

Former Alexandrian Authors

Beginning with this volume, the Alexandrian will include updates on past contributors and student editors. Each year we will highlight a handful of alumni whose work appeared in the Alexandrian to find out what they have been up to since graduation. In this first installment, we begin with Doug Allen, the Alexandrian's first editor.

Doug Allen, PhD

Doug not only edited and wrote for the first volume of the *Alexandrian* – he was the driving force behind the whole idea. His article, “From ‘Excellent Officer’ to ‘Little Consequence’: The Deterioration of Gates and Arnold’s Relationship at Saratoga,” appeared in the 2012 inaugural issue.

From Doug:

It is hard to believe it has been a decade since the beginning of *The Alexandrian* and since I graduated from Troy University’s history department. It sounds, and often is, cliché to say that everything someone has done since a milestone moment like undergraduate graduation was made possible by that time, but for me it feels specifically true. My education and Troy University broadly and within the History Department specifically prepared me for the rigor of graduate school as well as provided me a passion for engaging in the world. As a first-generation college student, I don’t think attending a different university, particularly a larger research university would have been able to prepare me the way Troy University did. The care with which professors mentored me inspired me, gave me confidence, and (as I say to anyone that will listen) gave me a better hands-on education than many students being taught at research universities. I went to graduate school much better prepared to read critically and write effectively because of my history education at Troy University, and history awakened in me a passion for seeking ways to engage responsibly in the world.

Since graduating I’ve been able to teach US history in high school (an experience that really taught me the value of well-thought pedagogy), graduate with a Master’s of History in Race, Ethnicity, and Society from Columbus State University and a doctorate in Geography from Florida State University, and travel to Belize (beginning a life-long fascination with this beautiful country). Though I have steadily shifted further from the discipline of history, my education and historical training remain vital to me research and teaching as a professor in the social sciences. I use historical examples and historical documents in my classroom to contextualize ongoing events and to explain why and how a place comes to look the way it does. My background as a historian has made the current moment easier to understand (if not necessarily to stomach) and is a constant



touchstone for my academic and social life as I try to understand the world and engage as a responsible global citizen. History and history education have always been vital, but it seems even more so in the past decade. It teaches people how current events are not spontaneous but develop, how context matters, and how to sift and critically evaluate the massive (and at times simply false) amounts of information that bombards our daily life.

My hope with the *Alexandrian* at the time was to provide students with a way of sharing their hard work. It quickly became a way to honor Dr. Nathan Alexander and uphold his belief in students and academic engagement. Ten years on (thank you to the professors and students that have kept this going, by the way – especially Dr. Ross) my experience as a professor and as an active citizen makes me hope that this journal has played at least a small part in providing back to history students after me the benefits history and Troy University gave to me. I hope that it inspires them to engage in research to learn about the world, gives them confidence to engage in the world academically as well as socially and politically, and I hope that it encourages them to continue learning and growing.

Theo M. Moore, II, MS

Theo M. Moore, II, completed his bachelor’s degree in history in 2012 and began teaching high school. It was just after graduation that his article, “Accepting the End of my Existence: Why the Tutsis Did Not Respond More Forcefully during the Rwandan Genocide,” appeared in the 2013 *Alexandrian*.

His interest in historical inquiry, however, drove him to return to Troy for his master’s in post-secondary education, with a concentration in history, graduating 2017. Since then, Theo has been the collections manager and educator at Tuskegee University’s Legacy Museum. “I remember reading the job description, which included taking care of collections, African diaspora, and all-around African-American history. It was at that moment that I realized the job had all of my passions rolled into one — I knew this was more than a job, it was my future career.”¹



At the museum, located in the National Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care, Theo manages collections pertaining to the United States Public Health Service Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male (1932-1972), as well as exhibits on the contributions of Tuskegee University in medicine and science, a current exhibit on health disparities in relation to the coronavirus, and a sizable collection of African, African American, American, European, and Oceanic art.

¹ From Tuskegee Spotlight, 2019, <https://www.tuskegee.edu/news/skegee-spotlight-theo-moore>

Theo is also the founder and Executive Director of Hiztorical Vision Productions (HVP). At HVP Theo and his team create short-film documentaries highlighting African American history and preserving local histories. “I am the type of person that when I learn new information, I want to share it with all who will listen.”² In 2018, HVP released *Crown the County of Lowndes*, about the founding of the Calhoun Colored School, the *Southern Courier*, and the role of Lowndes County in the Civil Rights movement. This film was followed by *Hobson City: From Peril to Promise*. Hobson City, Alabama, was the first incorporated Black municipality in the state. Theo has a passion to tell the stories not often told and in danger of being forgotten. In addition, HVP works with local communities, empowering them to tell their own stories. “The films and projects we usually see of African Americans are from the victimization standpoint rather than a focus on the success stories of those who were civically engaged or made contributions to this country.”³

Through his work at Tuskegee University, both as an educator and museum professional, and as an innovative film-maker, Theo brings history to life for new generations.

Nikki Woodburn, JD

Nikki helped with the inaugural issue of the *Alexandrian* in 2012 as a Student Assistant Editor and was Co-Editor with the second issue. Her work on both volumes was of tremendous help to establish the *Alexandrian* and to keep it going!

She graduated from Troy University with an English major and History minor in 2013. After graduating from Troy, she attended law school at the Jones School of Law in Montgomery, Alabama. Jones offered her excellent opportunities to intern with the Alabama Board of Nursing and the Alabama Administrative Office of Court, and she clerked with Marzulla Law. Since graduating in 2016, she has worked for the Isaak Law Firm as a family law attorney.

When asked how her experience with *The Alexandrian* and Troy’s history department helped her after her undergraduate years, she stated: “Legal research built on the research I learned in the history department and my role at the *Alexandrian* later helped me get a position on the law review. I use these research, formatting, and editing skills daily in my profession.”

As a lawyer, Nikki continues to use the skills she developed at Troy University. “Before I went to Troy, a judge told me that an English and History degree would greatly benefit me in law school. Beyond preparing me for my legal research and writing courses, my English Major and



² Hiztorical Vision Productions, <https://hiztoricalvp.org/about/>

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History Minor developed my analytical skills. It helped me succeed in law school, but it has also helped me in my professional capacity today. I am able to make better arguments and prove these arguments quickly because of the skills I developed at Troy.”