



POMPANO PEOPLE

November 20, 2008

Pam Masters

Age: 62

Occupation: Florida Field Director for the Horatio Alger Association

A member of the Horatio Alger Association for almost 20 years, Pompano Beach resident Pam Masters said she enjoys helping students attain scholarships so they can achieve their dream of going to college.

Masters moved to South Florida from Kentucky 25 years ago and she said she loves Pompano's friendly small-town community that often reminds her of Louisville.

The Horatio Alger Association is the largest provider of college scholarships and will give away \$12 million in scholarships this year.

The organization offers high school seniors scholarships of up to \$20,000. The students are chosen based on their academic performance, and on how they've overcome adversity in their life.

She recently returned from a national grassroots conference in Virginia where she shared her experiences with the scholarship organization and learned from peers about reaching out to more students.

Masters, who has two children and six grandchildren, enjoys running mini-triathlons with her friends and spending time at the Pompano Beach Aquatic Center. For more information about the Horatio Alger Association, visit www.horatioalger.org/scholarships.

How does it feel to work for an organization that gives students a chance to attend college who may not have otherwise?

It's been an honor and privilege to work with an organization that focuses on America's youth.

What was the most important thing you learned at the conference?

Communication. Nothing replaces good communication.

What are your responsibilities as field director?

We're [the students'] support system. We educate them on the opportunity the scholarship provides and to get the word out to the students. We also reach out to organizations that deal with kids in need, so they can understand the opportunity we provide.

Did you have to overcome any adversity in your life?

Being a single parent was the most challenging thing ever, but also the most rewarding. The decisions you make are life altering. I'm also a Realtor and the real estate market drop -- that was adversity.

What would you like students to know about the Horatio Alger Association?

Everyone's dedicated to kids with needs. We're here to support and help drive the application process. The scholarship is for high school seniors with low-income families, who plan to go to college. You can be a C student and still get a scholarship.

Who has been the biggest inspiration in your life?

Definitely my kids. My kids [Neiko and Calvin] brought out the best of me. They made me a better person. I could've been just satisfied with being average, but they wouldn't let me. Also, Dave Thomas [former owner of Wendy's] introduced me to the Horatio Alger Association and he was a real mentor to me.

What do you think has been the key to your success?

Never give up, stay focused, and always have a plan B. Give it your best shot and keep a good value system intact.

- Sean d'Oliveira