



The 2018 recipient of the Urbana High School Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award is Andrew Alexander, a 1966 graduate. During his four years at UHS, he was in the band, on Student Council, and on the staff of the newspaper; in addition, he was band president his senior year. He was active in Boy Scouts, Explorer Scouts, and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, as did his father and two brothers.

He is an award-winning journalist and news industry leader who has been a reporter, editor and Washington bureau chief during a career that spans four decades. He reported from more than 50 countries and won or shared in prizes for distinguished Washington correspondence and investigative journalism. As a strong open government advocate, he has written and spoken extensively about the public's right to know. He helped launch the national Sunshine Week Initiative, which each year focuses public attention on freedom of information and the dangers of excessive government secrecy.

Alexander grew up in Urbana and attended Urbana schools. After graduating from Urbana High School, he continued his education at Ohio University, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Journalism. While a student at OU, he worked during the summer in Australia for the Melbourne Herald. He also spent a summer covering the war in Vietnam and covered the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Upon graduation, he went to work for the Cox Newspaper organization in Dayton, Ohio.

He was transferred to the Cox Newspaper's Washington Bureau in 1976, where he covered Congress and politics. In 1997, he was named bureau chief, overseeing a Washington staff and foreign bureaus in London, Jerusalem, Beijing, Moscow, Mexico City, Baghdad and the Caribbean, as well as bureaus in New York and on the West Coast. During that time as bureau chief, the Cox Washington Bureau shared the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. In early 2009, Alexander joined the Washington Post.

Alexander serves on numerous boards related to journalism: He is a board member of the American Society of News Editors Foundation, having completed a three-year term as its president in 2016. He is now a Senior Advisor to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, helping foreign journalists who have been subjected to attacks, arrests and harassment by repressive regimes. He chairs CPJ's Development Committee.

He has also served on the board of the National Press Club and is a member of the advisory council for the Scripps College of Communication at Ohio University, which has awarded him its Medal of Merit as a distinguished alumnus. In 2011, he was inducted into the Scripps College of Communication Hall of Fame, which recognizes lifetime achievement. He was also named Ohio University's Alumnus of the Year. In 2013, he received an honorary doctorate of communication from Ohio University and was its undergraduate commencement speaker.

For his work on behalf of open governments, Alexander was inducted into the First Amendment Center's national Freedom of Information Act Hall of Fame in 2006. He serves on the Accrediting Committee of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

Alexander currently is a Visiting Professional at W.E. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University, where he is playing a leading role in fostering media innovation and entrepreneurship. He is also an Executive in Residence at Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs.

He is married to Beverly Jones, an attorney and consultant. They live in Washington D.C. and Rappahannock County, Virginia.