Soldier’s Legacy Lives on Through Scholarship

F. Scott Fitzgerald once said, “Show me a hero, and I’ll write you a tragedy.” Although Fitzgerald died shortly before the U.S. entered World War II, no doubt he could have written much about those who fought during that harrowing time.

One such hero was Lieutenant Ross Beason Jr., a Salt Lake City native whose fighter plane crashed off the Italian coast in 1944. Unwilling to let his son’s memory die, Lt. Beason’s father erected the Meditation Chapel in Salt Lake City’s Memory Grove in 1948, and the family trust established the Ross Beason Jr. Memorial Scholarship at Westminster in 1980.

Lt. Beason was never a student at Westminster, and his son, Ross Beason III, who was only six weeks old when his father died, does not know why the scholarship at Westminster was created. But to him, it doesn’t really matter. Beason III’s grandfather only completed the eighth grade and was largely self-taught. Helping others attain their education was his way of honoring his son’s legacy.

“The scholarship was created for Dad’s memory,” Beason III said. “But it’s really meant to increase education for other kids and give them the opportunity to do something they may not have been able to achieve otherwise.”

Elmon Tanielian, a Westminster senior majoring in international business, is one of the recipients of the Ross Beason Jr. Memorial Scholarship. Tanielian, who is a first-generation college student with her sights set on law school, had the opportunity to meet and thank the Beason family at the Scholarship Luncheon in November.

“They were some of the nicest people I’ve ever met,” she said. “I owe them a lot more than I think they realize. They’re not just helping fund my education, but my future, too.”

Tanielian realizes that she is part of a chain that leads back to the tragic day Lt. Beason died.

“I will not put this opportunity to waste or take advantage of what has been given to me,” she said. “I hope to be able to do for someone else what the Beasons have done for me.”

You Can Help a Student Like Elmon by Creating a Scholarship. Here’s How:

- An annual scholarship can be created to support any kind of student. You can name an annual scholarship for as little as $1,000 per year, payable over four years.
- Whether you want to honor a loved one or a favorite professor, we can help you create an endowed scholarship at the $25,000 level (payable over five years) that will forever provide scholarships for deserving Westminster students.
- By joining the Converse Society, you can create a scholarship through your estate, making Westminster a stronger institution and preserving the college’s culture of caring for future generations.

To learn how you can create a scholarship for a Westminster student, please contact Jane Campbell at 801.832.2770 or jcampbell@westminstercollege.edu.
New Athletic Scholarship Honors Coach Tommy Connor

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Westminster was known for housing the practice facility for the Utah Jazz, not for having a basketball team of its own. That all changed in 1999 when Coach Tommy Connor reinstated men’s basketball, leading his team to seven conference championships and two conference tournament titles in his 12 seasons as head coach.

Connor left Westminster in 2011, and to honor his tenure and success, the college established the Tommy Connor Leadership Award for student-athletes on the men’s basketball team who best demonstrate leadership, hard work, academic performance, and sportsmanship.

“Coach Connor epitomized these attributes, and that’s how he built his team,” said Adam Hiatt (C ’04), current head men’s basketball coach. “There could be no greater honor for him than to recognize student-athletes who exemplify the high expectations he set.”

Hiatt believes this award will not only benefit the student athletes who receive it, but the basketball program and alumni community, as well. “We are competing against institutions that offer full-ride scholarships for athletes, so any type of financial aid helps us recruit high-quality student-athletes,” he said. “But this award also offers a great way for alumni to give back to the program and honor the coach who gave them so much.”

If you are interested in contributing to the Tommy Connor Leadership Award, please contact Marc Weyerstall at 801.832.2739 or mweyerstall@westminstercollege.edu.

Westminster’s Campaign for Scholarships

We are half way through our $10 million scholarship campaign and are sincerely grateful to those who have helped us stay on track to reach our goal! Since July 2010, alumni, friends, and community partners have created 17 new endowed scholarships, 49 new annual scholarships, 9 new estate gift scholarships—all of which have benefited 144 deserving Westminster students.

Thank you for your support!

To learn how you can create a scholarship for a Westminster student, please contact Jane Campbell at 801.832.2770 or jcampbell@westminstercollege.edu.