

Tunstall co-valedictorian expands family's pedigree

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Hannah Barker, left, stands with co-valedictorians Berkley Toufas, center, and Jarret Stowe, right, just before Tunstall High School's 2016 commencement ceremony.

For Tunstall High School co-valedictorian Jarret Stowe's grandmother, Carol Reasor Stowe, his graduation meant more than walking across a stage in commencement regalia, accepting his diploma, and preparing to attend Princeton University in the fall. It also signified an expansion of their family's legacy and the special place they hold in Tunstall's 52-year history.

Jarret's father, Glen, Class of 1990, along with Carol, Class of 1965, also graduated from Tunstall.

His great-grandfather, Jackson E. Reasor, Sr., was the school's first principal.

In 1964, at the conclusion of the school year, Reasor left his position as principal of Whitmell Farm-Life School after two years there and took the helm of leadership for Tunstall's first, and arguably critical, year. Whitmell and Brosville High would merge that fall and both school's students would attend Tunstall.

Reasor had previously served as principal at Callands High School from September 1950 to June 1962.

Joining him for her high school experience was his daughter, Carol.

"I'm the one person who probably never skipped a day of school," Carol said, explaining that, in high school, she attended the schools where he served as principal.

Realizing the connection between Jarret's graduation and his great-grandfather's work at Tunstall naturally left Carol reflecting on the years between and her own high school experience.

"Since my senior year was the first year, it was quite hard trying to merge the two schools," Carol said. "I guess I remember our prom and graduation better than anything else. Our prom was in the cafeteria. Diplomas got mixed up at graduation because when the band members came back to sit down some of the seats left vacant were in the wrong place."

Carol said that, although the school has changed through the years, with the addi-

tion of the science wing and recent complete facelift and new wing addition, it still feels the same to her.

Carol also said that she believed Jarret's great-grandfather would be very proud of him for his academic accomplishments.

"Family and lineage are very important to me," she said. "I was sad that my father was not here to see Jarret's accomplishments. He would be 'busting his buttons,' he would be so proud. He always wanted his children to get a good education and to see his great-grandson do so well would have been the best," adding that she is proud of him, too.

"As far as my pride in Jarret—if you talk to any of my friends, or check out my Facebook page around the time of his acceptance at all three of the major schools to which he applied, you will probably hear, and see, that they got tired of hearing about it. 'Proud' just doesn't do justice to how I feel. It does my heart good to know that all the hard work and time he has spent learning has paid off with such a large dividend," Carol said. "I know in some minds, Jarret is a 'nerd,' but he is a very well-rounded nerd. He is a very well-rounded young man. He is a great, loving grandson."

During his commencement speech last month, Stowe talked about a statement made by Albert Einstein, in speaking of the status of genius: "Everybody is a genius, but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

"I believe it is important to keep that in mind when we go into the world," Stowe said. "Not all of us are going to be doctors, lawyers or engineers. Being a genius can be defined by anything from a successful career to traveling the world to just having a happy family. Everyone in the class of 2016 is a genius in my mind because each one is choosing his or her own path."

He said he was inspired to reach his goals primarily by his family.

Jarret is the son of Glen and Terri Stowe of Dry Fork.



Jackson E. Reasor, Sr., served as principal of Tunstall High School during the 1964-65 school year: its first year in operation.



Carol Reasor, now Carol Reasor Stowe, graduated from Tunstall High School in Dry Fork in 1965 as part of its first graduating class.



Pictured on his graduation day are Glen Stowe, his mother, Carol Reasor Stowe, and father, James "Jimmy" Stowe. Glen graduated from Tunstall High School in 1990.