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The Pierian Times

The National Newsletter of The Pierians, Incorporated

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OUR MOTTO

*A little learning is a dangerous thing.
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian
Spring;
There shallow draughts intoxicate
the brain
And drinking largely sobers us
again.*

An Essay on Criticism by
Alexander Pope

From The National President



Greetings, Pierians!

Let me begin by saying once more how honored I am to serve as the 16th

National President of this organization. I would also like to

thank Cara Walker for her leadership over the past four years. She and all of the past National Presidents have provided broad shoulders to stand on and a good solid base for us to more forward into the future.

Our 60th Anniversary in Baltimore County, Maryland was beyond fabulous! I salute all of the hard-working Pierians who helped make it an unforgettable weekend for all in attendance. From the Opening Reception to the Masquerade Ball, the entire weekend was festive, creative and artistic. Photos of the assembly were made available online by the photographer. On our Pierian website, www.pierians.org, there is a video with many of the photographs from assembly. For the Pierians who did not attend the assembly, this is a wonderful way for you to get a taste of the highlights of our weekend. From the Opening Reception to the Masquerade Ball, it was all delightful! In the coming year, we hope to blaze new trails as we promote our Pierian goals!

There are plans for us to have regular

bi-monthly conference calls with chapter presidents in order to facilitate communication among chapters and with the national office. And so my Pierian Sisters, let us go forward together!

Assembly Highlights

Kudos to the Baltimore County Chapter for hosting a fabulous National Assembly. This 19th National Assembly was also a celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the organization. Registration was a breeze and was complete with gorgeous red bags and bling lariats for our name badges! All of the hostess chapter members greeted us wearing red rhinestone caps. The Opening Reception was an elegant affair and featured local artists displaying their work as a back-drop to the reception. We were also treated to the delightful strains of music from harpist Kim Sator. The cheerful Hospitality Suite allowed Pierians to re-connect with our sisters from many chapters.

The Awards Luncheon honored two Annette C. Johnson Award winners: Virginia Walker and Alvanelle Thompson. These Pierians have dedicated many years of tireless service to the organization. We are proud to have such dedicated members in our organization.

The Foundation Awards dinner honored Alexandra Hutchinson, a graceful and very

talented ballet dancer. Among the chapter initiatives, the Atlanta, Baltimore and Columbia chapters each received chapter initiative awards for programs they sponsor. Congrats to each chapter for outstanding programming. The final gala Masquerade Ball was Fabulous! We enjoyed a fun evening of music and dancing with elegantly attired Pierians and Guests displaying beautiful masks reminiscent of the glorious evenings in Venice. Our 60th year was celebrated in style and we look forward to the 2020 Assembly in Prince George's County, Maryland.

Chapter Updates

Since the assembly, chapters have been hard at work celebrating the arts. **The Atlanta Chapter** had its bi-monthly meeting in March at the very elegant and art filled home of Honorary Member K. Joy Peters. Ms. Peters scintillated the artistic senses of the group through her very detailed descriptions and explanations of the multitude of phenomenal works by her and other artists in her collection. It was an intriguing educational experience as well. The members enjoyed a luxurious afternoon basking in all the painted and sculpted works of art while feasting on divine delicacies by Chef Zig.

The Baltimore Chapter hosted an Afternoon with David Driskell at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture. The afternoon featured a lecture on *Memories of Romare Bearden* and an elegant reception. Local chapters showed their support by attending the event. The chapter finished the club year by inducting two new members.

The Columbia Chapter recently honored the talented local dancer, Ariana Odom, by presenting her with a \$2,000 Scholarship. The award was presented at a very elegant dinner and program at the Columbia Sheraton Hotel. The chapter also attended a performance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre at which Ms. Odom was performing. In June, the chapter welcomed two new members and is looking forward to a dynamic and exciting program year to come.

The Detroit Chapter continues to have a robust and active program. They continue to support arts in the area and once more, have provided a scholarship to a deserving student of the fine and performing arts. Once more, the chapter is

providing a non-renewable, \$2,000 scholarship to a deserving student of the fine and performing arts!

The Montgomery County Chapter is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year! The chapter is very active in the community and is a recent recipient of the Artist Project Award of the Pierians Foundation for the support of the performance group *The Finest!* I was honored to assist with the induction of six new members of their chapter. The induction was an elegant afternoon complete with champagne, wonderful hors d'oeuvres and a beautiful art show. Two of their inductees presented examples of their painting and art work and one favored us with song.

The Pittsburgh Chapter as well as other chapters, has become a magnet for all kinds of art: painting, dance, drama, fabric design, quilting, painting, writing, music, and more. Over the past few years Pittsburgh has also attracted many younger artist and so provides more opportunity to attend a variety of events. The chapter attended a performance of *Funky Fly*, a musical group of students from a performing arts school who are now performing nationally and are opening for major artists. The chapter hopes it will be gathering and supporting younger artists in future.

After reading the novel *An American Marriage*, by Tayari Jones, the chapter attended Jones' book review and reception at the Arts and Lecture Series, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh. The "required" summer reading is to ignite passion for the literary arts.

December brought in silver bells with dinner at Grill #36 Restaurant (former Steeler Jerome Bettis is the owner), with gift exchange among members. After dinner we were entertained with a Christmas Concert by Gerald Albright and his daughter Selina at the Manchester Craftsman's Guild.

The Chapter attended a series of string orchestra performances, which took inspiration from traditional African music and folk music by African Americans. It's title; **Requiem For Rice: Unburied, Unmourned, Unmarked is a lamentation for the** repose of the souls of the dead who were enslaved, exploited, and brutalized on Low country South Carolina and Georgia rice plantations, (Director Gregory Lehane, Composer Dr. Trevor Weston, Libretto Dr. Edda Fields-Black,(Pgh.,/CMU) The performances were more than magnificent.

Our new Officers are off to a great start with Harriette Meriwether, Past National President and Past Local President conducted the installation of Officers.

Members attended the Spring Concert of the Hill Dance Academy Theater, which was delightful. One of our new members is the Director. HDAT has graced the stages of many organizations and institutions locally. In addition, and keeping our attention on youth, a fall event is planned which features students from the Afro American Music Institute. Our May meeting was held at **Kolor and Kiln**, and “artful masterpieces” were created. Also in May, the chapter attended the opening of the exhibition and reception *Seat of Power*, at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center. Members came out to support JoAnne Bates and Harriette Meriwether who are members of Women of Visions, Inc., an art collective of women of African descent. This art group was featured at our Assembly in 2018. The exhibition was a culminating event ...the creative component included seats that represented someone the artist admired ...a founding member, someone else they admired or a symbolic representation of a woman. The other component is an oral history series including interviews with founding members of the organization, friends and mentors. From this data a documentary will be made. We anticipate being in the audience for the preview of this documentary. We are forever proud of JoAnne and Harriette.

The Pittsburgh Chapter continues to celebrate art in many ways, and will follow our theme... **“Embracing Transformational Change in The Arts”**. Our vision for the next few years will be youth in the arts. We believe strongly that developing young artist is of great value because art offers a pathway for young people to access their deepest and most authentic selves. It seems that Pittsburgh has provided a creative outlet for expression and reflection, and we want to capture that in our efforts to embrace the arts.

The Prince George’s County Chapter presented the invitation to the National Assembly for the 2020. At the recent assembly, Samantha McElhaney was inducted as an Honorary Pierian. Ms. McElhaney was nominated for the honor by the Prince George’s County Chapter.

In December the chapter had its Christmas Celebration at the Blue Dolphin and began the year by attending the lecture by David Driskell on *Memories of Romare Bearden* and a reception of the Baltimore Chapter. They also attended a performance of *The Heiress* at Arena Stage. Chapter member

Eva Chesley’s granddaughter appeared in the production. The chapter also attended the tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Kennedy Center.

In May, the chapter hosted a great event at the National Golf Club in Fort Washington, Maryland featuring Samantha McElhaney, 2018 Honorary Member and performances by Shiana Spencer, Desiree Davis and Michael Love, Students, Suitland High School, and an upcoming opera singer Temia Smith, Student Charles E. Flowers High School. On May 6th, chapter members attended the art display and reception of Terry Tabor, a prospective new member of our Chapter. The event was held at Oxon Hill Library, Oxon Hill, MD.

Chapter members attended the performance of Dance Theatre of Harlem’s Ballet Across America at the Kennedy Center. Pierians Foundation 2018 Emerging Artist Award Winner, Alexandra Hutchinson was in performance for the evening. The end of the club year culminated with attendance at a performance of *Jubilee* at Arena Stage and an afternoon of installing new officers and inducting new members. The final activity was at the home of Pierian Pat Shannon on June 9th, where she chaired the nomination and installation process. Pierian Joyce Flowers chaired the new membership committee, and the chapter inducted four new members into or chapter. The afternoon also featured a celebration with a champagne brunch.

In Memoriam

In recent months, the organization has suffered the loss of both Pierians and those close to Pierians. Chapter members have lost parents, spouses and siblings. Also, there have been several members who have experienced health challenges. We grieve for them and hold everyone in our thoughts and prayers.

The passing of 1st National President, **Dr. Jessie M. Colson**, was a great loss to the Pierians. She convened the 1st National Assembly on October 16, 1982 at the Eisenhower Library of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. A founding member of the Washington, DC Chapter, Pierian Jessie also wrote two documentaries on the history of the organization. A tireless advocate for the arts and



especially for The Pierians, she will be missed for her spirit, her talent, and her dedication.

The Hilton Head Chapter recently suffered the loss of **Juliann Foster**. Pierian Juliann was a charter member of the Hilton Head chapter and was their chapter Vice President. The loss to the chapter was immeasurable and we all will hold them in our thoughts as they go forward.

Coming Events

Executive Board Meeting: September 28, 2019

9:30 am – 4:00pm
Marriott Atlanta Airport Gateway
2020 Convention Center Concourse
Atlanta, GA, 30337
(404) 763-1544

News From The Foundation



Hello Pierians,

On behalf of the Pierians Foundation, Incorporated Executive Board, thank you for your ideas, kindness, and support over the past few months!

We have completed transition and are moving ahead with great ideas for the fall and **TOWARDS 2020**.

Our awardees are doing well. Our Baltimore County Chapter connected with Dylan Guest's mom, Pam; she reported that Dylan is still chasing his craft by currently working in furniture restoration, refining his skill in renewing period pieces and wood crafts. Many of us took a moment to experience the Dance Theater of Harlem this year and watch and greet our EYAA 2018-2020 winner, Alexandra Hutchinson, in both Washington, DC and Naples, FL. Both of these winners continue to demonstrate what our artistically talented young people can do when given the right support!

Here are a few things that we have been working on:

Updates on our Pierians Foundation Website. We are using our organic talent to make the website relevant, accurate and dynamic with emphasis on who we have supported and how that support has helped our communities.

Updates on our Foundation Facebook account. We have "in house" management of our account (most organizations today pay an expert to manage social media daily). Our Facebook page will continue to be a way for us to communicate the good news of our award recipients with an emphasis on what they are doing today. "Like" us, send us great information about artistic events in your area for our consideration to post, and "follow" us in order to monitor Pierian Foundation news.

Annual Giving Campaign. The board has decided to launch an annual giving campaign in October, running from mid-October to the beginning of December. We know that giving comes from an excited and active donor base, not from just "asking for money". We are building our donor base, thanking our donors, and sharing with our donors the great news of where their donations are going.

Art Auction and Awards Dinner during National Assembly in 2020. The board is laying the groundwork now for an art auction as its primary fundraiser and signature event in 2020. We have some incredible advisory board members helping our planning. We are eager to auction work from professional artists or Pierian artists; or from donated art from private Pierian collections.

Our goal. Since 2014 our foundation has raised over \$37,000 with approximately \$27,000 being given to our communities for our projects, awards and initiatives. Our goal, **TOWARDS 2020**, is to raise \$13,000 in order to continue to provide financial support to budding artists in our communities and meet the goal of having raised \$100,000 since inception.

Help us by:

Serving on a committee. We need members who will work on committees with the predominate amount of work being online or via phone. We want Pierians who have an interest in article writing, fundraising, event planning, artistic design and who are artists.

Find us artists. Provide the board names of artists who would be willing to partner with us or provide their work for the art auction.

Find us potential donors.

Send us pictures. Send pictures of chapter members working with community members on Foundation sponsored projects.

Together we are transforming generations through the arts using training and teaching initiatives and awarding excellence as ways to support our communities. As you enjoy the summer, please survey your communities to unearth the best talent, so that as we approach the season for identifying Matching Grant Projects and selecting an Emerging Young Artist, we are recognizing and awarding the greats! Spread the word in your churches, your clubs, your community organizations and your fraternal organizations about who we are and who our Foundation supports so that the Foundation may develop partnerships with our communities in the future. Support the Foundation!

Contact me at lynnd1125@gmail.com or pres@pieriansfoundation.org if you are interested in supporting us with your talent.

Artfully yours,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Lynn". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a slight shadow or bleed-through effect.

Pierian Lynn
The Pierians Foundation, Incorporated
National President 2018-2020