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LIFESTYLE CAREER BUSINESS EDUCATION RELIGION
ISSUE #4 SPRING / SUMMER 2020

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Thank you for your continued support of Panoramic Magazine. Hilighting stories of positive individuals has been a blessing. We look forward to continuing spreading the stories of those who influence and inspire.

-The Wilson's

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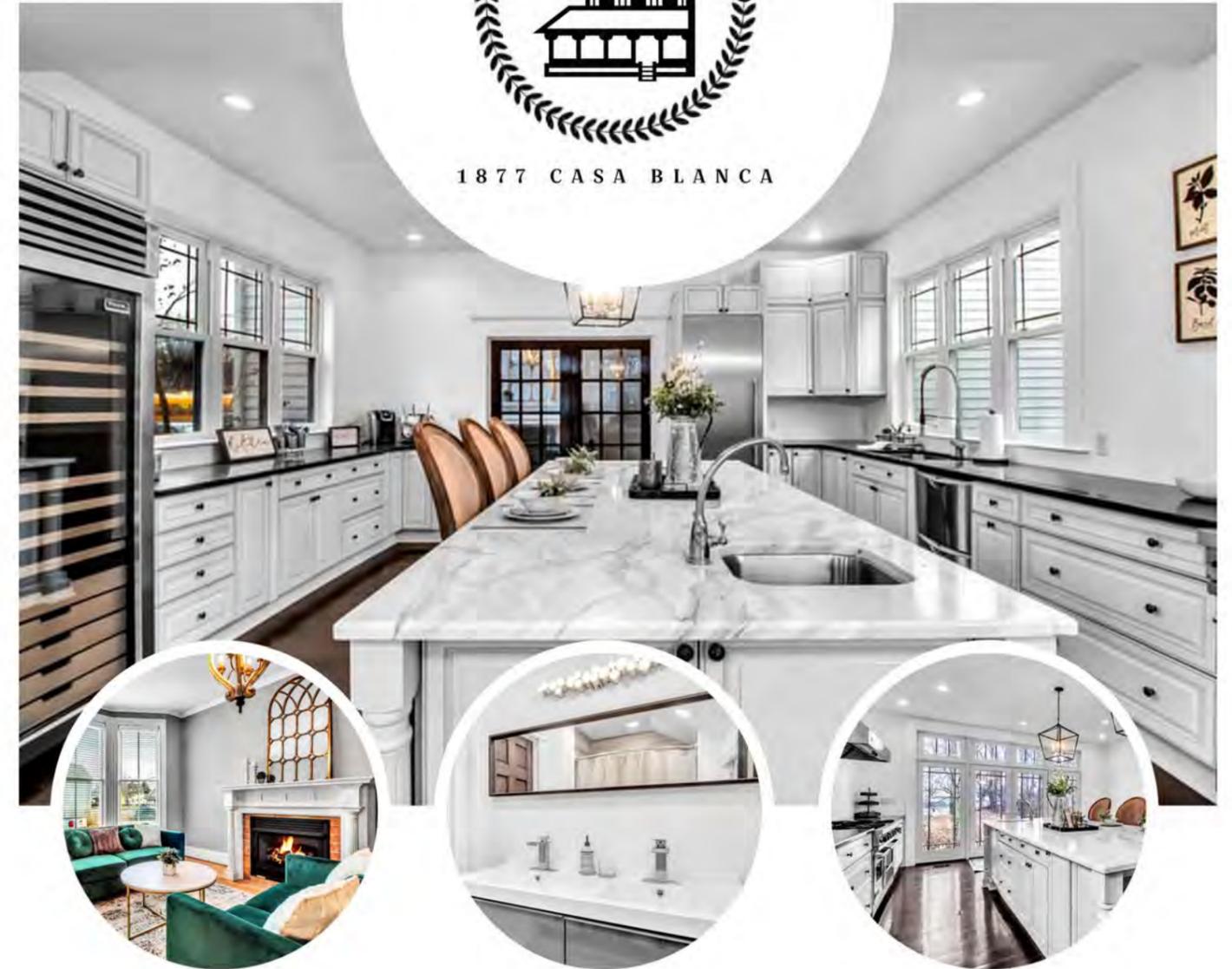
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KENT

C R E A T I V E M E D I A M A N A G E R

Kent Olden's career in public/media relations and communications started with an internship in 2009. His very first client with that internship was Sir John (currently Beyonce's makeup artist), a columnist for Vogue Magazine. Since graduate school Kent has been a staff writer for the Kappa Alpha Psi Journal, a writer and editor for Bleu Magazine, and most recently the Coordinator of Development & Communications for the Buffalo Urban League.

A Biochemical Technology graduate of Buffalo's Hutchinson Central-Technical High School, Kent was always the smart kid. Designated as gifted and talented in the 4th grade, Kent was accelerated in all of his classes. Exceptional in math and science, Kent just knew he was going to be a doctor. There was just one problem, he didn't like math and science. After high school, Kent attended Morehouse College (Atlanta, GA), and obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a concentration in Communications, followed by a Master of Science in Public Relations Management from Buffalo State College.

Kent was born and raised on the eastside of Buffalo. Kent states "one thing that was always drilled into us while at Morehouse was that your education is worthless unless you go back to your community and share it. I came back to share my HBCU experience with those who otherwise wouldn't know anything about it. Anybody who knows me knows I have no problem talking about my time at Morehouse to anyone who wants to hear. Buffalo hasn't really been known to push HBCU applications for graduating high school seniors. I'm just one person bridging that gap." Kent also is always ready to share the experience of joining a Black Greek Lettered Organization. Kent states "membership is taken very seriously because it lasts the rest of your life, and each and every member has a very lofty legacy to uphold. Becoming a part of one of these organizations not only sheds new light on the people and the world around you, but it also shows you the parts of yourself that you never knew exist".

Kent goes on to share "having the network of fraternity brothers across the globe is enough to propel you forward in whatever it is you're pursuing. That network doesn't just stop within your organization. There are the Divine 9 BGLOs, we are all here for each other. For example, a few years ago I was contemplating

OLDEN

B U F F A L O N I A G A R A M E D I C A L C A M P U S , I N C .

a PhD program at George Mason University. I contacted a high school classmate of mine who is a member of a black sorority, she had received her PhD from the same school. When I told her what program I was looking at, she immediately put me in touch with the director of the program, who ironically is a member of my fraternity. After a few initial conversations and him looking over my writing, he said "I'll take care of you frat, just let me know when you're ready." This is one reason I always wear my letters when I travel. You never know who you'll come across. You just may find your next job opportunity while waiting for your flight all because you wore your fraternity/sorority shirt to the airport and the right person recognized it."



Kent shares "I never thought I'd ever do well with public speaking because I was always a shy kid, now I'm always asked to give news interviews or host events at the drop of a dime. There is no such thing as "you can't do it, I'll find a way or make one."

In his current role as a media specialist for the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, Inc., Kent oversees content development and distribution, brand awareness and event promotions, and social media management. Any news that goes out, any media pitches for a potential broadcast all have to go through Kent. According to Kent, "the secret to Public Relations (PR) is turning Perception (P) into Reality (R). As public relations professionals (PROs), it's our job to direct the public perception of the brand, ultimately resulting in a full blown buy-in." Being successful in public relations takes quick wit, creativity and being able to think and speak on your feet. According to Kent, "one of the most important things to have is a personable persona. Your success is determined by your individual personality. You must be liked

by everybody. Everyone knows the "it's not what you know, it's who you know" line when it comes to success in your adulthood."

In PR, it goes a little bit deeper:
It's not what you know, it's who you know.
It's not who you know, it's who knows you.
It's not who knows you, it's who likes you.

It's not hard to be well-known but it's not easy to be well-liked, however the goal is to be both. That's how you get what you want for your campaign or your press conference or your special event. Ken stated "being the Golden Child gets you the gold."

CHRISTINE FARROW

BEAT THE ODDS: PROJECTS TO PHD

Born and raised in the Langfield projects in the city of Buffalo, Christine Farrow has defied the odds and proved it's not where you're from that determines your future. There's a certain stigma attached to people who grow up in low socio-economic environments, however one conversation

with Christine and you'll throw those stigmas away.

Raised in a single parent home Christine and her siblings had a good childhood. Christine shares "my mother was always considered "the cool Mom." Growing up we didn't have much, however her door was always open to practically every kid in the neighborhood. She made sure we were provided for, she always put us first. I would see her working two jobs, she would still find resources and activities for us to be a part of so we did not become products of our environment."

Christine graduated from Kensington High School in Buffalo, NY. Following high school she attended Erie Community College and received an Associate Degree in Paralegal Studies, that was just beginning. She went on to obtain a Bachelor's degree in Individuals Studies and a Master's Degree in Adult Education from Buffalo State College. She continued studies at the University at Buffalo and obtained a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and a PhD in Counselor Education from the University at Buffalo. Christine admits she wasn't a great student initially, but she has proved that an average student can be a great scholar.

Christine has a vast professional career. Presently Christine works in the NYS Courts System as a Deputy Commissioner of Jurors for Erie County. She is responsible for supplying all courts in Erie County with qualified jurors. Deputy by day Christine also works as an adjunct professor for the University at Buffalo. At UB she teaches a variety of counseling related courses in the Graduate School of Education and test prep skills at the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC). Despite the statistic of growing up in the projects, Christine never encountered trouble with the law. She states that "learning the court system from the ground up was a challenge but I have never met a challenge I did not like. Not to mention, I am the first female and first black to ever hold this position in Erie County. With that being said there is always going to be some challenges and pressure when you are the first in anything."

The project kid turned doctor, Christine stated that obtaining her PhD is one of her most proudest accomplishments. She shares "less than 3% of the population has achieved this level of education, I have accomplished something that is not afforded to many. To date, this was the scariest yet most rewarding thing I have ever attempted." What makes her journey more special is that she initially flunked out of college during her time at ECC. Christine is creating a legacy of character, integrity and passion. Christine states "I want to be remembered for my perseverance, a person that never gave up despite how difficult things were."

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Born and raised in Buffalo, NY, Deana Stevenson was primarily raised by her mother and maternal grandmother. Describing the relationship between her and her mom, as one of best friends, Deana's mom created an environment of support and happiness. The only child, Deana knew she would become successful one day.

As a teen Deana was a people pleaser, she really cared how people viewed and thought of her. Recalling the carefree life of highschool and college, she remembers feeling invisible. A straight A student, Deana graduated from Lafayette High School in Buffalo, NY. Upon graduating from high school Deana attended Howard University. Deana's post-high school journey was just beginning. Completing her undergraduate degree at the University of Buffalo, Deana went on to attend Case Western University where she received a medical degree. She then attended D'Youville College and Canisius College where she received multiple educational degrees. Deana's college experience also included joining the prestigious Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Like many students Deana selected a major in college that wasn't her true passion. Deana states "I had a French teacher in high school that was always willing to share her own life experiences to assist us in making better choices. I can recall her having conversations with me about doing what was best for me and not being concerned about what others wanted me to do. I guess you could say that she knew medicine was not the track for me, but because I was great at math and science that was the track I followed. Knowing what I know now, I'm uncertain if I would have attended college and medical school. I spent a lot of time working towards a career that I later found to be unfulfilling."

Deana's first job was a physician for the Baltimore Veterans Administration Hospital. After realizing medicine was not for her, Deana decided to change careers and become a science teacher. After teaching for several years she became a principal. During that time she also started a home-based business and the future entrepreneur was born. Using the skill sets from medicine and diagnosing patients Deana began to build her business. Understanding that you need systems and processes to be successful, Deana leaned on the strategies taught in medical school to overcome her lack of "formal business" training. Eventually she was successfully able to leave her job as an elementary principal and become a full-time entrepreneur. Deana stated "I realized my business skill set was unique and I could share it with other women like myself. I also realized that this same skill set could be used to coach School Administrators. Therefore, in December, 2014 I created the DocDeana Enterprises DDE, LLC Consulting Firm." DDE is an Educational and Business Consulting Firm."



DDE has two arms. First an education arm that consists of visiting schools and discussing goals as it relates to leadership, instruction, curriculum, student behavior and well-being, and parental involvement. This arm is typically done with building and district level leaders. The second arm is the business arm. This arm consists of meeting (mostly via Zoom) with coaching clients to discuss their goals, systems, and sales. A considerable amount of time also goes to creating and tweaking content for the many online courses

related to building a profitable business.

Married and a mother of two, Deana's and her husband Bert have created a goal-oriented home. Instilling in their children the concept of always be in pursuit of something. Deana's philosophy of life is to live each day with a pure heart and clear conscious. Life is a constant evolution of change and Deana's goals and vision continue to evolve. Deana concludes "when I was younger my goals were related more to money and notoriety but now it is centered around helping as many people as possible achieve their goals and teach them how to help others do the same. I'd like my life, my words, my presence to impact others to do more, want more, and be more."

DEANA STEVENSON

DocDeana Enterprises DDE, LLC Consulting Firm



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JAMEE WILLIAMS

ACADEMIA'S BOSS LADY

Photo by: Mayfield Media

Inquisitive and insatiable, Jamee Williams appetite for knowledge has created a life of balance and professional wisdom. A graduate of Buffalo's Hutchinson Central Technical High School, who knew that the teenage girl who wore red and black everyday would become a pivotal figure in Western New York's academia community.

Born and raised in the Central Park neighborhood of Buffalo, Jamee was a self proclaimed daddy's girl. Describing her childhood as fun, Jamee recalls the days of playing with her friends and just enjoying life education was paramount within her family. Confidence and hard work were attributes that her parents passed on to Jamee and her siblings. "I was spoiled but I had to work for everything I had. Bad grades, bad behavior and bad attitudes were not rewarded. If I did what I was supposed to do, they made sure I had just about everything I wanted. Growing up I had my entire life planned, "I knew I was going to be a pediatrician with four children. I knew their names and the order they'd be born, however I was wrong" Jamee marveled.

After high school Jamee attended the University of Pittsburgh, University of Buffalo and St. John Fisher College in Rochester, NY. Currently she holds the position of Academic Dean at an area community college. Following in her mother and sister's path, Jamee started out her professional career as a Public Librarian. Now a typical day includes lots of meetings, problem solving, navigating personalities and writing policies and curriculum. Being a woman of color in a white male dominated field, Jamee has come to learn that she can still be true to herself while being a professional. She states "I tend to be pragmatic and strategic in my job, often minimizing emotions. That is very different from how I am in my personal life. I realize the value in both approaches, I bring a diverse perspective that is representative of the population served by my institution. The population is absent at many of the meetings where decisions are made and this keeps me on my job. I have to work hard and go above and beyond because I know I am having an impact on students who deserve the best."

A great childhood and promising professional career gives the illusion that life has always been good for Jamee, but her faith was tested some years back. Within a six month period Jamee lost her dad and her boyfriend. Jamee lost faith and struggled in the next phases of her life. Losing a parent is an emotion that lasts a lifetime, but Jamee was able to get back on track with therapy, prayer and great family and friends. Now married with two children, Jamee credits her husband with loving her even when she didn't love herself. Jamee's dreams and goals have changed and now she realizes that control and power are perceptions. Jamee states "realizing that you can direct how things happen but you have no real power over how they play out has allowed me to accept life as it happens instead of trying to control what is next. My goals used to be very prescriptive and detailed, now I just focus on what makes me happy."

SYNTYIA TAYLOR NURSE PRACTITIONER

The ability to persevere through hardship and failures makes accomplishing your dreams that much sweeter. Syntyia Taylor has been able to conquer her dreams and now she's focused on making sure others do the same.

Growing up Syntyia battled depression as a child, but she didn't realize it until she was much older. Raised in Lackawanna, Syntyia's mom had her when she was 16 years old. According to Syntyia, "my mother was barely around throughout my childhood and my father was never in my life. I lived with my grandmother who raised me, my uncle helped take care of me and has been the best father figure that a girl could ever ask for." Syntyia's grandmother had medical problems from a young age and could not work, this allowed her to be at home with Syntyia. The family was very poor but her grandmother instilled that education will take Syntyia where she wanted to go.

As a child Syntyia was not happy. She shares "when I look back, I realized that I dealt with depression. It was hard living so poor and not having the things that other kids had growing up. I was picked on by so many of the kids growing up that I hated to go outside or even walk to the store out of fear. I often asked myself why I didn't have the family that other kids had, like a mother or a father." Syntyia's saving grace was school and her ability to achieve good grades, she was a great student and it showed through her achievements and activities. Influenced by her Uncle Marcus, Syntyia admires how he was able to come from the same household and go to a Historical Black College and graduate.



Syntyia attended Lackawanna High School she describes herself as super focused and very organized. Syntyia was known for getting good grades and excelling in her favorite sport, Track and Field. She ran in many events, Syntyia's believes she may still hold some records in Lackawanna High School history. She also played basketball and volleyball, was the junior and senior class treasurer, a member of the National Honor Society, Black History Group, Yearbook Group, School Store, Student council, and Varsity Club. After high school Syntyia attended the University of Buffalo with plans to become a doctor. College was a serious culture shock and that affected her grades. Syntyia also became pregnant and dropped out in her sophomore year. The feeling that she would never get another opportunity to go to school and be a healthcare professional stuck with her until she enrolled into Trocaire College, to obtain her Associate's in Nursing, she was determined and kept going and obtained a Baccalaureate in Nursing and a Master's in Science in

Adult Nurse Practitioner from Daemen College. Syntyia was back on track.

Today Syntyia is an Adult Nurse Practitioner in Neuroscience. She works in a hospital setting along with two physicians and two nurse practitioners. Her daily duties include breaking down the consults, following up with patients, managing neurological care for patients, developing treatment plans including necessary orders based on the treatment plan, as well as follow up on all test including CAT scans of the head, MRIs of the brain, and other imaging testing and lab work. "Nursing is a tough job mentally and physically and is not for everyone" she states. "Many nurses are known to "eat their young", meaning that some of the more experienced nurses make it hard for the new nurse." Syntyia found it difficult to gain experience however she put patient safety first and found her way.

Nursing has taught Syntyia how to be empathetic to others situations and medical conditions. "I have seen people outside the hospital doing their normal daily routines and then I have seen those same people in the hospital sick and at their most vulnerable state as I have cared for them. One would never think prior to their hospitalizations that they were struggling with physical or mental illnesses. With that being said being nice to people goes a long way." Nursing is a grueling but rewarding career, nurses like Syntyia let's us know we're in good hands when we most need it.



KELLY DIANE GALLOWAY

RAMP GLOBAL MISSIONS / MONA'S HOUSE

Serving others and saving the world, Kelly Diane Galloway is a truly unique and remarkable individual. Known as the modern day Harriet Tubman, there may not be another person to measure Kelly up to. As the president and founder of Ramp Global Missions (RGM), a Christian humanitarian organization that exists to help the hurting, those experiencing homelessness, and those exploited by human trafficking, Kelly's is on a mission to save those that are less fortunate and those that are in danger. RGM has schools, children's homes, and restoration homes in four countries. Kelly is most known for her work advocating for victims of human trafficking through the program Mona's House.

A native of Buffalo, NY, Kelly grew up in a very large family. A dreamer from day one, she was always trying something new. Kelly shares "I was a very creative child, I envisioned myself doing different things, I wanted to be a mineralogist, so my parents bought me a science kit that took over an entire room in our house, which was my own personal science laboratory. I wanted to be a singer so they bought me equipment, and I had a little makeshift studio when I was Ten. Then I wanted to be a teacher, and they helped me build a classroom and I would tutor neighborhood kids there on Fridays and Saturdays." Kelly's parents supported her dreams and ambitions and this helped them develop a very close relationship that still exists. Kelly considers her parents her best friends, when talking about her parents Kelly stated, "we can laugh, talk, go on parent-daughter dates, pray, and support each other however it wasn't always like that. After my cousin Mikey, who I call my brother, was murdered, I changed. I was angry, I was sad, I was grieving and I took that out on my parents during my teenage years. It was hard to get over but after many years we did."

When Kelly was 15 years old, she heard a woman, Dr. Claudette Copeland preach at St. John Baptist Church in Buffalo. Kelly shares "I had never seen or heard a woman preach before, I saw my future self in her. I wanted to preach but I was so filled with rage and pain I didn't know how God would ever let me be like her." Counselling and time eventually helped Kelly get over her pain and anger and return to the energetic and determined person we see today.

The Kelly we see today is the same social butterfly that roamed the

halls of Hutch Tech High School. While she didn't always excel academically, due to lack of interest, Kelly enjoyed her high school days. Urban Legend has it that Maya Pierce and Farod Muhammad taught Kelly a years worth of chemistry in six hours so she could pass the exam and graduate high school. After high school Kelly attended Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. At Liberty, Kelly's life started to change as she became interested in serving. Participating in a ministry team called campus crusade, and Shekinah Ministries at Liberty, serving others started to heal her heart from pain, rage, and anger allowing Kelly the ability to love again.

Kelly is proud and humble of her ability to create safe places for women and children to heal

Kelly's first professional job was at a finance company, Genworth Financial. She learned quickly that working in a cubicle, talking to people on the phone wasn't something she wanted to do everyday. Sad and depressed, things changed when she landed a position at a college working with high school students. Being able to travel, teach children practical skills they would need upon graduation, and helping them get into college was right up her alley. A chance encounter changed history and Kelly's path for the future. "In 2004 I met a man in the computer lab at Liberty University who also loved serving people, he ended up being my pastor. Together, along with a few others we planted a church called The RAMP Church International. Our

goal was simple, to reach as many as possible. A few years later I was burdened to do international work so I created an international line of work called Ramp Global Missions, I've been working at this ever since then" Kelly shares. Her days are now filled with meetings, teaching others about human trafficking, and studying her bible. Her passion has taken her all over the world but Buffalo and Lynchburg are her hubs. In Lynchburg, Kelly created the Dale Jackson Elevate GED Program. The program is named after Kelly's 5th & 6th grade teacher Dale Jackson. According to Kelly, "Dale Jackson changed my life. He always believed in me, he taught me how to play chess. I was encouraged and joined the chess club. He taught me how to ice skate which is why I am intentional about teaching other little black girls how to ice skate. He also used to let me take home the class pets on the weekends. When I would fight or act like I didn't have a destiny or purpose he would call my parents immediately, he believed in me so and he still does to this very day."

Today Kelly is proud and humble of her ability to create safe places for women and children to heal, learn, and grow. Mona's House, which is WNY's first housing facility just for human trafficking victims is Kelly's pride and joy. Dreams of opening Mona's Houses in every major city in the U.S., Kelly is not done with saving the world. According to Kelly, "my best advice for living is to get out of the boat. I've found that the fulfillment of destiny and purpose never happens in safe and comfortable places. The water seems scary, intimidating, and even impossible to control at times, but I'd rather live my life knowing that I did everything I could to die empty, than to rob this world by taking all my love, service, gifts, and treasures to the grave because I was afraid."



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CAVINA JAMES

Associate Director

Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP)

Cavina James an example of living in the moment and being confident in charting one's own path. Inspired to reach her full potential, the self proclaimed introvert is now one of the most important mentors and administrators in the higher education community in Western New York.

A true mixture of her mother and father, Cavina was born in Buffalo to very young parents. Cavina's first memories as a baby was living with her mom in her grandparents home. Her mom was one of seven siblings, a large family with a host of aunts, uncles, and cousins. Nicknamed "Piggy" by her family because she was chubby as a baby, the name has stuck with her

to this day. After her mom married, they moved out of Cavina's grandparents' home to the suburbs. The culture shock of a new neighborhood in which she was now a minority wasn't a pleasant experience. Eventually the family moved back to the city for Cavina's middle to high school years. Recalling her childhood, Cavina stated, "my mom raised seven kids, her house was always well kept and my siblings and I were always well put together. My dad was always a motivator, with the go get it attitude. He was a strong believer and advocate for education."

Cavina went to public school #11 and then Turner Carroll High School for two years, followed by Kensington Vocational High School for her last two years of high school. Shy and never a kid that had to be with the in-crowd, Cavina preferred to be alone when she wasn't in the comforts of her family. Academically an average student in high school, it wasn't until college that she really took education seriously. Cavina states "I wouldn't say I really enjoyed high school, I think because I wasn't very social and didn't get involved in any sports/activities I didn't enjoy it as much as I could have." After high school Cavina wanted to take a year off of school, but her dad wasn't having it. She enrolled in Buffalo State College and received her undergraduate and graduate degrees. For Cavina, college represented a time when she became more in control of her life. Scheduling her own classes, attending parties, getting involved in clubs, and figuring out what she wanted to do with her life represented a new view on life. "Being an EOP student and interacting with my EOP counselor inspired me to go to grad school and work in education. Grad School was the absolute best for me, the relationships I built and the knowledge I gained. My peers and I were like family and we helped one another to get through. Those relationships have become lifetime relationships" Cavina says.

Now a happy mother of two, Cavina is the Associate Director of the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) at Canisius College. Starting off part-time to get her foot in the door, Cavina has elevated herself in the higher education arena. In this area professionals stay in their positions until they retire, which often doesn't make room for new professionals. This makes Cavina's rapid ascension even more remarkable. Since the HEOP program is a state funded program, Cavina and her staff have to ensure the program is adhering to the grant proposal guidelines and state regulations. Working relationships with admissions, financial aid, academic deans, student life, as well as other support departments on campus makes her day to day schedule really hard to predict. Meetings, dealing with student related issues as they pertain to academics, financial aid, and dorm concerns, makes for hectic days.

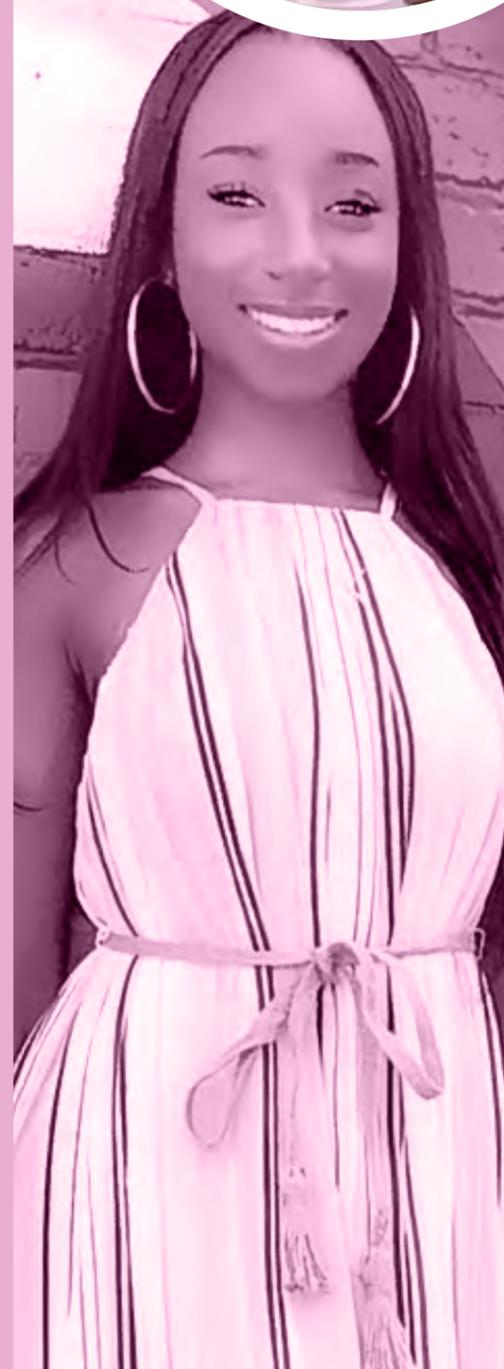
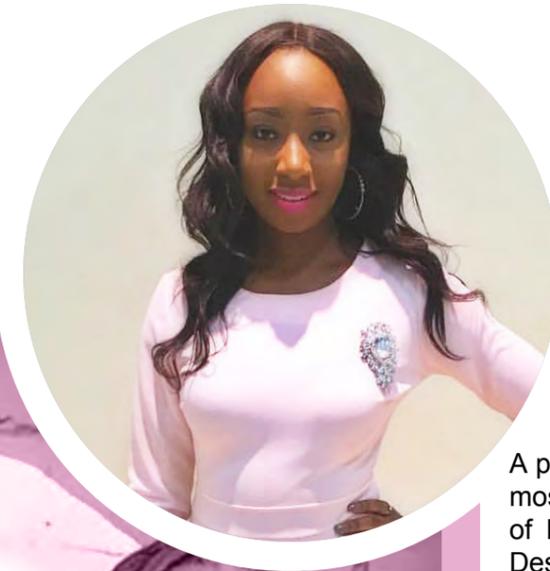
Cavina's work life has taught her that it's very important to have a balance of professional and personal. She shares "don't put more into your professional life that it takes away from your family or personal life, as for your professional life, you have to put in a decent amount of time to be good at your craft. You cannot help others unless you are willing to seek help for yourself as well. This was taught to me while pursuing my graduate degree and I've carried it throughout my professional endeavors. Sometimes hearing people's stories can have an effect on your mental well-being, so it's always nice to have someone whom you can consult."



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ASHLEE *Jones* E D U C A T O R

A pleasant and sweet soul, Ashlee Marie Jones is one the nicest and most polite people one will ever meet. Born and raised on the eastside of Buffalo, NY, Ashlee grew up in a happy, fun, and loving family. Describing her parents as amazing, Ashlee was given all the tools to succeed in life.

Ashlee attended and graduated from Sweet Home High School in Amherst, NY. She states "I was a very social student, I loved talking in the hallway at "the wall" at Sweet Home, getting ready for the Friday pep rallies for game day, Sweet Home was the football school." As a teen Ashlee loved chorus. She knew her family and friends hated attending Ashlee's chorus events but she didn't care since she loved everything about chorus and music. After high school Ashlee went away to college for fashion. After realizing that fashion was not what she wanted to do long term or for a lifetime, Ashlee returned home and attended SUNY Empire State College. Ashlee's personality is perfect for the role of a teacher and working with children is something she loved to do.

As an early childhood teacher Ashlee's first challenge was finding the right school community. Teachers are often placed in school environments that don't match their personality. According to Ashlee, "It's easy to go in and work a job, but finding the right school community matters. This is my fourth year and for myself I finally feel like I am in the right place." Understanding that all children have a story, the educator Ashlee Jones approaches her profession with the wisdom of acknowledging that you never know what children are going through outside of the walls of a classroom. Ashlee states, "what you pour into children matters, that may be the only healthy time and attention that they receive throughout the day. Be an example because they need it."

Being a teacher has created value in Ashlee's life. Ashlee shares "I know I am contributing back to the world, this is bigger than any financial gain. I'm making positive deposits into children that will last them a lifetime." Ashlee also still has dreams of her own, which include opening her own child care center. She wants to create a space that families can trust to take care of their children, and also provide more job opportunities and experience for others. Motivated by family, God, and the love of people, Ashlee's goals have changed. By achieving success it has shown her that nothing is impossible if you stay focused. According to Ashlee, "nothing is too far to be achieved or to happen."

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ALICIA Harke

E D U C A T O R

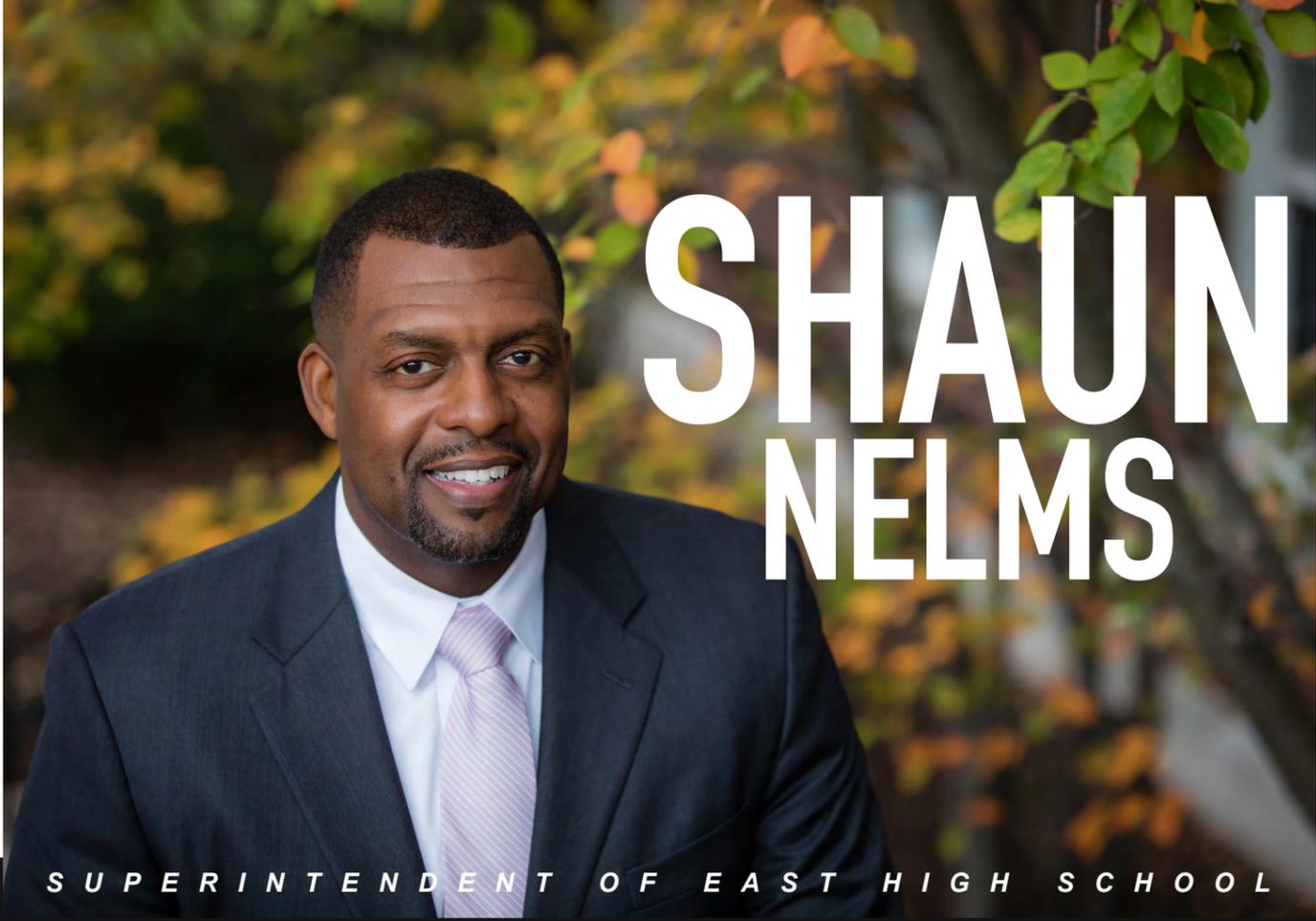
Some people are born to lead and Alicia Harke was one of them. A teacher of 12 years, Ms. Harke is a blessing for every student that she encounters. A sixth grade Math and Science teacher at Native American Magnet #19, Ms. Harke began her teaching career in 2008. Born in Williamsville, NY but raised in East Amherst, Alicia is the youngest of four. While her mom was pregnant with Alicia, the family decided to move out of the city of Buffalo and into the suburbs. Growing up in a loving family with great parents, Alicia enjoyed a great childhood.

Talkative and silly, Alicia was influenced by her mom and older sister. Alicia shares "my older sister Christina and I are three and half years apart and I always loved to be around her and her friends. She was a senior when I was freshman, which was a plus. I gained my love for field hockey from her and of course my love for shopping. I tried to follow in my mother's footsteps as well, she was a high school teacher in the Maryvale School District, and then a Latin tutor for many years after that. Yes, my siblings and I were forced to take Latin whether we liked it or not. I always tell my students how Latin helped me with many words in other languages and I always show them how there is Latin in the money we use every day, "E Pluribus Unum" meaning "out of many,one". I believe this motto speaks to us as a country, to think of the U.S. as one big melting pot of individual people that are different and unique in their own way."

After graduating from Clarence High School in 1996 Alicia attended Erie Community College (Liberal Arts Degree), Buffalo State College (Bachelor's Degree in Sociology) and Medaille College (Master's Degree in Elementary Education). Academically Alicia was average but she enjoyed school. One of the reasons she chose teaching was it gave her the ability to help students that may have difficulties similar to the ones she experienced in school. While attending ECC, Alicia had the pleasure of taking several classes with Dr. Azubike Kalu-Nwivu. "He was an amazing professor and made us laugh and enjoy class on a daily basis. He made you actually look forward to going to school. If you never had a chance to take a course with him, you missed out" Alicia states.

Alicia's first job working with children was caring for the kids of one of the Buffalo Sabres. An incredible opportunity that led to amazing experiences, Alicia was able to attend the games and get to know this beautiful family. If you know anything about the world of professional sports, things can change overnight and this happened to Alicia when the player was traded. Alicia says "I was devastated because I was losing them to another place, but then it became a second opportunity because they brought me to help out with the children in the cities they lived in. Over the next few years I was able to go to Los Angeles, Atlanta, Dallas and Montreal multiple times and have amazing experiences that I may never have had. I hadn't even been on an airplane before, so it was an exciting time in my life to explore all of these new places."

Life and professional experiences have taught Alicia the importance of patience. She shares "as a teacher it's important to make sure that you have that every day. I have also learned how important empathy is, you are the person that these children see the majority of the day. They grow close to you and express themselves, you can't imagine what some of them go through. I try my best to be a supportive figure in their lives, it's important for them to feel safe and trust you. Balancing the professional and personal can be a challenge for educators at times. It is good to be there for those that you love, but it's also important to realize that you need to make time for yourself." Alicia's late grandmother constantly reminded her of this. A nurturer at heart, Alicia is enjoying life but she will always be there for the children.

A portrait of Shaun Nelms, a Black man with a goatee, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and light-colored tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green and yellow leaves.

SHAUN NELMS

SUPERINTENDENT OF EAST HIGH SCHOOL

Growing up in the Cold Spring area of Buffalo, Shaun Nelms knew he would have a career that allowed him to support and help others just like his mom supported her community. The son of a community activist, Shaun never thought about becoming an educator until his junior year in college. During that year Shaun mentored a young man while working with a mentoring program with the local Boys and Girls Club, that encounter changed his life and gave Shaun the desire to continue to help others. Fast forward twenty years later, the former mentor has held various positions; Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Chief of Schools/Community Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Superintendent, University of Rochester Director of Research Center (Center for Urban Education Success) and Associate Professor.

Cold Spring was a predominantly African American neighborhood in the late 70's and mid 80's, there was a sense of family and community pride. Shaun's mother was the Block Club President and PTA President of his elementary school (Dr. MLK Jr Multicultural Institute #39). The neighborhood was right next to the Fruitbelt neighborhood, where Shaun's grandmother lived and the family attended church. Shaun's dad was the disciplinarian who provided for his wife and children the best he could. As a kid Shaun had the nickname "Motormouth." Shaun shares "I earned the name

Motormouth from my grandmother. When I was young I had a speech impediment so I would talk extremely fast to get the words out. My grandmother would call me Motormouth to get me to slow down and to enunciate my words." Who knew little Motormouth would become a speaker and advocate that has become known for the clarity in his messages.

Although Shaun and his family lived well below the poverty line, they didn't have a poor person's mentality or experience. Shaun's mom signed up her children for every free camp in Buffalo. From Boy Scouts to swimming lessons at the Masten Park pool, Shaun went on to attend and later became a counselor at Cradle Beach Camp during his summers. Participation in Summer Reading camps, the Mayor's Summer Youth Employee program, and a host of other programs and employment opportunities help shape Shaun. The experiences along with a solid academic foundation courtesy of City Honors School, where Shaun attended from grades 5-12 created a great base for Shaun's future. Very social as a student, Shaun was the class president, class clown and the teacher's pet all at the same time. Most of Shaun's schoolmates probably didn't realize how impoverished his family was and the pain it caused at the time. Attending an affluent school such as City Honors, was a daily reminder of the economic



and structural barriers Shaun's family and those in his community faced. Those barriers didn't stop him and after high school Shaun went on to continue his schooling at Fredonia State College (1999), The University of Rochester (Masters in Education Leadership 2003) and The University of Rochester where he earned his doctorate in 2014.

During high school and college Shaun was a basketball star. The sport allowed Shaun to travel throughout the state and experience settings not previously extended to him. The degrees he earned have given him access to resources and spaces where decisions are made which impact his community. "We need advocates in the moments when decisions are being formed, not after decisions have been made" Shaun states.

Presently Shaun is the Director for a Research Center at the University of Rochester, Center for Urban Education Success (CUES) and the superintendent of East High School. East is a school transformation model in partnership with University of Rochester, the New York State Education Department and the Rochester Board of Education. <https://youtu.be/hmqSKpNbN5s>

Shaun has always been placed in positions to lead, formally and informally. From teaching Sunday school to

school superintendent, working with and for others has given him a fulfillment unlike any other. The leadership position Shaun is in is not without its challenges. Being one of the few men of color leading a district (less than 2% of superintendents for NYS schools are Black men) can be challenging and lonely; especially when you are expected to do discipline and other non-instructional tasks. Shaun shares "I had to prove over and over that I can lead in the areas addressing instruction, finance, human resources and curriculum. I learned constantly by forcing myself to embrace the moments I feel the most incompetent as an opportunity to "get smarter". Smart is not something you are, it is something you become."

Leading a district takes a very large time commitment. Shaun sacrificed many days and nights to help children, but it made nurturing his own three kids difficult at times. Spending time with his children brings a different and special type of joy to Shaun. "I absolutely love parenting, I will be honest, it is more fun as they get older, we laugh, joke and cry together" says Shaun. Watching his kids and others grow professionally and personally is Shaun's life work. According to Shaun, "Progress is a beautiful thing."

M R D
WILSON



Miami Nights

Photo: @fdimages

COMEDIAN
REEMA
Reem



Chef
NIKKI



PHOTO BY: @JEFFWELT

Q&A *with* REEMA REEM

Panoramic: Where did you grow up and what was it like?

Reema: I grew up on the east side of Buffalo.

Panoramic: What were your parents like?

Reema: My mom was a single parent. She was strict, but not like I was running away and stuff like that, she just didn't play, old school mom you know (she laughs). My dad was in and out of prison most of my childhood and teenage years. He was soooo funny & charming and he had a big heart.

Panoramic: How was your relationship with your parents?

Reema: My mom and I had our rough times when I was a teen, like probably most mother/daughter relationships. We didn't have that BFF mother daughter relationship but she has and is always there for me. We talk much more in my adulthood than in my teens. My dad passed away of cancer in May 2008, and it was his last 11/12 years of life, with his sobriety, and after I had my daughter, we developed a relationship/bond.

Panoramic: How would you describe yourself as a child?

Were you happy?

Reema: I was a happy child, I had a big imagination. I used to like playing school, barbies and "bar" where I'd make drinks with lemonade behind my mom's bar in our living room, maybe that's where my bartending juices started flowing. I always loved attention, I was always outspoken and silly fun and a big personality.

Panoramic: What high school & college did you attend?

Reema: I went to Hutchinson Central Technical high school. I did a couple semesters at NYU and ECC, in my adulthood. That was hard, I kept trying but nah, could not finish college.

Panoramic: What type of student were you & did you enjoy school?

Reema: My High school was in the top five rankings in the city of buffalo when I was there, so of course I was a genius, very smart honor roll student. I was funny, popular and outgoing. I think my senior year I got the biggest mouth award and I was captain of my high school drill team. I loved my high school years. Now college, not so much. Probably because I didn't go straight out of high school, I wish I had, because ADULT COLLEGE! Wow!

Panoramic: What do you do for a living?

Reema: I do too damn much (she laughs), that's what I do for a living. So for an income,

right now, my 9-5 is an administrative assistant. I also bartend, design flyers, some occasional party promoting, but for a "LIVING", I am working towards being a stand-up comedian/actress FULL-TIME.

Panoramic: As a comedian what was your first big gig?

Reema: My first professional gig in comedy was a big show with comedian Talent Harris, at the Shea's Smith Theatre, which was one of my most memorable shows. My first acting gig is in the upcoming film Conflicted written by Duece King, I'm one of the leads in the film.

Panoramic: What's a typical day like for you?

Reema: Everyday I wake up late (she laughs). No matter what time I went to bed the night before, and no matter how many alarms I set on my phone, I'm waking up late. I then rush to get my daughter to school on time. Then the rest of my day I work 9am-5pm and from 5pm-until I work toward my actual career and personal goals. I do flyers, write jokes, and try to record content, yes all in a day. Some nights I go and bartend, which I love, because it's another form of entertainment for me.

Panoramic: What obstacles or major challenges did you face in getting into your profession?

Reema: One obstacle that I face that I can honestly say I created for myself, I'm a little insecure about my age and starting so late. Trying to pursue a career in entertainment in my 30's, and trying to figure it all out can be stressful at times. I often find myself afraid to make some of the sacrifices I know it's going to take to really get to where I want to be. Another obstacle is being an attractive woman with a hint of sex appeal. In the entertainment industry guys are always trying it. I find myself needing to make a point to display strength and that I refuse to compromise myself for an opportunity.

Panoramic: How else has your career created value in your life?

Reema: So the career that I want, I am not getting paid enough to make a living YET! However I see the value in this process, the ups, the downs the struggles have allowed me to become a strong business woman.

Panoramic: Are you married?

Reema: I am not married, these guys out here playing games. Or maybe it's me, because I certainly like the guys who don't pay me any attention and ignore the ones that do, I know Yikes.

Panoramic: How will you meet your future husband?

Reema: Wow somebody got jokes huh? (we laugh) well let me guess this is a general question. Umm hmm- Well nowadays every time I meet a guy and like him, I wanna believe I have met my husband, but by the 3rd date I already want a divorce, so there's that (she laughs). No, but seriously, I know that when God is ready, he will send my husband. Until then catch me on Tinder, Christian Mingle, and whatever dating app you can think of (we laugh).

Panoramic: What advice do you have for young couples?

Reema: None! But they can give me some!

Panoramic: What do you like to do in your free time?
What are your hobbies and interests?

Reema: Whenever I have free time I like to go to the movies. I love to laugh and dance, even when I can't catch the beat, If you just keep cheering me on I will keep dancing. I am also interested in theatre, art, food and naps.

PHOTO BY: @JEFFWELT

Chef NIKKI

S U N S H I N E V E G A N E A T S



PHOTO BY: @JEFFWELT

An entrepreneur at heart, Keysha “Nikki” Searles is in full steam with the changing shift to a vegan lifestyle. Her creative self taught culinary skills is changing the dynamics at her new restaurant in the heart of the eastside of Buffalo.

Born and bred in Buffalo, NY, Nikki grew up in a middle class neighborhood with her parents and two older brothers. Nikki’s parents were both successful and hard working. Nikki’s mom was strict parent, and her dad was one everyone loved. Nikki states “I grew up having great opportunities to carve out my own special place in society.” A Daddy’s Girl from the start, Nikki’s father taught her a lot of hard-knock life lessons with no filter. Parents are children’s first role models and Nikki has taken the lessons and successes of her parents and ran with it.

As a child Nikki initially wanted to be a nurse but eventually realized it wasn’t her dream job or profession. She graduated from Buffalo Traditional High School in Buffalo, NY. Very popular and active in basketball, dance, and drill, Nikki knew entrepreneurship and real estate was and still is in her DNA. Nikki’s first entrepreneurial launch was BabyCakes Daycare on November 11, 1996. It represented her first taste of life as a certified business owner. Next followed the opening of a marketing agency. The agency quietly grew a formidable real estate empire which eventually developed into its own entity and then another. The ‘spirit of hustle’ from her dad was in Nikki.

One of Nikki’s passions is cooking. Cooking for friends and family, turned into cooking for the masses and Chef Nikki was born. An emphasis on healthy lifestyle, Nikki created healthy meal prep options that spreaded through

word of mouth and social media. The success and Nikki’s dedication to working out led to her embarking on a path of food exploration and knowledge.

Part of the exploration was a 21 Day mind and body detoxing and a personal journey into veganism. Nikki has been vegan for three years. Her successful journey and the taste of her offerings made her customers push Nikki into creating a lane for Sunshine Vegan Eats. “I knew I wanted to be on Jefferson Avenue, investing and renovating a space in the heart of our community. So in the spirit of revitalization and progress I created a black owned vegan restaurant for all” Nikki says proudly.

A typical day for the mom of two, and grandmother of three is very busy. Juggling running a restaurant, personal needs with family and business obligations

and her dog Bentley is Nikki’s daily grind. For Nikki mornings are very important and to set the tone for the day she always tries to start the day off as with her slogan, “GREAT & AMAZING MORNING.” A trailblazer and true Queen of Buffalo, Nikki wants everyone to remember every morning is amazing when you wake up and have breath and Life.

Nikki is a true beauty inside and out. Nikki says “I believe in living a great life, taking care of self, and living out dreams. Surround yourself with people that inspire growth, which is the most powerful aspect of time development in life. I feel that in order to keep up and keep advancing one must always reinvent yourself! Explore the world and enjoy life!”



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"I love to see a young girl go out and grab the world by the lapels. Life's a bitch. You've got to go out and kick ass." —Maya Angelou

AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Herbert Lee Bellamy, Sr.

By John W. Bellamy



Many people knew my father as a politician, community leader and entrepreneur, but today I'm writing about Herbert Bellamy, Sr., the strong African American single father and my family's provider, who gifted me with an education as well as important life lessons. Hebert Bellamy was born on April 23, 1931 in Burgaw, North Carolina to Mattie Bellamy and Prince Bellamy, Sr. He was one of 12 children. They were sharecroppers, giving a part of each crop as their rent to the landowner.

Herbert Bellamy learned at an early age the meaning of hard work. He also lived a short distance from a highway known as Ni**erhead Road. This was a place where body parts of slaves or blacks were displayed in consequence of a purported crime. Many people would have let these strenuous and unfortunate circumstances stop them from trying to achieve things in life, but Herbert's parents taught him basic principles that he would later follow like a religion.



Hebert was shocked and incensed by a neighborhood general store owner who once made the derogatory statement, "A Ni**ger will be a Ni**er." This motivated him to prove critics wrong and inspired him to work toward building his own business. His mother always talked about her dream of seeing the creation of successful black neighborhoods throughout the United States. During those times blacks were so used to working for nearly nothing. Herbert's family thought there was nothing to lose putting those long hours into working for yourself. I know many people can relate to this today.



Above: Left to right, Sugar Ray Leonard, Herbert L. Bellamy, Sr., John W. Bellamy

After graduating from high school, Herbert decided to serve in the military as a marine. He fought in the Korean War, and when his service was over, he moved to Western New York to follow his brother. His brother worked at Bethlehem Steel and told him about the great employment opportunities in that region. He moved to

Lackawanna, New York, met and married Irene Bellamy, then later moved to Buffalo where the job market was one of the best in the country due to the boom in manufacturing jobs. After working a few years in manufacturing he decided to get into the liquor business. Starting off as a salesman, he became a partner of Ferry Wholesale Liquors. After the death of his partner he became the sole owner of the newly named Bellamy's Liquor Store. Bellamy's Liquor Store invested in and supported the growth of many businesses and nonprofits in the Coldspring neighborhood; this generated innumerable jobs. During this significant era black businesses were popping up everywhere. Although I wasn't born for this period of renaissance, my father always shared



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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control

EMPLOYEE'S IDENTIFICATION RECORD
(To be Filed in Duplicate)
State of New York, Elliott St. Sq., Buffalo, N. Y., with the criminal record, if any, of the person described herein.

Will you please furnish the State Liquor Authority, Executive Department, State of New York, Elliott St. Sq., Buffalo, N. Y., with the criminal record, if any, of the person described herein.

NAME: Herbert Lee Bellamy
HOME ADDRESS: 145 Gouling
EMPLOYED BY: Wine Cellars, Inc.
ADDRESS OF EMPLOYEE: 5 Reader Pl
PLACE OF BIRTH: Fender County, North Carolina
HOW LONG A RESIDENT OF PRESENT CITY AND STATE: 4 yrs

AGE: 23
DATE BORN: 4/23/31
HEIGHT: 5'11"
WEIGHT: 175
EYES: Br.
HAIR: Bl.
COMPLEXION: Dark
BUILD: Slender

EMPLOYEE'S IDENTIFICATION RECORD

great stories about Jefferson Avenue.

In 1984 tragedy struck our family. After years of declining health my mother passed away when I was 8 years old. I remember the day he came home and told me my mother was gone. The world stood still. I wondered what was to become of us, of me, because my father had a lot of responsibilities and worked long hours. With help from our family and friends, he undertook his next challenge – to raise me as a single father. Somehow, he made it work.

He was a strict disciplinarian; he wanted to make sure I understood what it took to survive in this world. He made sure to give me an education. Not just my school education but real world education. As a kid I spent a lot of time following him around offices all around the City of Buffalo, quietly attending meetings with accountants, lawyers, judges and businessmen. He taught me the importance of

supporting anyone's initiative to improve their neighborhood or build a business. Many meetings happened at the liquor store because it was a central location. It was strange to see people dressed up in business suits to come to a local liquor store.



John W. Bellamy and Herbert L. Bellamy, Sr.

My father also met with drug users, prostitutes and drug dealers who were trying to change their lives around. Often times in a community, this population is viewed as a problem, but Herbert Bellamy's message was, "These people fell on hard times. It could happen to you, too, and it's on all of us to help." He saw that the strength of the community was built on many layers, and not just on an individual business. And he also understood that the responsibility to help those less fortunate in the community was what created the community itself. I may not have realized it at the time, but I now see that the education I got from my father was as valuable as my college degree.



Financial education is rarely late. Part of my job is to teach also preach entrepreneurship one my father learned from

Even though my children are still young, they know their job right now is education. And just like my father taught me, I can't rely on their school to teach them everything. taught in school and most people learn the lessons too them financial literacy before they reach adulthood. I which is important to financial freedom. This lesson was his parents, and it's one he passed along to me.

Not everyone is lucky enough to have a strong father figure in their life. His success came from hard work and discipline but he was forward-thinking and generous when it came to his community. He had honorable principles that he wouldn't break for anyone. I'm very appreciative and honored to have had this man as a father even though I feel our time together was short, I feel blessed my son was born on his birthday, a year before he passed. Every year we celebrate the lives of two great Bellamy men.

Sometimes it's easy to focus on the negative aspects of our community. But I have had the chance to live in different communities around the United States, and nothing compares to the east side of Buffalo. When I was a child and wanted ice-cream, my father always made sure we got it from one of the only remaining black delis on Jefferson Avenue. He saw the value and potential in every black-owned business in our area. He saw spirit in our streets, in our people, and in our future. Buffalo still has more property than most communities to develop. And it has some of the lowest property prices in the United States. The next time you see an abandoned building, try picturing a black-owned deli, a hardware store or a dance studio. Imagine what Hebert Bellamy, Sr. might see.



KEYONNA Willis

LIVING IN MY NEW NORMAL

There are times we may be faced with a life changing event that will re-direct our path in ways we never planned. Dealing with a rare and chronic illness goes beyond the scope most can understand and get a grasp on.

The week of September 25, 2018, I thought I was suffering from food poisoning, I went at least five days without eating, drinking or holding any fluids down. Finally I went to urgent care and was treated with medication for nausea, vomiting and IV fluids. That lasted an hour before I was advised to go immediately to the emergency room. The ER visit turned into being admitted to ICU and a nearly two week stay in the hospital. During that stay, the doctors and specialists ran a host of tests still trying to figure out the issue. The vomiting never stopped no matter what they gave me. The tests they ran showed no clear indication of why my body was going through this constant episode.

With no evidence and clearly nothing to back his actions, one of the doctors decided he would perform emergency surgery and remove my gallbladder. Typical procedure to some, but for me it stopped nothing. After my experience at that particular hospital, I nearly begged my family to get me home. I was in a hospital with no clear treatment plan and doctors performing unnecessary surgery.

After being out of work for about four months and under the care of both my primary care physician and a neurologist who ultimately made the Cyclic Vomiting Syndrome (CVS) diagnosis, my symptoms seemed to be decreasing and my body was getting back to normal. During my absence from work I was able to collect as much research on CVS that I could find. I was so determined to beat this and get back to my hectic life being the mother my son was used to. Of course this was the most important year of high school and we were getting ready to send him off to college, I just had

to be at my best.

I made it back to work for two months before I had to take a medical leave. My episodes started to flare up constantly while at my job. But again I was still hopeful. That last Friday I left work, I already had an appointment for the Cleveland Clinic scheduled. Months before I had all 30 records from my hospital stays, my test imaging and doctor referrals sent to the doctor in Cleveland. The morning of my appointment I was in the midst of a bad episode. With my sisters driving, we made the three hour trip, hopeful that one of the best hospitals in the country could figure this out and would have the answer to the cure. Needless to say, after all my preparation. The doctor never looked at my file ahead of time, took a quick glance at one of my tests as I sat in her office and proceeded to start the admission process to the ER, stating this was not her area of expertise!

years because I can't work. I can't barely get myself out of the bed and dressed most days. I spend countless days of the weeks and months hospitalized. This is a disease that can't be controlled outside of going to the hospital.

Aside from the nausea and vomiting CVS can cause extreme high blood pressure, increased heart rate, abdominal pain, decreased appetite, weight loss, night sweats, tooth loss, malnutrition, anxiety, depression and some days you just feel you no longer have purpose.

***But God!
I am a true
believer in his
power***



I know some of this seems unbelievable, but being hospitalized over 60 times I can assure you that the healthcare system is broken in areas that have made it almost impossible for patients to access the care they so desperately need.

Fast forward to the present, I have now been living with CVS for 18 months. As a result I lost my job of almost 20

I should share that my research does not reveal why CVS usually affects young children who have a greater chance of growing out of the disease. There is very little information as to when and why it attacks adults. But God! I am a true believer in his power, and like many I have experienced my share of weak moments as I maneuver through My New Normal. But I continue to fight, I will continue to educate and I believe there is purpose in this journey.

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Back



New Life World Harvest Restoration Center is a local ministry with a global vision dedicated to spreading the love of God to our community and the world. Our call is to equip leaders to go into their spheres of influence to reach the lost, the broken and the down-trodden with the love of God. We believe Church leaders have a responsibility to give of their time, talent and treasure not only to the church, but give back to those around them. We also believe that Church growth is not measured by church attendance alone, but growth happens when a congregation understands the importance of giving back to their community, serving those around them.

Despite the size of our church, we understand the importance of giving our tithes and offering to the church. Yes, our giving helps to keep the bills paid and to it takes care of other church ministry business. But we also know that if we truly love God with our whole heart, mind and soul, then we wouldn't hold back from giving to others who are in need of love, care, and some supportive services that intend to make life better for the recipient.

Giving back means, to "give back" something you have received with the intent of making a positive impact into the lives of others so they can experience the love of God through people who represent the Christian church.

Helping others is at the core of who we are. In fact, we are committed to building strong men, strong families and a strong church that would have Godly influence in the community, nation and throughout the world – we aim to be a catalyst for Purpose Life, Change and Growth. Living life on Purpose is all about doing what God created us to do, which is to serve others!



Through our community outreach we have made significant contributions to organizations outside of our church. Over the past ten years we have volunteers serving as mentors and role models in our public schools, we provide outreach to hurting and bereaved families through group counseling ministries, every week we give groceries to families in need through our Food Pantry and my wife and I personal support and encourage countless couples and families in which most of them don't attend church or do not profess Christianity.

In our local and global missions outreach we have partnered with other churches locally and abroad to equip leaders to change their spheres of influence, to ignites the fires of evangelism, to bring hope to communities and nations by demonstrating Christ love to the hurting, broken and downtrodden, to assist in meeting their needs, and to support or plant strong vibrant churches. Our global missions outreach has served and financially supported community based organizations, local churches and churches in several countries, sending teams to minister in their prisons, hospitals, through open-air preaching, community service projects and leadership conferences. We have helped build youth centers in DR, churches in Cuba, and have supported educational programs in West Africa. We strongly believe in "What you make happen for others, God will make happen for you."

So if our hearts are in the right place and we are managers of the money that has been entrusted to the church, we will give back as God has given to us (John 3:16) says "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son and that whosoever believes on Him shall not perish but shall have everlasting life." The heart of God is to give....The motivation is to demonstrate His love. We desire to make an impact in the world through giving of our "time, talent & treasure" to our community and the world.

Giving back to the community is giving to Christ. "For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me" (Matthew 25:35-36).

If you want to learn more about living to give on purpose join us for Bible Study every Thursday at 6pm-7:15 or Sunday morning worship service at 11am-12:30pm.

The Challenge: Look for needs around you. Ask Jesus to show you how to meet those needs and do what He says!

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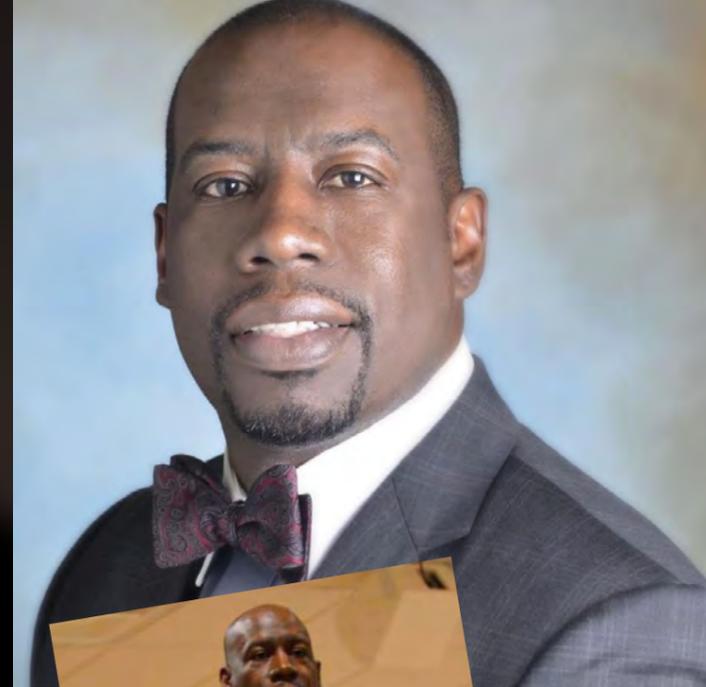
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The Arthur A. Duncan II, Esq.

ATTORNEY • SPEAKER • AUTHOR



“When I was in my 20’s, I did not have any dreams and my goal was to make money and get it however I could. I did not care about my future, all I cared about was “now” and that lifestyle eventually put me in prison. When I got out of jail and went back to school, settled down and got married, I began to think about my future goals and dreams.” TheArthur “Tone” Duncan II has righted his wrongs and became an inspiration to everyone in the process.



Born in Los Angeles, California’s South Central neighborhood, growing up Tone split time between living with his mom in Los Angeles and his grandparents in downtown Buffalo. Tone shares “In Los Angeles we moved around a lot so I didn’t get to know anyone and I didn’t really like it. However, in Buffalo, my grandfather owned five houses on our street that my family lived on, so I was very comfortable here in Buffalo.” Tone’s grandfather was a Pastor, so he spent a lot of time in church growing up in Buffalo. As a child Tone was very smart, carrying a 98 average throughout grade school. After he graduated from 8th grade in Buffalo, Tone went back to Los Angeles for high school. A great relationship with his mom and grandparents started to shift as he became older and started running the streets.

Tone attended Westchester High School in Los Angeles, CA. Self conscious due to being skinny, dark-skinned, with braces and bad acne, Tone was not sociable during school. Despite his personal issues, Tone maintained good grades and was a member of the Westchester H.S. basketball team that beat the historic Crenshaw H.S. during his senior year. Going to school in South Central, in the middle of gang culture definitely affected Tone. Tone recalled one of his worst memories during high school, he states “I was coming home from basketball practice and a crip put a knife to my throat on the bus and made me give him my Lakers starter jacket.” After high school, Tone came back to Buffalo and attended Erie Community College for a semester before dropping out to run the streets. After spending time in prison, Tone returned back to ECC 15 years later. After ECC, Tone graduated from UB and completed his first year of law school at Cleveland State, followed by UB Law however it wasn’t that easy. UB Law rejected Tone three times before finally getting accepted and getting to complete his last two years of law school. Perseverance, determination and the help of Dr. Gene Grabiner at ECC was very instrumental in Tone becoming a lawyer. Dr. Grabiner helped research whether Tone could become a lawyer with a felony and he wrote letters of recommendation to help him get into UB undergrad and law school.

A major challenge to Tone becoming a lawyer was the fact that he was a convicted felon with a wife and five kids. Tone took a leap of faith attending school with no guarantee whether New York State was going to allow Tone to practice law due to his felony. Several years later after working as an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Buffalo Tone opened up his own law firm. Now a typical day for Tone includes several court appearances for clients in different courtrooms and jurisdictions. With an understanding that your past mistakes do not define you and that everyone deserves a second chance, Tone didn’t allow excuses to prevent him from being the best he could be. His career and journey have inspired many people to become successful in life despite having a criminal record. Documenting his journey, Tone wrote and published his own autobiography Felon-Attorney. TheArthur “Tone” Duncan II has plans to write and publish more books as well as a 2021 campaign to run for Buffalo City Court Judge. According to Tone, “I want my legacy to be that I was a God-fearing upright man, a great father and husband, a lawyer that cared deeply about his clients, a great example of a man who changed and overcame adversity, an author and great motivational speaker that inspired many and made a difference.”



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Zach Warren ZACH WARREN FILMS

A chance meeting with an area DJ created the birth of Zach Warren Films in Rochester, NY. DJ TYGGA TY introduced the young videographer Zach Warren to nightlife events and concerts, and a friendship/partnership was born. As the work started coming in, Zach's name became synonymous with high quality and reliable video projects.

Born and raised in Greece, a suburb of Rochester, NY, Zach grew up in a prototypical household. The family lived in a modest three bedroom house with his mom, dad, Zach, and younger brother. A shy kid who loved skateboarding, Zach always loved video and editing. Early on school definitely wasn't his passion, but after graduating from Greece Athens High School Zach attended Monroe Community College. After two years, Zach transferred to the Art Institute of Las Vegas. Although he didn't stay and finish, the Las Vegas experience definitely impacted the future videographer and filmmaker.

Fast forward a few years, Zach is now a videographer for a wedding company called Marquee Events, and a freelance videographer in Buffalo and Rochester. His first wedding gig came in 2016. He admits having fun in the nightlife and club atmosphere, but he absolutely loves capturing the stories in weddings. Zach's youth and quiet demeanor made the transition from hobby to professional a little difficult. Zach says "a challenge I faced was getting people to take me seriously, I constantly had to prove to them that I had talent and was worth my fee."

Many people under appreciate the job of a videographer because they make it look so easy. Zach spends around eight hours a day editing various projects. One of the qualities that set main video professionals apart is the amount of professionalism they have. Zach prides himself on being on time, being responsible, and making sure he's always professional. Zach is a freelancer, so he realizes anyone he encounters can be his future employer for an event or project. Being a one man company can be dangerous also, a few years back Zach was robbed at gunpoint while he was actually working. He lost all his camera gear during the incident. Besides the mental anguish, cameras are the entire business. Fortunately two months later, Zach was booked for a wedding and the deposit allowed him to purchase everything again, as well as upgrading his equipment.

The positive side of being a freelancer is the ability to travel on gigs. This past year Zach went on a 15 day tour around Europe with his good friend DJ Ease. Zach States "I never thought my camera would allow me to travel the world, it was an amazing experience, I would have never thought in a million years I would travel to another country." Zach's work is absolutely great and when he hangs up the camera he will be known as a person that loved to capture memories and make people smile.



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Jason MOORE

REAL ESTATE X PROMOTIONS

In the Words of Jay Z "I'm not a businessman, I'm a Business Man". A full-time entrepreneur, realtor, and event promoter, Jason Moore is a man of many hats. Hoping to be part of the equation of a better Buffalo, especially for the African American Community, Jason believes Buffalo is on the rise.

Jason was born in the Cold Springs section of Buffalo, NY. Cold Springs had its share of inner city problems, but as a kid Jason wasn't fully aware of the ills of the area. He shares "as a child all I cared about was having fun with my friends, the street that I lived on, everyone would come there to hang out and have fun so I wasn't exposed in my early childhood to our neighborhood issues." Jason's parents worked hard and provided a good quality of life for him. Describing their relationship as one of tremendous love, Jason adores his parents. He states "I've always had a great relationship with my parents. I had my rebellious years for sure, but I always had much respect for my parents and the morals they instilled in me. I never strayed away too far, something in me always pulled me back to their love."

Jason attended high school at Park School of Buffalo followed by ECC North for a year. Socially a class clown, Jason got along with just about everyone. Sports allowed him to gain a little popularity as well as his stint as Vice President of the Kappa League in High School. Academically, Jason definitely had the ability to perform at a high level, but never cared for the traditional school system and its learning modules so he became disinterested in school. Doing just enough in high school did hurt Jason when it came to sports. "I wasn't the greatest basketball player, but I was fortunate enough to have a few looks from colleges. I just didn't meet the full requirements to get the scholarships so I had to attend ECC" he shares.

Nowadays Jason's day is filled up with daddy duties, meetings, real estate deals, and working on his event calendar. Being a father is Jason's most proudest accomplishment, living for a much bigger cause Jason had to start thinking much differently as a parent. No longer just do it for himself, Jason parents with the same love and morals that were instilled by his parents. Hoping to shield his daughter from the harsh realities of the world, Jason has attended counseling for some of the traumas he witnessed as a teenager.

Jason's dreams and goals remain the same but the paths have become clearer. A great father and family man, Jason hopes to leave a legacy as a trailblazer in the Western New York Community.

M R D
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Photo: i_am_goodnews



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Alexus Stover

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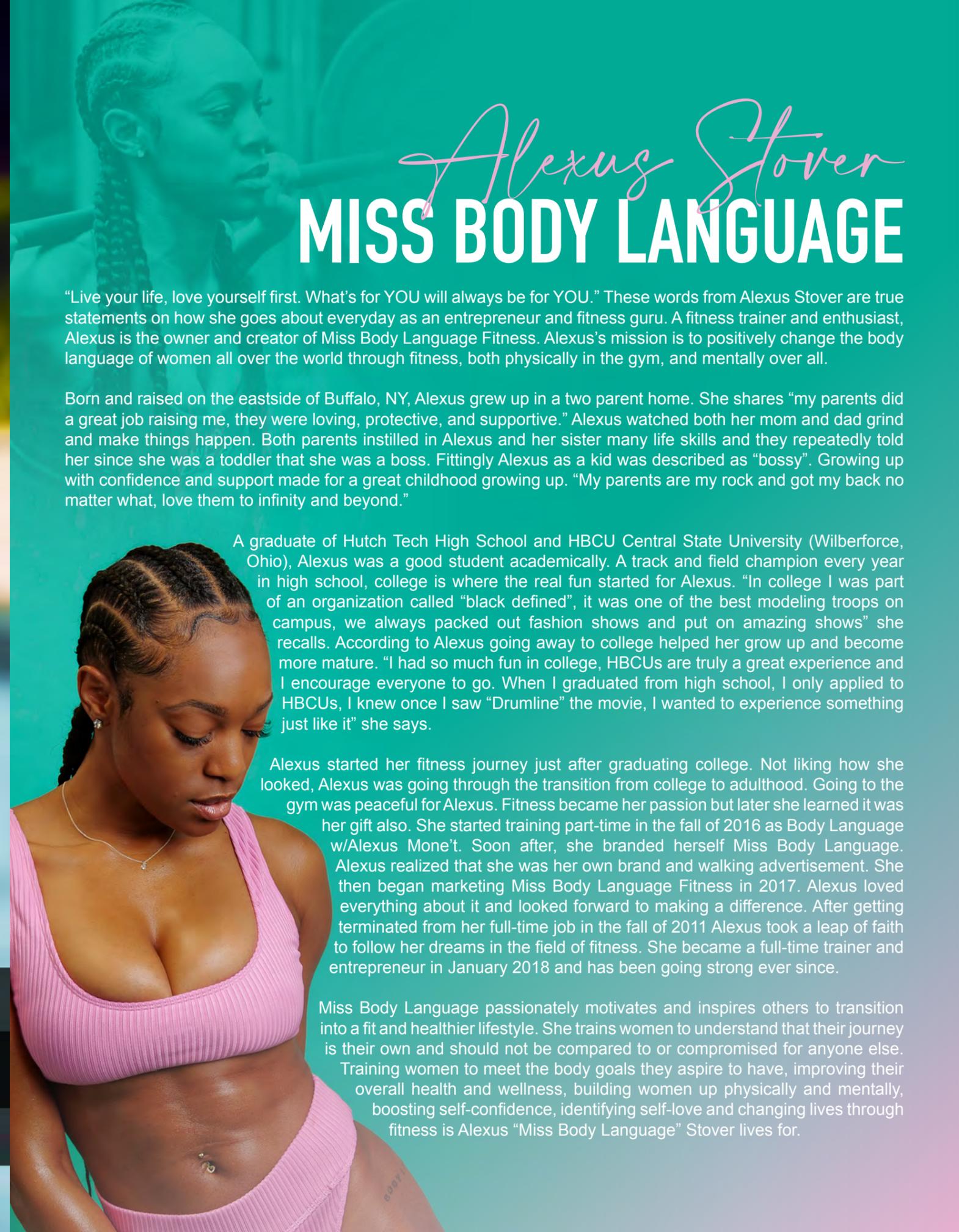
"Live your life, love yourself first. What's for YOU will always be for YOU." These words from Alexis Stover are true statements on how she goes about everyday as an entrepreneur and fitness guru. A fitness trainer and enthusiast, Alexis is the owner and creator of Miss Body Language Fitness. Alexis's mission is to positively change the body language of women all over the world through fitness, both physically in the gym, and mentally over all.

Born and raised on the eastside of Buffalo, NY, Alexis grew up in a two parent home. She shares "my parents did a great job raising me, they were loving, protective, and supportive." Alexis watched both her mom and dad grind and make things happen. Both parents instilled in Alexis and her sister many life skills and they repeatedly told her since she was a toddler that she was a boss. Fittingly Alexis as a kid was described as "bossy". Growing up with confidence and support made for a great childhood growing up. "My parents are my rock and got my back no matter what, love them to infinity and beyond."

A graduate of Hutch Tech High School and HBCU Central State University (Wilberforce, Ohio), Alexis was a good student academically. A track and field champion every year in high school, college is where the real fun started for Alexis. "In college I was part of an organization called "black defined", it was one of the best modeling troops on campus, we always packed out fashion shows and put on amazing shows" she recalls. According to Alexis going away to college helped her grow up and become more mature. "I had so much fun in college, HBCUs are truly a great experience and I encourage everyone to go. When I graduated from high school, I only applied to HBCUs, I knew once I saw "Drumline" the movie, I wanted to experience something just like it" she says.

Alexis started her fitness journey just after graduating college. Not liking how she looked, Alexis was going through the transition from college to adulthood. Going to the gym was peaceful for Alexis. Fitness became her passion but later she learned it was her gift also. She started training part-time in the fall of 2016 as Body Language w/Alexus Mone't. Soon after, she branded herself Miss Body Language. Alexis realized that she was her own brand and walking advertisement. She then began marketing Miss Body Language Fitness in 2017. Alexis loved everything about it and looked forward to making a difference. After getting terminated from her full-time job in the fall of 2011 Alexis took a leap of faith to follow her dreams in the field of fitness. She became a full-time trainer and entrepreneur in January 2018 and has been going strong ever since.

Miss Body Language passionately motivates and inspires others to transition into a fit and healthier lifestyle. She trains women to understand that their journey is their own and should not be compared to or compromised for anyone else. Training women to meet the body goals they aspire to have, improving their overall health and wellness, building women up physically and mentally, boosting self-confidence, identifying self-love and changing lives through fitness is Alexis "Miss Body Language" Stover lives for.



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Dj
WIRE

DJ / RADIO PERSONALITY

Brice Beathley aka DJ Wire, aka Playy, is a young man determined to take his show on the road and make everyone turn up. Born and raised by his mom on the eastside of Buffalo, NY, Wire was challenged very early in his childhood. Diagnosed with cancer at an early age, Wire's early years were spent thinking about death instead of normal kid activities. Frequent stays in the hospital caused Wire to miss a good portion of his childhood. Fortunately, he beat cancer and since the age of 13, he's making up for lost time.

Life started to change when Wire attended Hutch Tech High School. A goal of becoming the face of teen parties, DJ Wire was about to become a household name. Wire always had a fascination for sound systems, he loved the big speakers that everyone used to have in their living rooms. In those days Wire enjoyed a diverse range of music from Al Green to Ludacris.



According to Wire, "I don't care what anybody says in high school I was that BOY! I had the high top fade before it was a trend. I was DJing all the high school parties by my sophomore year of high school. I was making more money than the average teen while still getting good grades." After high school Wire attended Buffalo State College for two plus years. According to Wire "college is definitely where I started getting out of control. Not only did I have the Buffalo crowd but I had the NYC crowd behind me and I let the hype get to me and my grades started to slip. I remember getting told on a Tuesday you owe \$4000 by Wednesday and you are no longer eligible for class."

What many people don't know about Brice Beathley is that he's a survivor. A Eagle Scout (which is the highest achievement or rank of the Boy Scouts), and cancer survivor, the momentary setback at Buffalo State College wasn't going to hold him back. Working consistently since his first DJ gig at 13-years-old, it was time for Wire to turn up his career.

The opportunity came as Wire was tabbed to work at one of Buffalo's top radio stations, Power 93.7 WBLK. Hired as a Mixshow / OnAir DJ Wire can now be heard primetime Monday - Friday from 6pm-10pm. As a 13 year old, Wire didn't take his art seriously but now as a 24 year old radio station Jock he's up at 7am everyday working on his craft.

Still young in his career, Wire is still learning the ends and outs of corporate America. "Everyone is not your friend, corporate America is cut throat and you gotta be on your Ps and Qs all the time you never know who's watching or looking." Understanding his value as a jock and dj and balancing that with expanding his network is something that Wire is in tune with. Wire's talent and personal appeal has helped the ratings for WBLK. The station is getting some of the highest ratings they have seen since before all the music streaming services began. His goal is to be a major player in the industry and DJ Wire is well on his way.

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Oj **BARKER**
 HIP HOP KARAOKE BUFFALO

Picture the biggest nightclub with over 800 guests jammed packed, and everyone is smiling while singing the same song. This picture is a memoir of Otis Barker Jr. better known as OJ. The co-organizer and host of Buffalo's Hip Hop Karaoke (HHKBUFFALO), OJ has created a signature event that brings out the singers in everyday middle class professionals and millenials. From house parties during spring break to packed venues, OJ and his team are on the cusp of greatness.

OJ grew up in Buffalo, on the Eastside and in North Buffalo. Growing up in the two communities allowed him to experience diverse cultures. A very happy and active child, OJ grew up very close with his parents and siblings. Always social but lazy academically OJ attended City Honors High School, and graduated from McKinley High School (06') in Buffalo, NY. Despite spending a lot of summers in summer school, OJ attended Erie Community College (Buffalo) and Stillman College (Tuscaloosa, Alabama). An athlete with a goal to make it to the NBA, OJ was very active in sports including basketball and track.

Not only the host and organizer of HHKBUFFALO, OJ is the co-owner and founder of GUAGGI Sportswear, as well as employee of the Buffalo Sewer Authority. Overcoming the lack of venues and lack of trust of black males in the area's entertainment field, OJ and his team created a diverse event that has changed the dynamic in Western New York. For the past ten plus years OJ has hosted many events and they have allowed him to create great business relationships, friendships, as well as extended family members. Inspired by the movers and shakers in entertainment locally and nationally OJ is in the middle of his plan to become a multi-millionaire.

Life isn't always a party and life has its shares of challenges. Prior to the age of 30, OJ suffered three harsh injuries that made him realize how important health and wellness is. The proud father of one, is focused and ready for the world and the world is ready for HHKBuffalo, Guaggi, and OJ Barker.

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