

## **Alfred University alumni, friends finding ways to honor fallen hero; create scholarship endowment and rename prestigious award**

7/06/18

The Alfred University community, trying to find ways to honor NYS Trooper Nicholas F. Clark '11, who died Monday, July 2, while answering a call of a "suicidal suspect" barricaded in his home in the town of Erwin, NY, is creating a scholarship in his honor, and will also rename a prestigious student-athlete award to recognize Clark.

As police officers, including Clark, responded to the scene the suspect, later identified as Steven Kiley, 43, opened fire, striking and fatally wounding Clark.

"From the moment our community learned of Nicholas Clark's death, people have been contacting me, asking what they can do to honor Nicholas, who was not only an outstanding athlete, but a young man respected for his leadership," said Alfred University President Mark Zupan.

"With the blessing of Nicholas' family, a student scholarship endowment has been established at Alfred University to recognize and permanently honor his academic and athletic accomplishments, leadership, community service, and character," Zupan, said. "We are grateful to all the individuals who have already stepped forward to help build this endowment and welcome any further support that others are willing to provide in Nicholas' honor."

Clark was an Environmental Studies major; his mother, Theresa Gunn '96, '98 MBA, is an accounting professor in the University's College of Business.

"We will be working with Nicholas' family to determine the criteria for the scholarship," said Zupan. "The recipients will display the leadership qualities Nick exhibited throughout his life. Checks may be made out to Alfred University with Nick Clark Scholarship in the memo and mailed to University Advancement 1 Saxon Drive Alfred, NY 14802. To make a credit card contribution please call 607.871.2144."

On top of the creation of the endowment, Alfred University Athletics will rename the department's most esteemed award, The Ideal Saxon Award, to the Nicholas F. Clark '11 Ideal Saxon Award. The award was established in 2013 and is defined as "an annual honor that recognizes the achievements of a male senior and a female senior student-athlete at Alfred University who displays excellence in both academics and athletics while providing service and leadership of distinction to the AU Community." Fourteen Alfred University student-athletes have been bestowed with the honor since its inception.

"We established the Ideal Saxon Award during the 2012-13 academic year, one year after Nicholas had graduated from

AU,” Director of Athletics Paul Vecchio, said. “He therefore never had a chance to earn what we consider the highest honor a Saxon student-athlete can receive from the Athletics Department. I find it wholly fitting that we honor Nicholas' incredible contributions to Alfred University, on and off the football field, by naming the award in his memory in perpetuity.

"Most importantly this will allow future nominees and winners to be reminded of the kind of selfless leadership and fierce desire to excel both on and off the fields of play that was the cornerstone of Nicholas' life, and to go forth from Alfred University in the service of others as he did. The 14 winners we have had since instituting this award will no doubt feel an extra sense of pride as well to be remembered alongside one of the greatest Saxons to have ever worn the Purple & Gold."

Clark was a four-year letter winner for the Saxons, ending his career as one of the most decorated players in AU football history. He was an All-America honoree in 2010 and 2011, leading the Saxons to the NCAA Division III Football quarterfinal in 2010, the deepest any AU football team had gone in the tournament at that time, and was only recently matched in 2016. Clark also earned Empire 8 All-Conference honors three times, the Empire 8 Defensive Player of the Year honor twice and the Empire 8 Conference Merit Award.

Clark can be found throughout the AU football record book ranking second in career tackles (377), fifth in rushing touchdowns in a season (12 in 2010), sixth in tackles in a game (19 vs. Springfield in 2011) and eighth in career rushing touchdowns (26).

The 2017-18 Ideal Saxon Award winners were women's tennis player, Beryl Torte (Pretoria, South Africa/St. Mary's Diocesan-South Africa); men's track & field athlete, Seth Spicer (Corning, NY/Corning-Painted Post); and football player A.J. LiCata (Lakeview, NY/Frontier).

Alfred University will host NYS Trooper Nicholas F. Clark's calling hours and funeral within the Terry S. Galanis Family Arena inside the James A. McLane Physical Education Center. Calling hours will be Saturday from 1-6 p.m. while the funeral is scheduled at 11 a.m. on Sunday.