Atlanta is proud to boast many highly successful alumni who have made a difference in the world with the talents, hard work, pride and spirit instilled in them during their school years. Their occupations cover a wide range of fields, from professional athletes to actors, doctors and teachers to authors. Some of them have traveled far from Atlanta in search of their dreams and others have stayed home to make their mark on the world. In either case, we are proud to list just some of the notable alumni of Atlanta...
Robert Andrew “Drew” Stubbs (AHS 2003) is an American professional baseball outfielder and has played for the Cincinnati Reds, Cleveland Indians, Colorado Rockies, Atlanta Braves, Texas Rangers, Baltimore Orioles and the San Francisco Giants. He was a three-time All-American in baseball and two-time academic All-American at the University of Texas. He hit a game-winning triple for Team USA in the gold medal game against Japan at the 2004 FISU II World University Baseball Championship in Taiwan. Stubbs was the Longhorns’ co-MVP, named Big 12 Co-Player of the Year, and one of five finalists for the Golden Spikes Award in 2006. Stubbs was drafted by the Houston Astros out of high school, but refused the draft and accepted a baseball scholarship to the University of Texas, where he graduated with a degree in finance. He was the first round pick (8th overall) of the Cincinnati Reds in the 2006 draft and made his major league debut in 2009. He was named a 2017 Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation.

Decori Birmingham (AHS 2001) is a former professional gridiron football running back. He played college football at the University of Arkansas. Birmingham has also been a member of the New York Jets, San Francisco 49ers, New York Giants, Frankfurt Galaxy, Indianapolis Colts and Carolina Panthers. He was signed by the New England Patriots as an undrafted free agent in 2005. In 2010 Birmingham signed with the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League.

Derrick Blaylock (AHS 1997) is a former running back for the National Football League. Blaylock was drafted in the 5th round of the 2001 NFL Draft by the Kansas City Chiefs and played professional football from 2002 through 2006. Blaylock also played for the New York Jets. He was a standout in AHS football, track, and basketball. In football, he was a three-time All-District selection. In basketball, he was a second team All-District selection and in track, he placed second on the 100 meter dash at the state Class 3A finals with a time of 10.7 seconds and set the school record in the 100 meter dash with a time of 10.44 seconds.

Randy Garner (AHS 1996) played college football for the University of Arkansas and was drafted into the NFL in 2001 in the 6th round (4th pick) by the Atlanta Falcons. Garner played defensive end for the Falcons, the Jacksonville Jaguars, the St. Louis Rams, the Denver Broncos, and the NFL Europe League.

Amanda Ellis Cuban (AHS 1994) serves as a Vice President for Special Counsel, a national legal search firm. As a member of the senior leadership team, Amanda recruits and places attorneys in law firms and corporations all over the country. After high school she graduated from Centenary College in Shreveport and graduated summa sum laude from the University of Texas in 2001 with a doctor of jurisprudence. Amanda worked as an attorney in Texas and Massachusetts and since taking the reins at Special Counsel, has propelled her company’s permanent placement division into a multimillion-dollar business. As a result of this incredible growth, Amanda has received numerous awards such as the President’s Choice Award at the company’s 2014 All-Star Gala. Her international accolades include participating in a leadership program with the IMD Business

If you know of a notable alumni not mentioned here, we would be happy to add their story! Please contact Marilyn Cobb at mcobb@atlisd.net or call 903-796-4194 extension 1009.

Last updated: September 25, 2017
Brigadier General Kelley Arnold was born in Atlanta in 1910 and began his military career in 1925 when he enlisted in the Army. He served in the enlisted grades for fifteen years and was commissioned a second lieutenant, Infantry, in 1940. His first duty assignment as an officer was in the 144th Infantry Regiment, a unit of the 36th Infantry Division. Arnold joined the 49th Armored Division of the U.S. Army National Guard when it was organized in 1947. Arnold was promoted to Colonel in 1961 and served as the chief of staff of Fort Polk Louisiana. In 1965 he was appointed Assistant Division Commander of the 49th armored division. In addition to his military duties, General Arnold was a partner in the East Texas Motor company in Atlanta for 20 years and was very active in civic affairs. He was a founding member of the Indian Hills Country Club and a charter member of the Atlanta Lions Club. As an AHS student, Carney was one of the first players on the Rabbit football team. He attended Cumberland Law School in Lebanon, Tennessee and devoted over 50 years to his law practice.

Howard A. Carney Sr. (AHS 1922) served in the Texas Legislature from 1944 to 1953, representing Texas District 1 counties of Bowie, Cass, Marion, Morris and Titus. Carney served as the Senate President Pro Tempore of the 52nd Legislature and as the Texas Secretary of State from 1953 to 1954. He then continued his public service on the Texas Game and Fish Commission for another eight years. Carney also served on the AISD Board of Trustees and was a charter member of the Atlanta Lion’s Club. As an AHS student, Carney was one of the first players on the Rabbit football team. He attended Cumberland Law School in Lebanon, Tennessee and devoted over 50 years to his law practice.

Gordon McLendon (AHS 1939) was a pioneer of American commercial broadcasting who attributed his beginnings in radio to Atlanta. He is noted in radio history as the founder of the Liberty Sports Network (noted for its daily national broadcasts of Major League Baseball) in the 1940s. Liberty was the second largest radio network in the U.S. at the time with over 458 affiliated stations. He graduated from Yale and was a Japanese-language officer in naval intelligence during World War II. McLendon was also a pioneer of offshore pirate radio with Radio Nord off southern England. He is credited by most broadcast historians with having established the first mobile news units in American radio, the first traffic reports, the first jingles, the first all-sports radio station, and the first “easy-listening” programming.

Kevin Rahm (AHS 1989) is an actor and is best known for his television roles on Judging Amy, Desperate Housewives, and Mad Men. In 2016, began playing a lead role on the Fox series Lethal Weapon. After graduating from AHS, Kevin served as a missionary and studied pre-law at Brigham Young University before changing his major to drama. In 1994, he was awarded the Irene Ryan Award for best college actor, and in 1996 dropped out of BYU to pursue an acting career in Hollywood. Besides appearing in these and many other TV series, Kevin has had roles in over twenty movies, and most recently starred in the Netflix horror thriller Clinical in 2017.

Bret Caldwell (AHS 1988) is Director of Communications and chief spokesman for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, one of the largest labor unions in the world – representing more than 1.4 million workers in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. Prior to joining the administration of Teamsters President James P. Hoffa in April 1999, he worked as a grassroots and media coordinator for numerous federal, state and local political campaigns. Caldwell also worked as a congressional aide to Speaker of the House Jim Wright and two other members of Congress. He received a BA from the George Washington University and a MA from the Graduate School of Political Management at the George Washington University. Caldwell was selected in 2015 as a Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation.

Carol Ann Clements (AHS 1993) has served as the Chief Information Officer for Pizza Hut US since 2014. Prior to that she was a senior director and manager for Southwest Airlines. Carol received a bachelor of science in industrial engineering and mathematics from Southern Methodist University in 1997. In 2016, she was named one of the Most Powerful Businesswomen in Texas by the Texas Diversity Council, an honor to those serving as effective role models to other aspiring professionals for their contributions to their company’s growth, strategic direction and proven track record of success. As the Chief Information Officer, Carol is responsible for establishing, coordinating and evaluating information technology strategies for key products and services. She oversees management of IT operations and personnel and development teams, communicates at a senior level of the Pizza Hut organization, and provides technical expertise and industry knowledge to support sales and marketing efforts. Carol was named Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2017.

David Hooten (AHS 1993) was drafted by the Minnesota Twins in the 14th round of the 1996 MLB June Amateur Draft from Mississippi State University. Hooten pitched for 8 seasons in minor league baseball and has returned to his Alma Mater as the AHS baseball coach.

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• Linda Rowe-Thomas (AHS 1988), a fashion designer and founder of the design company Romas. Rowe-Thomas made her New York Fashion Week debut in 2010 and was named “One to Watch” by the New York Examiner. She was chosen to be part of the Celebrity Fashion Experience in Dallas along with Project Runway stars. She has used her adversities as a burn survivor to inspire young burn survivors at Camp Sunshine, where she is a counselor and committee member bringing hope, motivation and confidence to children. She founded Designing Hope, an annual fashion fundraiser benefitting young burn survivors in partnership with Arkansas Children’s Hospital and the Arkansas Firefighter’s Association. Rowe-Thomas was selected in 2014 as a Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation.

• Natalie Scott (AHS 1988) is an attorney for the Coats Rose law firm in Austin. She is a registered lobbyist and works on issues relating to creation of special districts, health care issues, Texas Jurisprudence and business law matters. Scott received a BBA and MS from the University of Texas and graduated from Baylor University College of Law. While in law school, she was the Assistant Managing Editor of the prestigious Baylor Law Review. Scott also has over 20 years’ experience in Texas government where she served for seven years as a Senate staffer, and four years as a legislative liaison for a state agency. Scott was named Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2014.

• Phillip Epps (AHS 1978) is a former American football wide receiver for the Green Bay Packers (1982-1988) and the New York Jets (1989). He attended Texas Christian University. One of his more memorable catches was a 1985 game against the Minnesota Vikings in which he caught a pass from Lynn Dickey on the 21-yard line and hopped into the end zone, attempting to maintain his balance and remain inbounds. The Packers won 27-17. Epps was also a world-class sprinter. His personal best of 20.19 seconds in the 200 meters was the second fastest time in the world in 1982. He also competed in the 55 meters and 100 meters, posting personal bests of 6.08 seconds and 10.16 seconds.

• Joseph Strickland (AHS 1977) was named the fourth Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tyler in 2012. On the announcement of his appointment, Vatican Radio called Strickland “one of North America’s new generation of blogging priests” for his popular Running Priest blog. Strickland attended Holy Trinity Seminary and received a Master of Divinity and the University of Dallas, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in Philosophy. Reverend Strickland was ordained into the priesthood on June 1, 1985, for the Diocese of Dallas. He completed his canonical studies with a Licentiate in Canon Law in 1995.

• Ellen DeGeneres (AHS 1976) is a talk show host, actress, comedian, writer and producer. She has been the host of a TV talk show, The Ellen DeGeneres Show, since 2003. DeGeneres also starred in the popular sitcoms Ellen from 1994 to 1998, and The Ellen Show from 2001 to 2002. Her stand-up career started in the early 1980s, culminating in a 1986 appearance on The Tonight Show.
Fred Cameron (AHS 1956) was an attorney with the Fulbright & Jaworski law firm of Houston and retired as a senior partner. He served as chairman of the Baylor Board of Regents, on the Baylor College of Medicine Board of Trustees, and was a leader of the Baylor Law Alumni Association. Baylor University honored Cameron with the 2009 Founders Medallion, one of the most distinguished awards given by Baylor, for service and contributions that are significant to the life and future of the university. He was recognized in 2012 as a Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation.

Jane Cook Barnhill (AHS 1956) has dedicated her life to the preservation of historic Texas buildings. Appointed by the governor to the Texas Historical Commission for two terms, Jane served as vice-chair of for six years. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum Foundation, and on the University of Texas College of Education Advisory Council. In addition, Jane and husband John are active members of the Texas Exes at the University of Texas. In 2001, she received the prestigious Clara Driscoll Award from Preservation Texas. She is owner of two restored bed & breakfasts in Brenham, the James Walker Homestead (c. 1824) and the Allcorn House (c. 1844). Jane also rehabilitated the 1935 residence of her parents on Bogie Street in Atlanta and an historic theatre in downtown Brenham, which has been renamed in honor of Jane and John as The Barnhill Center at the Historic Simon Theatre. She attended The University of Texas at Austin where she majored in music and education, and graduated from the University of Houston with a BA in Elementary Education. Jane was named Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2016.

David Michael “Slim” Richey (AHS 1956) was an American jazz guitarist, fiddle player, bandleader, and publisher who was known for his eclectic guitar style that crossed genres from jazz to swing to country. Richey became a jazz enthusiast at an early age, starting a swing band at AHS. In the ’70s and ’80s, Richey ran Warehouse Music, a mail order company that marketed instructional materials for students of bluegrass music. The company also developed one of the very first commercially-produced variable speed tape machines designed to assist in transcribing recorded music. Richey ran a number of record labels, most memorable being Ridge Runner Records. Specializing primarily in acoustic music from Texas and Oklahoma, the label produced some groundbreaking projects which are still cherished and studied today.

Steven Fischer Smith (AHS 1974) graduated from Texas A&M, Texarkana with a bachelor’s degree in business administration in 1980. He was named Atlanta’s “Man of the Year” and Distinguished Alumni of Texas A&M Texarkana. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church, the Atlanta Lions Club, the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and the United Way. He was a founding member of the Atlanta Economic Development Corporation. Steven was also a founding member of the Atlanta Education Foundation, where he was a member of executive committee and board of directors until he passed away in 2016. In high school, Steven was a delegate to Boys’ State, and played football and basketball, and ran track. He was a member of the Science Club and the Junior Engineering Technical Society. After college, Steven returned to his home in Atlanta worked in his family’s business, Smith Wholesalers, a Texaco fuel distributing company. He made Smith Wholesalers his career and served as president of the company for 29 years. His hobbies included drag racing and boat racing, and he was an avid amateur “ham” radio operator. Steven was also a committed member of the Racer’s For Christ organization, and Steven helped the organization promote their mission to provide chapel services, pastoral care, outreach and Christian fellowship. Steven was named Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2016.

Lewis Lincoln (AHS 1972) is a school administrator who began his career in education in 1978 by returning to his Alma Mater as a classroom teacher and coach. In 1989, Lincoln became the principal of Atlanta Middle School where he served until 2005. He was recognized as Region 8 Principal of the Year in 2005 and received the Outstanding Texas Education Agency African American Principal Award. He is involved in many civic organizations and was the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year in 1998. Lincoln was named a Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2013.

Ted Thompson (AHS 1971) is the Executive Vice President, General Manager, and Director of the Green Bay Packers. Thompson played college football at Southern Methodist University where he earned Academic All-Southwest Conference Honors. His career with the NFL spans more than 25 years, including a 10 year playing career as a linebacker and special teams player for the Houston Oilers from 1975 to 1984. Prior to becoming the Packers’ general manager, Thompson served the Seattle Seahawks as Vice President of Operations from 2000 to 2004. He was recognized in 2012 by the Atlanta Education Foundation as a Distinguished Alumni.
- Max Allen Sandlin Jr. (AHS 1971) is a former Democratic Congressman who served eight years (1997–2005) in the U.S. House of Representatives representing Texas District 1. He was a member of the senior House Democratic leadership, serving as Chief Deputy Whip. Sandlin served on the powerful and exclusive Ways and Means Committee, the Financial Services Committee, and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. He was an elected and later a leadership representative on the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, and also among the small group of legislators selected for the Parliamentary Group, representatives called upon for rapid parliamentary and procedural action on the floor of the U.S. House. Max was named Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2017.

- Martin Miller (AHS 1971) is a criminal defense attorney with the law firm of Bailey & Galyen in Fort Worth. He received his undergraduate degree at SMU, a law degree from Baylor University, and an MBA from Texas Tech University. Miller and began his legal career at the Dallas County Criminal District Attorney’s Office prosecuting hundreds of criminal cases. He was recognized in 2013 as a Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation.

- Joel Steger (AHS 1970) is an active Atlanta community leader and serves as the Vice President of the Offenhauser Insurance Agency. Steger has had a career in the insurance industry and has served in many capacities at the local level. He currently the president of the AISO Board of Trustees and has been a member of the Atlanta Lions Club for 40 years. An avid sports fan, Steger served as a sports announcer calling Atlanta Rabbit football games on local radio for many years. In 2015, Steger was named Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation and is a founding member of that organization.

- Darryl Davis (BTW 1969) retired as Senior Sales Manager for Pfizer Pharmaceutical after 33 years with the company. He received a bachelor of arts from Jarvis Christian College in 1973 and completed additional studies from The University of Pfizer, Management Association International and Leadership Institute. The highlight of his career with Pfizer was his induction in 2008 into the Pfizer Hall of Fame for outstanding leadership, dedicated service, and sales accomplishments. He was inducted into the Jarvis Christian College Hall of Fame in 2017. Darryl continues to be a career development lecturer for the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City University, Jarvis Christian College, and Langston University, and is the owner and CEO of Davis and Davis, Inc., a real estate company in Oklahoma City. Davis has received numerous awards for his civic and community service, including Harlem’s YMCA Achiever Award, Pfizer Pharmaceutical’s Black Achiever Award, Habitat for Humanity, and many others.

- Roger Hailey (AHS 1965) is a lifelong public school educator who retired in 2014 as superintendent of Atlanta ISD. He began his career in Texarkana in 1971 and left it to serve in the military. Hailey taught and coached for several years in various high schools before becoming a principal at Barbers Hill. He served as principal at Pleasant Grove High School in Texarkana, and superintendent in Crane and Henderson before returning to his Alma Mater in 2004. Hailey was honored in 2014 as Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation.

- Robert Daniel “Danny” Barr (AHS 1964) is a retired US Air Force Colonel and was the pilot for the presidential plane, Air Force One for 17 years, flying for Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton. Upon retirement, Barr was awarded the Extraordinary Meritorious Defense Distinguished Service Medal by the Air Force. After retirement, Barr was the pilot for the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the U.S., Prince Bandar bin Sultan. He was selected a Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2012.

- Eddie Stanley (AHS 1962) is the owner of Stanco Manufacturing of Atlanta, a market leader in the safety clothing industry. Stanco has worldwide distribution with outlets in the US, Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Middle East. Stanley has provided jobs for many Atlanta residents over his 45 year career and has received many honors for his civic and philanthropic service. In 2013 Stanley received the “Significant Sig” award in Washington DC from the Sigma Chi Fraternity, which recognizes men who have made a significant impact in their chosen professions. In 2014 he was selected as a Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation.

- George Dickinson, PhD (AHS 1958) is an author and college professor. He as published more than 80 articles in professional journals and has co-authored over 20 books on the subject of death, bereavement and grief. He has been teaching courses in death and dying for over 35 years and has been actively involved as a hospice educator. Dickinson is on the International Editorial Board of Mortality in the United Kingdom and on the editorial board of the American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Medicine. Dickinson is currently serving and professor and chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the College of Charleston, South Carolina and was awarded as Distinguished Alumni by the Atlanta Education Foundation in 2013.

- Dr. Joe Dan Nichols, Jr. (AHS 1958) is a family practice medical doctor practicing in Atlanta for over 45 years. He attended the University of Texas and received a BA in 1963 and medical school at the University of Tennessee, graduating in 1966. He completed his residency at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth in 1968 where he received the Eli Lily Award for outstanding family practice intern. He also served as a Captain in the Air Force, serving as medical officer at McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento during the Vietnam War. “Dr. Dan,” as he is affectionately known, was honored in 2013 by the Atlanta Education Foundation as a Distinguished Alumni.

- Jim Lee “Earthquake” Hunt (BTW 1957) was a college and professional football player from Prairie View A&M University who played defensive tackle for the American Football League’s Boston Patriots from 1960 through 1969, and for the NFL’s Boston Patriots in 1970. He was a four-time AFL All-Star, and was one of only twenty men to play the entire ten years of the AFL. He was drafted in the 16th round of the 1960 NFL Draft by the Chicago Bears, but decided to sign as an