarship funds across Arkansas, gave out over \$800,000 this past year, think of all the generous volunteer effort required to make these scholarships possible. And all of the effort by single parents to provide care to their children while they study. That is the true story behind the numbers. ■

## ASPSF Welcomes 'Sister' Program



Kathryn Swope-Miller  
with her sons Aaron and

It's official!!! The SPSF model has been successfully 'cloned' and the 'infant' is alive and well in Toledo, Ohio. The Single Parent Resource Center, established September 2002, by Kathryn Swope-Miller, is the first such known group outside Arkansas to follow the ASPSF design.

A woman with vision and determination, Kathryn began her journey towards establishing a single parent program ten years ago when her life was turned upside down by divorce. At the time, she was enrolled in an Associate of Arts degree program and was a mother with one young

son and another 'on the way'. Although poised to quit school, she was persuaded by Professor Diane Marker that her education was "more important than ever" for her children's future. Later on, Diane was instrumental in encouraging Kathryn to complete a B.A. in Computer Networking.

Despite being blessed with a strong support network of family and friends while in school, Kathryn remembers the intense effort it took to survive as a single mom in school. One of the greatest frustrations of that time was not knowing

*(Continued on page 4)*

## SCHOLARSHIP FUND A TRIBUTE TO

*Editor's note: As we often observe in this newsletter, ASPSF affiliates are organized in many different ways. The model used by the Randolph Co. SPSF is distinct and interesting in approach.*

The Mary Sallee Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Randolph Co. was established in 1992 by a committee of community leaders who wished to assist single parents. They also wanted to recognize and honor a former Home Economics teacher at Pocahontas High School, Mary Sallee. In Randolph Co., Mary is remembered and respected because of her commitment to all students and help provided to single parent students.

The Single Parent Scholarship Fund honors her dedication to providing inspiration for her students to seek out opportunities for education and lifelong learning.

In the year 2000, the ASPSF **Delta Project** was inaugurated and annual matching grants increased to \$6,000 in Delta-area counties. Randolph Co. is included in the project area, and has benefited from the additional matching funds. This is reflected in the marked increase in both the number and value of scholarships since the inception of the project when 2 awards worth \$900 were granted. During 2003, Randolph Co. gave 26 scholar-



(Continued from page 3)

about community resources available to her and others in her situation. The SPRC aims to fill this void.

After graduation, Kathryn worked full time at the University of Toledo before starting her own computer tech support business. During this period, she held onto a dream of helping single parent students but had no road-map to follow and was getting nowhere. She learned about ASPSF through reading the book, Up and Out, by Prof. Lori Holyfield when a friend saw it advertised on the Internet. After reading this book, Kathryn called the ASPSF office and had a long telephone conversation with Ralph Nesson about her dream.

Following this synchronistic event, Kathryn completed the design of the SPRC. Papers for tax-exempt 501(c)(3)

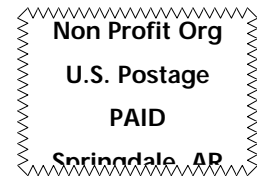
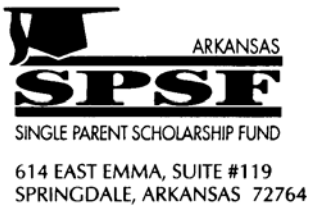
status were filed by an attorney who worked pro-bono and a board of directors was selected. Realizing that fundraising was essential, the group joined forces with another small non-profit and hosted an event called 'March for Moms'. With the resulting proceeds, the SPRC awarded its first scholarships in the Fall '03 and to date has awarded 9 scholarships totaling \$2,200.

Kathryn's work for the SPRC is completely volunteer and she runs the program from her home office. It consists of 2 parts: a scholarship program which is set up following the SPSF model, and a network/referral service for single parents to agencies that can provide assistance.

She reports she constantly.



uses The Toolbox



www.aspsf.org We're on the Web

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The mission of the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund is to enable single parents to attain self-sufficiency through post-secondary education.

