

Memorial scholarship to honor four young women

A big thank you goes out to the Birmingham chapter of Mississippi's First Alumnae Association (MFAeA) for setting up a memorial scholarship to honor the four young Mississippi University for Women students who lost their lives to a fire at the Days Inn in Hoover, Ala. in January.

Mississippi's First Alumnae Association, the organization of graduates and former students of Mississippi University for Women, voted Saturday, Feb 6 to establish the memorial scholarship.

Chapter president Shirley Rutherford Spain contacted me this week after reading my earlier blogs about the four young women. She wanted me to know that their lives will never



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be forgotten.

Shirley Rutherford Spain is a 1964 graduate of Mississippi University for Women. The alumnae of the W are also known as the Long Blue Line.

I spoke to Ms. Spain today at her home in Jasper, Ala. She's been in touch with several of the girls' families. One mother spoke about taking the loss "one day at a time."

All four of the women who died were freshmen on scholarship at MUW. They were Jamelia Brown, 18, of Grenada, MS; Jaslynn McGee, 19, of Corinth, MS; Alondan "Angel" Turner, 18, and Catherine Muse, 18, both of Cordova, Ala.

MFAeA president Anghaarad Teague-Dees said: "These young

women will never get to be part of the Long Blue Line of W alums, but they were certainly part of our W family."

I did not know these girls, but as an educator I imagine that any of them could have been one of my students. Their deaths made my heart heavy for what might have been and for the terrible void left in the lives of their families and friends.

I hope my contribution to the memorial scholarship will make a difference in the lives of those MUW students who will follow these four.

If you would like to make a contribution to the memorial scholarship, please send your check to Mississippi's First Alumnae Association, c/o Deborah Hodges, Treasurer, 800 Hillcrest Road, No. 6, Mobile, AL, 36695. *Snow is an associate professor of public diplomacy at Syracuse University. Her blog is published on Huffington Post.*