

Arkansas  
SINGLE PARENT SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Opening doors to a  
brighter world.




## 2006 ANNUAL REPORT

### Scholarships Top \$1.37 Million

For the second straight year, affiliated Single Parent Scholarship Funds across Arkansas awarded more than a million dollars in aid to single mothers and fathers seeking to earn a college degree. Reports indicate that sixty-seven Funds awarded 2,268 scholarships worth \$1,317,989.

Scholarship awardees must be low or moderate income single parents with custodial care of children under the age of eighteen. They must be high school graduates or have earned their

GED and be enrolled in a post-secondary course of study leading to a degree, diploma, certificate or license. Awardees must prepare themselves through study for a skilled occupation leading directly to economic self-sufficiency.

Since the ASPSF was founded in 1990, 17,471 scholarships worth \$8.79 million have been awarded within the state of Arkansas. Affiliate support in the form of matching grants has totaled \$2.18 million. 

### Portrait of a Successful Recipient

Juggling college, military service and the care of two daughters and a son came naturally to Cherice Lynette Crawford of Jonesboro (pictured at left). Cherice is a single mother who spent ten years in the regular U.S. Army before enrolling in Arkansas State University's Technical Center in Marked Tree, working toward an Associate Degree in business which she earned in May 2002. With help from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Craighead County, she continued her studies on ASU's main campus in Jonesboro and earned a Bachelor's of Social Work (BSW) in May of 2006. Graduating with a 3.84 Grade Point Average, Cherice was hired in June by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services in Blytheville, where as a case manager she assists clients to find and keep employment. She remains in the Arkansas Army National Guard to this day.

Cherice wept the first time she was notified that she had been chosen to receive a Single Parent Scholarship. "I cried and cried to my mother over the phone, having convinced myself that I would not be approved, that I did not impress the board members who interviewed me." Yet Cherice was a logical choice for a scholarship, given her heroic effort to remain in school, care for

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# Our Programs

## Services and Programs of ASPSF

The efforts of hundreds of volunteers are the bedrock of our organization. Volunteers serve on the boards of directors of our county affiliates and are the people who make scholarships possible. To support the work of affiliate board member, the ASPSF provides the following services:

- **ON-SITE STAFF:** field representatives available to train board members, help with strategic planning, assist with fundraising, publicity, and board recruitment
- **COMMUNICATIONS CD:** Contains templates for logo, stationery, brochures, posters, and public service announcements
- **AFFILIATE SEED AND MATCHING GRANTS:** up to \$7,500 annually in match of local contributions towards scholarships
- **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE:** free annual conference with workshops, panel discussions, networking opportunities and cash prizes for scholarships
- **QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER:** contains articles and information of interest to board members, students, contributors and the general public
- **EVERGREEN MARKETING FOLDERS:** state of the art folders donated by Wal-Mart Foundation are available to affiliates for use in all marketing and public relations efforts.
- **WEBSITE:** downloading of affiliate applications, listing of contact information, online credit card contributions, Resource Toolbox and organizational history
- **ONLINE CONTRIBUTION SYSTEM:** helps make fundraising easier for Single Parent Scholarship Funds by enabling donors to make contributions using credit or debit cards or electronic checks. Donors can simply go to the ASPSF website at [www.aspsf.org](http://www.aspsf.org), click on any "Donate Now" button, and make an electronic contribution to their county SPSF. This system has been incorporated into the ASPSF website on a permanent basis, attracting support to affiliates in an easy and convenient method. ♿



## Arkansas Scholarship Connection

The Arkansas Scholarship Connection (ASC) was initiated in the early 1990's by the ASPSF in response to many inquiries about scholarships other than those offered by Single Parent Scholarship Funds. It is now an online database of over 2,100 sources of financial aid. In 2006, more than 13,000 visitors to the ASC website completed a personal profile form and received a list of potential scholarships, loans and grants.

This project is funded by grants from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Walton Family Foundation and is completely free to the public. Director Merin Singleton regularly updates and augments information contained in the database. She also visits college and high school campuses throughout Arkansas to promote its use. ♿

## Delta Scholarship Project

Launched in Year 2000 as an intensive response to the need for college graduates in the Delta region of eastern Arkansas, the Delta Scholarship Project has been instrumental in helping single parents to enroll in college courses. ASPSF Field Representatives Beverly Chapple and Kim Dollins provide on-site support to twenty-seven county affiliates, helping them to develop effective boards of directors. Boards are assisted in fundraising, leadership training, publicity and selection of awardees, along with communications and planning.

Since the establishment of the Delta Scholarship Project, 3,718 awards worth \$1,386,584 have been provided to single parents pursuing their post-secondary education. In 2006 alone, 458 scholarships valued at \$200,156 were awarded. ♿

# Accomplishments

## 2004-2006 ASPSF Business Plan Complete

The ASPSF initiated an ambitious three-year plan in 2004, supported by a grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. The main elements of the plan were:

- ① Increasing matching grant support of affiliates
- ② Strengthening affiliates through increased staff support
- ③ Sustaining the ASPSF through endowment expansion and affiliate endowment stimulation
- ④ Enhancing communications to raise public awareness of affiliates

We are pleased to report that the Business Plan has been completed with exceptional success:

- ✓ Affiliate matching grant support rose by 59% from \$200,347 in 2003 to \$335,565 in 2006.
- ✓ A third field representative was hired to serve eleven additional counties and three regional affiliate meetings were convened.
- ✓ ASPSF endowment rose from a 2003 level of \$1.3 million to a 2006 level of \$1.6 million. Affiliate endowment stimulation is an extended goal for 2007.
- ✓ Public awareness of affiliates was significantly stimulated through the development and dispersal of adaptable templates for logos, brochures, posters, stationery and public service announcements. Professional evergreen folders were also disseminated to all affiliates. [ⓘ](#)

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her children, and honor her military commitment to the Arkansas Army National Guard. Despite having to miss three weeks of classes while joining other Guardsmen during the Hurricane Katrina crisis, she successfully completed that semester and ultimately graduated Magna Cum Laude.

Although Cherice set out on her academic career as a business major, she soon became interested in the study of sociology and social work. A true people person, she opted for a degree in social work in order to pursue her ultimate goal of working closely with the elderly. "My inspiration," says Cherice, is my own mother who has always been my biggest cheerleader. When things got tough and tight, my mom helped take care of my children and told me: 'You can do it!'"

Now, Cherice is cheering others on through her work with former TEA clients. She is also a model to her three children who are all honor students and hoping to attend college themselves. Cherice would like to serve on the board of directors of the Craighead County Single Parent Scholarship Fund and inspire others to do what she has been able to do, without letting any problems stand in their way. [ⓘ](#)



## Student Success Rate is 75%

Following-up on the success of awardees of Single Parent Scholarships is critically important to all who want an answer to the question: do our scholarships really make a difference? Each year, SPSF's are asked to ascertain the status of awardees in order to determine an overall retention and graduation rate. In 2005, research on the previous year's recipients revealed that out of 1,150 awardees, 75% either remained in school or earned their degrees. Furthermore, 67% of all graduates were employed at an income above the poverty threshold and 21% of graduates were continuing their education.

Follow-up of awardees for the past six years has consistently produced a retention and graduation rate between 75% and 80%. This remarkable indicator of success suggests that better than three out of four scholarship awardees will earn a post-secondary educational degree or diploma if sufficient financial aid and lots of encouragement and support are available to them. [ⓘ](#)

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Chris Womack

**Affiliate Field Representatives**

Beverly Chapple

Kim Dollins

Jessica Quihuis

**Arkansas Scholarship Connection  
Student Support Specialist**

Merin Singleton

## Entergy and Harps Underwrite Scholars Programs

Two corporate supporters encouraged the attainment of excellence in academic performance by SPSF awardees. The Entergy Charitable Foundation donated \$30,000 in 2006 to underwrite scholarships awarded in twenty-nine counties in which the Entergy Corporation provides service. Harps Food Stores and Gerald Harp donated an equal amount for similar awards in fifteen counties served by the company. Award ceremonies honored the students recognized as Entergy and Harps Scholars, with representatives of the two contributing corporations presenting scholarship checks and certificates. [⌘](#)

## Benefits of a College Education

The difference in earnings between those of a college graduate and a high school graduate are astounding. The US Department of Labor reported the results of a 2004 study: female college graduates were earning 76% more than female high school graduates. This translates to \$24,732 in greater earning power annually. Men, however, continue to earn significantly more than women at both diploma/degree levels. Yet the completion of one's post-secondary education, regardless of gender, has never been more financially rewarding than it is today. [⌘](#)



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