

# THE SAMUEL HUNTINGTON PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

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## The Power of Passion and Perseverance

### Dear Friends of the Sam Huntington Award,

My subject for this newsletter brings together the work of Angela Duckworth; memories of Sam; and what it takes for our winners to succeed: that subject is grit!

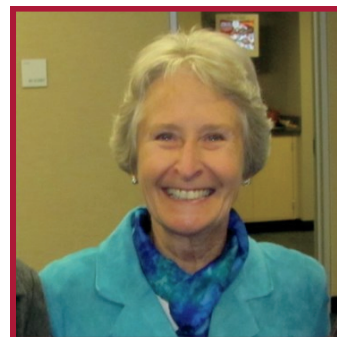
Angela Duckworth is a 1992 winner of the Samuel Huntington Award and is now a psychology professor at the University of Pennsylvania. Her pioneering work on the secret to success is being widely acclaimed among parents, educators, athletes, students and business people. Her newly published book, *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*, has become a national best seller. When asked about the impact that the Huntington Award had on her career, she stated:

"The Huntington Fellowship changed my life. It made it possible for me to do what I am doing today. I will forever be indebted."

Her new book made me think about what it takes for our winners to succeed, and how much they remind me of Sam's determination and grit.

Let me start with Sam! He was a man of immense determination. He wanted to make New England Electric System the best utility in the country, and not just for production and profit, but also for customer satisfaction and energy efficiency combined with care for the environment. With his talented colleagues, he worked hard to develop NEES in ways that made him a leader in his field. And it wasn't just at work that he showed his grit. On the tennis court, in a sailboat, on skis, climbing a mountain, he was a true leader determined to give joy and purpose to his effort in ways that were infectious.

So many of our winners of the past 27 years have shown the same characteristic: grit! Whether teaching women in Kabul, Afghani-



**Jennifer Huntington**  
Chair

stan; showing street kids in Nairobi how to make sandals; encouraging children of incarcerated parents how to escape the cycle of poverty; combating child malnutrition in Nepal; creating urban gardens in inner-city Philadelphia; recycling trash for treasure in Durham, NH; building a school for girls in rural Ghana; helping inner city kids transition from middle school to high school in Providence, RI – the wonderful list goes on and on. As we read the mid-year reports from these winners, we have all come to appreciate the grit and determination it takes to make their project work, sometimes in the face of huge odds and seemingly insurmountable difficulties.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Progress reports from 2015 Winners	2 – 3
Save the Date	3
Thank You to Our Supporters	4

*Continued on page 4*

# 2015 Winners Make Excellent Progress

One of the requirements of our winners is that they report during the year on their progress (a condition of getting the second half of the \$15,000 Award). This gives us a chance to see how everyone is doing, and, equally important, shows the ability of these young people to respond to the realities on the ground. After all, the conditions are different in the streets of Washington DC, the villages of Ghana, or the slums of Pune, India than they are in the dorms of Elon University, the University of Pennsylvania, or Florida State where our winners (Yasmine, Shadrack, and Amelia) dreamed up their projects. The implementation takes flexibility, perseverance, and a different kind of creativity — the talents that Angela would call “Grit.” We have been blessed with young people who have the ability to think up the wonderful proposals that lead to our awards, then have the Grit to implement these projects under sometimes difficult and very different circumstances. This year it is the same; here are the interim reports on last year’s Samuel Huntington Award winners.

## Help for Children with Incarcerated Parents



Yasmine Arrington, the daughter of an incarcerated parent, knows first-hand how difficult it is for students in these circumstances to get into and succeed in college. She started an organization to help. ScholarCHIPS provides scholarships and mentoring to students with an incarcerated parent. During the past year, Yasmine focused first on fund raising for scholarship awards, winning a match grant of \$10,000 from the Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation and then more than matching that amount through other donors. She then turned to distributing the funds, awarding scholarships to six new scholars bringing the total to 23 scholars receiving awards. In addition, Scholar CHIPS awarded six prizes for best entries in an essay contest, mentored youth thinking of college, and held a College Life Skills workshop for participants. Yasmine’s project is centered in Washington

D.C. She has shown great resourcefulness in raising funds for scholarships and reaching students who have a compelling need.

## School for Girls in Ghana

Shadrack Frimpong comes from a rural village in Ghana, whose poverty required a focus on boys education, leaving girls uneducated. After graduating from Penn (with honors and the President’s Prize as one of the top five students), Shadrack, a native of the Tarkwa Breman area, vowed to change this situation. He proposed to build a girls’ school to serve his and surrounding villages. The operation of the school is supported by the sale of produce raised on the school’s property by villagers who donate their time. Since winning his award, he has established a team, won an additional prize from the University of Pennsylvania that has allowed him to expand his project to include a community hospital, completed the design of the facility, bored holes for clean water, and begun construction. In December, 2015, Shadrack informed us that many mothers had begged for a dormitory for the girls so that they did not have to walk three hours to school. He has raised the money and is building a dorm, with a road to the school called the Huntington Way. Shadrack’s project has grown exponentially from his dream in his dorm at Penn to the reality of the village in Ghana.





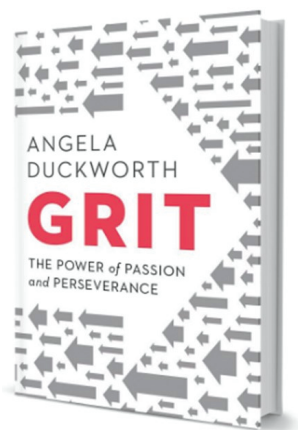
# Save the Date: September 15, 2016

## Reception at National Grid Office in Waltham, MA

We have been quite fortunate over the years to have so many wonderful Huntington Award winners, who have created spectacular projects and programs. A significant number of these projects continue well past the initial year of public service. Over the years, we have followed the achievements of our Award winners as they start their careers and families. We have reported on many of these successes in past issues of this newsletter.



Angela Duckworth's new book, *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*, gives a special reason to celebrate. Angela's book is of originality and relevance to us all.



Please join us to hear Angela discuss her book, and to meet with former Award winners about their projects and careers. The event will be held:

**September 15, 2016 at 6 pm**

National Grid Office  
40 Sylvan Road  
Waltham, Massachusetts 02451

Thanks to you, we have had the opportunity to provide seed money or social venture capital to 68 Award winners operating throughout the United States and around the globe. Many of the projects (25 percent of all award winners and over half in the last ten years) continue to provide public service to this day. The September 15<sup>th</sup> event will allow us all to celebrate and build upon their success and grit, thanks to your support.

## Vocational Training in Pune, India

Amelia Watts' project, to provide vocational training to the children of some of India's most disadvantaged families, began with a survey of needs. She quickly found a wide diversity of needs and limitations not expected in her original proposal. As a result she has expanded the impact group from 20 to 74 people, and set up three different programs for participants: (1) men who reached tenth grade; (2) men who dropped out prior to tenth grade; and (3) women who did not reach tenth grade. The women's program illustrates the different constraints. The women of Pune are conservative Sikhs who cannot leave the house without their husbands or brothers. Amelia has designed a three-week bag stitching class for these women. Once certified, the women can earn a fair market rate working in their neighborhoods close to home. Different programs are being developed for other groups. As Amelia notes, "By taking multiple approaches, we can measure the impact of each approach and determine which will be the best allocation of resources for both the organization and the community going forward." Amelia demonstrates the flexibility and creativity that is necessary for successful Project implementation.



# THE SAMUEL HUNTINGTON PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

## Greetings from the Chair, continued

Vision and intelligence alone are clearly not enough. As Angela has shown, success takes passion and perseverance – and yes, grit!

Angela has kindly agreed to come and speak at our next reunion gathering on September 15, and we hope you will all come and hear more about her ground-breaking work, meet former colleagues, and chat with other former winners. I look forward to seeing you all.

*Jennifer Huntington*

## Thank you to our Supporters!

The Samuel Huntington Fund was established in 1989, and has now granted 68 Public Service Awards. Below is a list of contributors to the Fund during the past year. We sincerely appreciate your support. You can make a tax deductible contribution at any time by sending a check to: The Samuel Huntington Fund, c/o Ms. Amy Stacy, National Grid, 40 Sylvan Road, Waltham, MA 02451. For your convenience, a pre-addressed envelope is enclosed with this newsletter. Thank you for your consideration!

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