Alden J. "Butch" Carpenter was born in Flint, Michigan and graduated from Flint Southwestern High School. He received a scholarship to the University of Michigan, where he excelled academically and athletically. For three years, Butch started as a defensive end for the Michigan Wolverines and was co-captain of an undefeated football team.

After graduating from the University of Michigan, Butch worked briefly in Detroit before returning to Ann Arbor to join Michigan Law in 1977. In law school, Butch demonstrated the same leadership skills, aptitude, and commitment that marked his undergraduate years. His natural gifts made Butch an effective advocate for social justice. Believing that the development of economically disadvantaged communities was greatly dependent upon businesspersons and lawyers, Butch intended to dedicate his career to the survival and growth of such communities. Those acquainted with him were impressed with his enthusiastic spirit and his singular, driven purpose to use his professional talents for the benefit of others.

At the age of 28, Butch tragically passed on February 2, 1978 after collapsing while playing basketball. To some, his untimely death meant the loss of a fine athlete, to others, the loss of a future legal star. But to all, Butch's passing meant the loss of a great man.

On February 21, 1978, recognizing the importance of Butch's chosen life's work, the Black Law Students Alliance (BLSA) at Michigan Law voted unanimously to honor his memory and vision by establishing the Alden J. "Butch" Carpenter Memorial Scholarship Fund. The Fund's purpose is to support law students pursuing the same high level of social commitment that Butch demonstrated during his life.

In 1999, Alden J. "Butch" Carpenter was inducted into the Greater Flint AfroAmerican Hall of Fame with the following headline: "Alden J. 'Butch' Carpenter made his mark in Flint's sports history. Gone but not forgotten."

Each year, BLSA hosts this memorial banquet to promote the Fund and to reflect upon the principles that Butch personified. As a part of the annual banquet, the Fund awards scholarships to outstanding first-year BLSA members who have demonstrated commitment to combining business and law to promote community development. Last year, the Fund awarded $75,000 in scholarships.