



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Scholarship Spotlight

Alyssa Taylor, 2014 Scholarship Recipient

Alyssa Taylor grew up in Whitehouse, Ohio, outside of Toledo and graduated from Anthony Wayne High School in 2009. Then she attended The Ohio State University from 2009 to 2015, earning a bachelor's and a master's degree in City and Regional Planning.

2014 Scholarship Winner: Alyssa received an OCCD Scholarship the second year it was offered; she and Megan Allen from Akron both received the 2014 scholarships. (Stuart M. Davidovich, an OSU student, received the first and only scholarship provided in 2013.)

Current Position: Since April 2014, Alyssa has worked for the Franklin County Land Bank, the Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation (COCIC), where she assists in identifying blighted properties, acquiring them through tax foreclosure and various other avenues, and evaluating the properties for demolition, re-sale, or future rehab/renovation. The COCIC was created in 2012 and serves as Franklin County's land bank agency and is primarily funded from penalty and interest paid by delinquent taxpayers. The COCIC works with local and state partners, as well as private and non-profit agencies to rehab or demolish blighted buildings with the goal of returning the properties to productive use. COCIC received Moving Ohio Forward grant funds for demolition of vacant/abandoned residential buildings, and most recently received OHFA Hardest Hit funds under the Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP).

Alyssa says that she has benefitted from the Land Bank's small workforce. It has allowed her to become involved in nearly all of the organization's programs. She also appreciates the relationships that the Land Bank has built with local community groups, municipalities and non-profits. Alyssa is excited to be a part of the extensive teamwork that goes into improving our neighborhoods.

Alyssa's previous experience: Alyssa worked at the Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Office from March 2013 to April 2014. In this role, she assisted OCCD Board member Rollin Seward. Alyssa was also employed at The Ohio State University's Office of the President from January 2011 to May 2013, as a communications assistant.

Proud Moments: While she received other scholarships, Alyssa states, "I was most proud of the OCCD scholarship, because it is in the field I love -- Community Development" and she "looks forward to giving back to the organization that assisted her in completing her studies, OCCD."

On July 27, 2016 Alyssa was nominated to be the youngest-ever Board member on the OCCD. As a new board member, she is looking to take on responsibilities in furthering the mission and spirit of OCCD, and encouraging other young professionals to take up a career in Community Development. She considers her continued involvement with OCCD to be her "proudest professional accomplishment."

Future Aspirations: She is interested in learning more about the economic development side of the profession in order to better understand creative financing tools available to organizations and jurisdictions.

Alyssa on the Future of Community Development in Ohio: She believes in Ohio cities, and feels they will be playing a huge role in both efficiency of resources (economy of scale) and in social development/social capital which includes diversity of experience and population.

What Alyssa likes to do for fun: -- She likes watching OSU sports, hanging out with her Columbus friends, and checking out different parks with her dog.

Something surprising about Alyssa: She studied abroad in Bangkok, Thailand for several weeks in 2011.