

Alison Karol Named 2008 Buck Scholar

By Andrea A. Firth

Wayne Karol has experienced what most parents of a high school senior only dream about. His daughter Alison, known by most as Ali, is one of this year's recipients of the Frank H. Buck Scholarship, which entitles her to a full ride to the college of her choice. "It's a tremendous opportunity for any kid because of the extent of what it covers," notes the proud father. The Buck Scholarship, established in 1990 in honor of former United States Representative Frank H. Buck, covers all the usual costs of undergraduate school, and upon review, most likely graduate school as well.

Ali was one of fifteen recipients culled from a pool of over 950 applicants for the prestigious and generous award. The scholarship is given annually to a select group of deserving students who either live or attend school within the boundaries of the Congressional District that Buck served which includes Contra Costa County.

"I heard about the scholarship from a young woman who won in 2000," explains Ali. "She encouraged me to apply, because she thought I was the sort of person that they were looking for," she adds. Ali, who grew up in Orinda and attended Sleepy Hollow Elementary and Orinda Intermediate Schools, is the first graduate of Miramonte High School to have received the Buck Scholarship.

"They are looking for a well rounded student," notes Ali. "Someone who shows leadership potential and a commitment to the community. Grades are important but there is no defined

minimum GPA requirement," she adds. Ali is able to meet these standards and then some. An active member in Miramonte's speech team all four years of high school, Ali maintained a GPA well over 4.0. She also participated in choir, musical theater, and a host of community service activities throughout high school.

Ali notes that her public speaking experience helped her with the intense interview she underwent as part of the Buck Scholarship application process. "You are interviewed by the Buck Foundation's Board members. There are six people interviewing you; it lasts about 45 minutes; and the questions are very specific," she explains. Ali notes that the Board members are all related to Frank Buck in some way. Despite the formal nature of the interview process, she understands the reason for it. "They are inviting you into their family," she explains.

Ali will attend the University of California Los Angeles in the fall where she plans to major in History. "I love history," states Ali. "I don't understand when people say the past is the past. Without history there is no present. Everything in the past leads us to where we are," she adds.



Alison Karol, Frank H. Buck Scholarship recipient. Photo provided