



SMA ALUMNI FOUNDATION 2020 LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP

This was the fourth year of the SMA Legacy Scholarship Program. It was established in 2016 as one of the precepts of the SMA Legacy Fund that provides the monies to be awarded each year to four deserving high-school seniors which includes renewals for those applicants during their sophomore, and junior years.

Determining the four recipients was quite challenging. The SMAA Foundation and the Scholarship Committee selected **Miss Isabel Basilis** of Cape Coral, FL; **Mr. Daneel Konnar** of Meridian, MS; **Miss Emma Kurtz**, of Charlotte, NC; and **Mr. Benjamin Powell** of Loudoun County, VA.

Our thanks and best wishes in the future to all those who applied, and our congratulations to the four young men and women who, by this action, have joined our community. Each of them will help perpetuate the legacy of Staunton Military Academy, its heritage, and its core values of “Truth, Duty and Honor.”

The four winners each provided a picture and biography to introduce themselves, and here they are:

Isabel Basilis:



Isabel Basilis

Isabel Basilis was born and raised in Cape Coral, Florida with both her parents and younger sister. She graduated from Cape Coral High School in the year 2020. **She will be attending Mary Baldwin University** as a proud member of the only all-female cadet corps in the nation in the fall, and she will be majoring in Criminal Justice. She will work extremely hard her first year to receive a three-year Air Force ROTC scholarship and commission as an officer in the United States Air Force upon graduation.

In the four years that she attended Cape Coral high school, Isabel is blessed to say that she’s achieved many great things and has been recognized for all of her accomplishments. She has been awarded Academic Excellence all 4 years, she was a member of the National Honors Society as well as a National Honors of high school scholars program. She ended her senior year with a 4.37 GPA, class rank was 35 out of 251 seniors, and her class percentage was 86%. Isabel was also nominated as the top female senior, where only two females were selected out of all the seniors. But most importantly, Isabel had countless teachers who believed and supported her in everything. The one thing she learned from them was that the only way to achieve greatness is to allow others to help you, and in return, be truly grateful towards them.

Isabel took JROTC all four years, and she was the Raiders Commander for three of them! She surpassed her role as a leader using the one thing that made her and her team successful even through all the adversities that they faced together as a team - passion. Truth, Duty, and Honor were the main components that molded her into being the most determined Commander, who only wanted the best for her team. But the one thing that Isabel learned and will take with her for the rest of her life is that gratitude creates humility. When you are humble and grateful you find yourself having purpose, and Isabel found her purpose within her role as a leader.

Isabel is extremely honored to have been selected as one of the four winners of the Staunton Military Academy Legacy Scholarship! She truly cannot explain how grateful she is for this achievement and for everyone in the selection committee! She will continue the tradition that SMA Legacy Fund has demonstrated within the true meaning of what Truth, Duty, and Honor should always look like, and she is truly excited to be a part of such a hard-working community!

Daneel Konnar:



Daneel Konnar

My name is Daneel Konnar, and I would like to thank the Staunton Military Academy Alumni Foundation for the generous scholarship I have received. I graduated from Northeast Lauderdale High School in Meridian, MS as the Class of 2020 Valedictorian. I was the 2020 Senior Class President, the Founder and President of the Northeast High Public Relations team, as well as the President of the Young Politicians of America club. In the summer of 2019, I was chosen to represent Mississippi at the Youth Leadership Program in Washington, DC along with 88 other high school Mississippians. **At Ole Miss, I will be a member of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, the Trent Lott Leadership Institute, and Chancellor's Leadership Class.** I will be majoring in Public Policy Leadership with a focus in pre-medicine. In my free time, I like to explore walking trails, play

tennis, travel, spend time with my family, and eat lots of Chick-Fil-A.

Emma Kurtz:



Emma Kurtz.

My name is Emma Kurtz, a 2020 graduate of Providence High School in Charlotte, North Carolina. This fall **I will be attending the University of Pittsburgh** to study linguistics, anthropology, and music.

I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but my family moved to Charlotte during the summer prior to my sophomore year of high school. The transition was difficult for my brother and me, as we were leaving the independent school we had attended since kindergarten. I made the decision to attend Providence, the public school near our new home; it was one

of the best decisions I have ever made. At Providence, I joined band, choir, and student government, pursuing my interests in music and civil engagement. This past year as a senior, I had the honor of serving as Student Body Secretary on my school's student government.

My grandfather, Edward Hyde Morse, attended Staunton Military Academy. Throughout my childhood and teenage years, he taught me to embody the truth, duty, and honor that SMA promotes. He encouraged me to apply for this scholarship, and I am very grateful for the opportunity this award provides.

Benjamin T. Powell:



Benjamin T. Powell

I made two decisions before I turned 14 that ended up having a tremendous impact on my life. I became a United States Naval Sea Cadet and I transferred schools my freshman year to join the Naval JROTC program at Loudoun County High School.

During the past four years I immersed myself in both programs by attending military trainings across the country, serving inside of my units, volunteering in my community, and mentoring my shipmates. One of my most memorable experiences allowed me to attend Fleet week as a crew member aboard the USS New York where I manned the rails as we sailed into New York City from Norfolk Naval Station.

I have been distinguished with many appurtenances over the years but am most proud of rising to the rank of Chief Petty Officer in the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps and being selected as 1 of 15 Chiefs worldwide to serve on the

Inaugural Senior Leadership Cadet Council and receiving the Presidential Community Service Award for my work with Valiant Warrior.

In the fall I will join the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University on a 4 year Army ROTC Scholarship and pursue a degree in International Studies. I look forward to a life of service to the United States and its Armed Forces.