

Watchung Hills Regional High School Hall of Fame



Alison Wright
Photojournalist
Class of 1979

Even as a student, Alison was a “pioneer.” She was the only girl on the all-male track team. Her determination and her persistence, in fact, led to the formation of the girls’ track team at Watchung Hills.

Alison’s career as a photojournalist also had its beginning at Watchung Hills; she served as photographer for the yearbook and student newspaper. Her performance was so outstanding that she was encouraged to consider photojournalism as a life work.

This she did, and with remarkable results, persistence and artistry. Now, more than three decades later, Alison is considered among America’s foremost photojournalists. Her work, which has taken her around the world, has focused on human rights as she has documented the traditions, customs, needs, and obstacles of people throughout the remotest regions of the world. Her photo-stories have appeared in such periodicals as *National Geographic Traveler*, *Smithsonian*, *American Photo*, *Natural History*, *Time*, *Forbes*, *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and *The San Francisco Journal*. She is a recipient of the prestigious Dorothea Lange Award in Documentary Photography for her photos of child labor in Asia, and is a two-time winner of the Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Award. Alison is also the 2012 recipient of the Society of American Travel Writers Photograph of the Year Award.

Best known of her books is *Learning to Breathe: One Woman’s Journey of Spirit and Survival*, which tells of her miraculous recovery from a horrific accident in a remote jungle road in Laos. Her brave story has served as an inspiration to many who have suffered similar life-threatening accidents.

Other books she has authored include: *Face of Hope*, *Children of a Changing World*; *A Simple Monk*, *The Dalai Lama*, and *The Spirit of Tibet: Portrait of a Culture in Exile*. As an outgrowth of her investigative work, Alison has established a foundation, “Faces of Hope,” that helps children in need around the world.