THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE JUSTICE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM CENTER

BEGINNING FOURTH QUARTER

THE FOCUS

PEOPLE • PURPOSE • PROGRESS



FROM THE SOUND OF '96
TO A NU SEASON

TIDEWATER IN MOTION

CULTURE. WORKFORCE. OWNERSHIP.
A TIDEWATER-TO-VIRGINIA STORY

INSIDE

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GO Virginia and where regional opportunity moves.

YOUTH VOICES
Jayden's People First journey toward a career pathway.

COUSINZ FESTIVAL
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BACK TO SCHOOL
Three daughters. Three seasons of motherhood.

+

CAPT. DESMOND WALKER
Leadership. Service. A Tidewater milestone.

PEOPLE FIRST NORFOLK
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WHERE VIRGINIA'S NEXT WAVE STARTS

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EDITOR NOTES

BEGINNING FOURTH QUARTER, TIDEWATER IS MOVING.

This issue starts where NFX started: with the cultural energy of the 757 and the belief that creativity can become economic mobility. Tidewater in Motion looks back at the region's 1996 music explosion, then turns toward the entrepreneur pipeline and workforce support shaping the next season.

Ahmad Coston takes us inside Cousinz Fest. Jayden Staton tells, in his own words, how People First became food support, housing stability, school help and a pathway into technology.

Tierra Walker brings honesty and humor to the changing seasons of motherhood. We salute Desmond Walker on earning the rank of Captain and honor Claudia Whitworth, one of media's true pioneers.

Nari'k Page launches our Agencies of Opportunity series with a practical guide to GO Virginia. The common thread is movement: culture becoming opportunity, support becoming stability and leadership making room for what comes next.

STAY FOCUSED MY FRIENDS
— Tom Page, Editor-in-Chief

IN LOVING MEMORY

THE PRESS NEVER STOPPED.



CLAUDIA ALEXANDER WHITWORTH

1927 - 2026

EDITOR. PUBLISHER. PRINTER. COMMUNITY VOICE.

For more than half a century, Claudia Whitworth stood at the helm of The Roanoke Tribune - one of the nation's longest-running Black community newspapers. She entered the newspaper business in 1945, mastered the printing trade in Ohio and New York, and returned home to purchase the Tribune from her father in 1971.

Through firebombings, bulldozing, social change and an industry transformed by technology, the paper never missed an issue. Her pages informed, encouraged and reflected Black Roanoke with dignity - proving that community media can be both a public record and a source of possibility.

> *"Always the positive. Like a letter from home."*
>
> - CLAUDIA WHITWORTH

The Focus Magazine honors a true media pioneer whose courage kept the press running, whose vision kept our stories visible, and whose legacy continues through every community journalist determined to tell our truth.

HER PRESS. OUR HISTORY. AN ENDURING LEGACY.

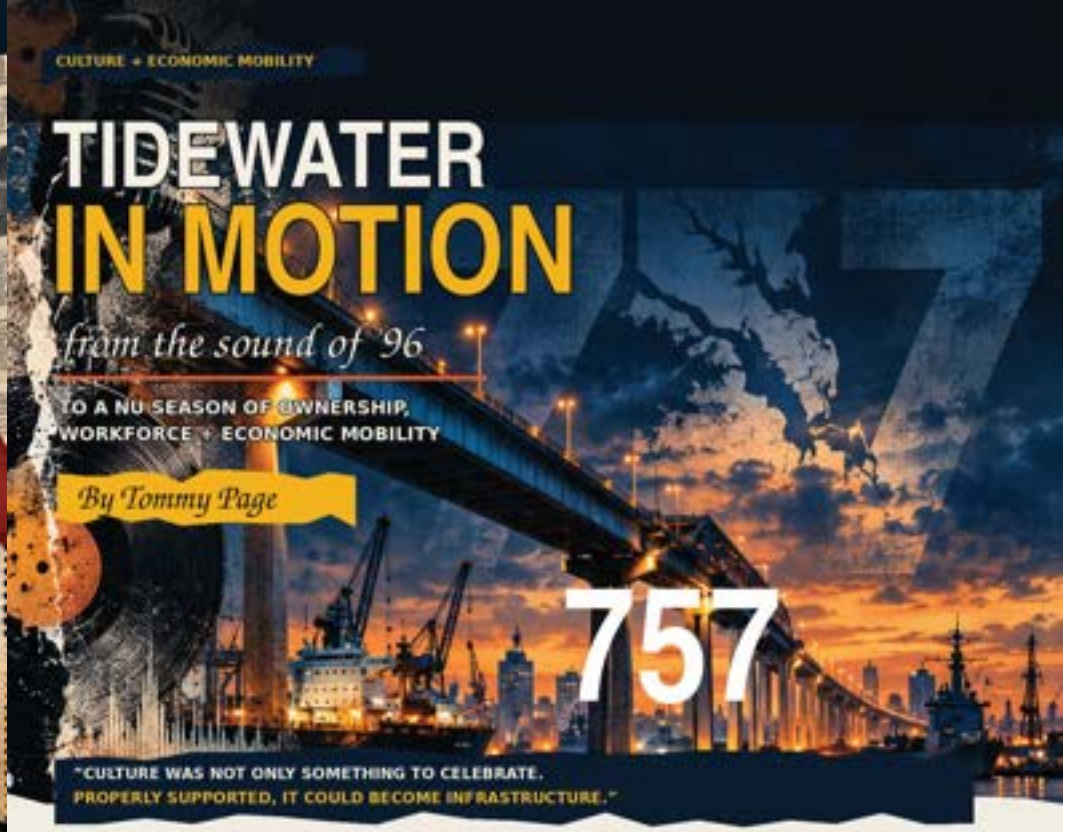
CULTURE + ECONOMIC MOBILITY

TIDEWATER IN MOTION

from the sound of '96

TO A NU SEASON OF OWNERSHIP, WORKFORCE + ECONOMIC MOBILITY

By Tommy Page



"CULTURE WAS NOT ONLY SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE. PROPERLY SUPPORTED, IT COULD BECOME INFRASTRUCTURE."

WHEN THE 757 CHANGED THE SOUND

In 1996, Tidewater felt like the center of a future the rest of the country had not fully caught up with yet. You could hear it in the music. Teddy Riley had already brought a major recording operation to Virginia Beach. Timbaland and Missy Elliott were helping reshape R&B through Aaliyah's One in a Million. Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo were still emerging, developing the ideas that would soon help make The Neptunes one of the most influential production teams in popular music.

The sound did not feel borrowed from New York, Atlanta or Los Angeles. It sounded like us: unpredictable, percussive, futuristic and impossible to ignore. Artists from somewhere that national gatekeepers once treated as being between markets were suddenly helping set the market.

What stayed with me was bigger than celebrity. I was watching a creative economy take shape. A record could create publishing income, studio work, production fees, management opportunities, performance revenue, merchandise, travel, media and events. One breakthrough could create room for engineers, musicians, dancers, photographers, designers, promoters and young people who had never seen their own region as a place where global ideas could begin.

That moment convinced me that Tidewater did not lack talent. It needed more ways to organize talent, protect the value it created and connect that value to opportunity. The music taught me that culture was not only something to celebrate. Properly supported, it could become infrastructure.



REPORTING NOTES / SOURCE CHECK

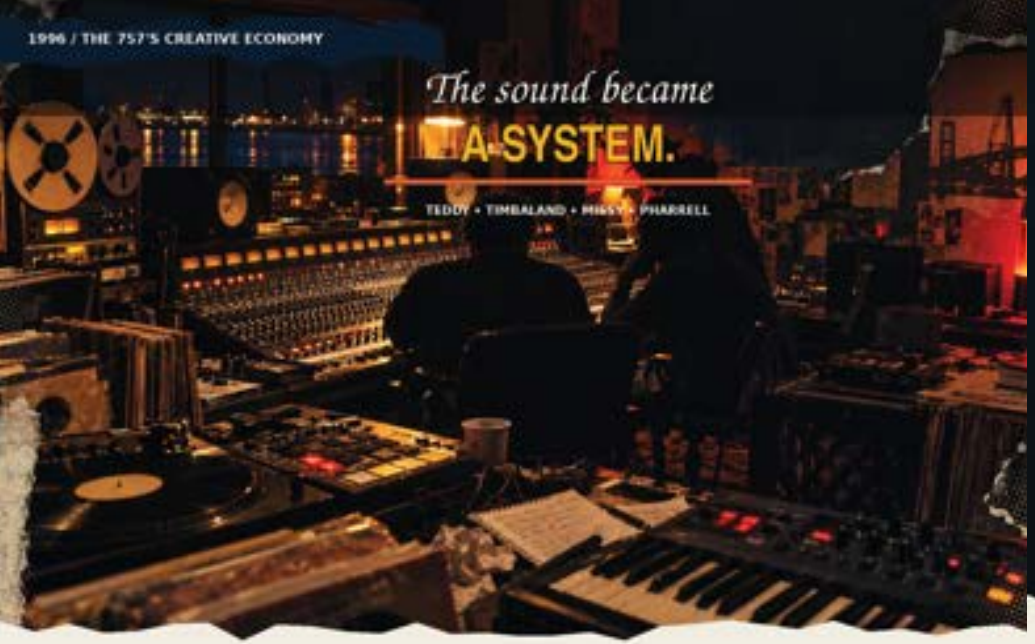
GRAMMY.com, 'Aaliyah's One in a Million Turns 25' (1996 album history and credits).

Virginia Tourism Corporation, Virginia's music history coverage (Missy Elliott, Timbaland and the 1996 breakthrough).

Old Dominion University Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy, 2019 Something in the Water economic-impact analysis prepared for the City of Virginia Beach.

Red Bull Music Academy interview with Teddy Riley and the Teddy Riley Productions studio timeline (future Recording Studios and the Virginia Beach creative hub).

WTKR reporting on Missy Elliott's Portsmouth housing-support donations.



TEN YEARS LATER, I STEPPED INTO THE CURRENT

By 2006, I was ready to get involved. That is when I started NuFocus Entertainment. I did not begin because I believed I could reproduce what Teddy, Timbaland, Missy or Pharrell had done. I began because their example had already changed what I believed was possible from here.

They proved that Tidewater could originate ideas with national and international value. My question was how to help more people enter that kind of economy - not only as artists, but as owners, producers, organizers, service providers and partners.

Entertainment was the first doorway, but the vision kept expanding. The more I worked around creative people and communities, the clearer the larger challenge became: talent is everywhere, while access is not. People may have the skill, the story or the business idea and still be disconnected from training, capital, contracts, mentors, employers and the relationships that help an idea grow.

That gap is where NuFocus started becoming more than an entertainment company. It became a way of looking at the whole system around opportunity.

TWENTY YEARS LATER: FIVE REGIONS, ONE ECONOMIC-MOBILITY MISSION

Now, twenty years after that start, NuFocus has evolved into NFX and is fully connected across five regions of Virginia: Tidewater, Richmond, Central-Western Virginia and Roanoke, Northern Virginia and Southwest Virginia. Each region has its own assets, industries and identity, but the mission connecting them is true economic mobility.

For us, economic mobility means more than getting someone into a room. It means helping people build skills, earn more, start and strengthen businesses, win opportunities, create jobs and move from participation toward ownership. It also means recognizing that culture, workforce development and entrepreneurship are not separate conversations. They are parts of the same machine.

Over the past several years, the people who first showed the world what Tidewater could produce have continued to put attention and resources back into this region. Those investments do not all look the same. They appear through festivals, philanthropy, mentorship, local business activity, education and the decision to keep attaching a world-class name to home.

Pharrell's Something in the Water made the economic power of culture especially visible. An Old Dominion University analysis commissioned by Virginia Beach estimated that the 2019 festival generated more than $21 million in economic activity. Missy Elliott has used her platform to support families in Portsmouth. Teddy Riley's Virginia Beach studio and mentorship helped establish the environment from which a new generation could emerge. The larger point is not that one event or one celebrity will transform a region. It is that Tidewater has already demonstrated the cycle: local talent can create global attention, and global attention can be converted into local activity.

Global attention.
Local activity.

THE LESSON WAS NEVER ONLY ABOUT MUSIC.
IT WAS ABOUT WHAT A REGION COULD BUILD AROUND ITS OWN ORIGINAL IDEAS.



WHY TIDEWATER - AND WHY NOW

Tidewater has many different parts of the machine. We have the Port of Virginia and a logistics economy connected to the world. We have shipbuilding, advanced manufacturing, defense and a large military-connected workforce. We have universities, community colleges, health systems, tourism, hospitality, technology, media, neighborhood businesses and a creative culture with a proven record of influencing the world.

That combination is what makes the growth potential so exciting. It is not a theory waiting for its first evidence. The proof is already here. The opportunity now is to connect the parts more intentionally.

A creative entrepreneur may need business training and help understanding contracts. A separating service member may have leadership and technical experience that can become a company. A young person interested in media may also be developing skills that apply to marketing, information technology or production. A small business may be ready to hire but still need access to talent, capital or procurement relationships.

When those people move through separate programs, momentum gets lost. When workforce support, entrepreneurship, education, employers and community partners operate as a pipeline, talent can keep moving forward.

THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY IN THIS NU SEASON

The entrepreneur pipeline, supported by a strong workforce system, is the biggest opportunity in this Nu Season. We need a clear path that helps people identify their strengths, build relevant skills, test ideas, connect to employers and buyers, form sustainable businesses and scale what works.

That pipeline should not force everyone into the same outcome. Some people will become employees in high-demand industries. Some will become contractors or vendors serving those industries. Some will build creative businesses. Some will develop technology, train others or create the neighborhood services that allow families and workers to thrive. Economic mobility becomes real when people can see more than one doorway and receive enough support to walk through the right one.

NFX's five-region network gives us a wider field in which to connect those doors. Tidewater may produce an entrepreneur whose next market is Richmond. A workforce partner in Roanoke may have a model that can strengthen a program in Norfolk. A Northern Virginia relationship may open a procurement path for a business in Hampton Roads. Southwest Virginia may bring talent and perspective that changes what a statewide project can become.

This is not about forcing a parallel between everything NFX does and everything happening around us. It is about understanding the moment. In 1996, Tidewater showed what could happen when original talent, mentorship, facilities, business relationships and cultural confidence met at the right time. In 2026, the same principle can reach far beyond music.

This is where NFX started. It is also where our next level can be tested: connecting the culture that attracts attention with the systems that convert attention into income, careers, businesses and ownership.

Tidewater is in motion again. This time, the goal is not only to celebrate the wave. It is to help more people own a piece of it.

TIDEWATER IS IN MOTION AGAIN.
THIS TIME, HELP MORE PEOPLE OWN A PIECE OF THE WAVE.
TIDEWATER • RICHMOND • ROANOKE / CENTRAL-WESTERN • NORTHERN VIRGINIA • SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

NFX

W+E=Be Academy

WORKFORCE + ENTREPRENEURSHIP = BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

YOUR INVITATION

SELECTED – NOT RANDOM

More money.
More options.
Starts here.

This program is about one thing: putting you in a stronger financial position — whether that's landing a better job, moving up where you are, or building something of your own. You decide the path.

You didn't get this because of a flyer. Someone in your corner said your name. That's how we work — we show up for people who are ready to move, and we stay long after the program ends.

We're not outside consultants coming in to teach. Our team is already active in the community — we live, work, and invest here too.

TWO PATHS. ONE DESTINATION: FINANCIAL STABILITY.

PATH 1

GET HIRED & MOVE UP

Resume, interview skills, job search strategy, credentials — everything you need to land a job and keep it.

OR

PATH 2

CREATE YOUR OWN INCOME

Turn a skill, idea, or hustle into something real. No pressure — just a sustainable income stream that's yours.

ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET CERTIFICATION — COVERED FOR YOU

A nationally recognized credential that applies whether you're working for someone else or building your own thing. Signals to employers and lenders that you think differently.

INCLUDED & PAID

NFX

W+E=Be Academy

WORKFORCE + ENTREPRENEURSHIP = BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

TWICE A WEEK — WHERE YOU ALREADY ARE

Sessions rotate through community spaces, local businesses, and training partners — no long commutes, no unfamiliar rooms.

MONTHLY GROUP GATHERINGS

Come together with the full cohort to share wins, troubleshoot barriers, and build a network that actually opens doors.

A PLAN BUILT AROUND YOUR ACTUAL GOALS

Your Individual Development Plan (IDP) is yours — not a template. We build it with you in the first session based on where you want to go.

SUPPORT FOR THE REAL BARRIERS

Transportation, childcare, gear, digital access — if something is getting in the way, we work through it. That's what the program is for.

SPOTS ARE LIMITED. YOURS IS HELD — FOR NOW.

Reach out to Kiara or your case manager to confirm.

First session is coming up soon.

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NFX

WHAT'S GOOD VA

UNDERSTANDING GO VIRGINIA

A young business owner's guide to one of the Commonwealth's most important economic-development resources

By Nami'k Page

VIRGINIA BUILDS OPPORTUNITY

Stronger Regions. Brighter Futures.

PEOPLE | BUSINESS | PARTNERSHIPS | PROGRESS

WHAT IS GO VIRGINIA?

GO Virginia stands for Growth and Opportunity for Virginia. It is a statewide economic-development initiative created to encourage regional collaboration among private businesses, local governments, educational institutions and workforce organizations.



GROWTH
OPPORTUNITY
COLLABORATION
STRONGER REGIONS

As a 28-year-old small business owner, I have learned that having ambition is only one part of building something sustainable. You also need information, relationships and an understanding of how opportunity moves.

Virginia has many programs created to support business development, workforce training and economic growth, but most people do not know where to begin. Sometimes the language is highly technical. Sometimes the opportunity is promoted within circles that everyday business owners have not entered yet. And sometimes we hear the word "grant" without understanding who can apply, what the funder is trying to accomplish or why partnerships matter.

That is why this edition of What's Good VA is beginning a new resource series examining Virginia's "Agencies of Opportunity." We will break down organizations, initiatives and funding systems that can help people turn ideas into partnerships, programs, businesses and careers.

We begin with GO Virginia.

GO Virginia is not simply another small-business grant program. It is not normally designed for one person to request money solely to open or operate an individual business.

GO Virginia invests in projects that can improve an entire region's economy. Its focus is on creating higher-paying jobs, strengthening important industries, developing a qualified workforce and making Virginia's regional economies more competitive.

FROM NEED TO REGIONAL GROWTH

Ideas Turn into Impact.



The Commonwealth is divided into nine GO Virginia regions. Each region includes multiple cities and counties that share similar workforce and economic-development needs. Every region has a council that brings together business leaders, educators, workforce professionals and public officials.

Those regional councils help determine what industries and economic priorities deserve attention. Their decisions are guided by documents known as Growth and Diversification Plans.

In simple terms, each region studies its economy and asks:

- Which industries can bring more money into this region?
- What higher-paying jobs are available or expected?
- What skills do employers need?
- Where are the gaps in training, infrastructure or business support?
- What organizations can work together to address those gaps?

The answers help determine which collaborative projects may qualify for GO Virginia support.

VIRGINIA IS ONE STATE, BUT IT IS NOT ONE ECONOMY

Growing up in Virginia teaches you that every part of the Commonwealth has its own identity.

The economy of Hampton Roads is heavily connected to the military, ports, shipbuilding, logistics and technology. Northern Virginia has a major concentration of federal contracting, information technology and professional services. Southwest Virginia has different industries, assets and workforce challenges. Roanoke, Richmond, Petersburg and the surrounding communities each bring their own economic history and potential.

OPPORTUNITY ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

Different regions. Stronger together.





HOW DOES THE FUNDING WORK?

GO Virginia supports several kinds of projects, including planning and feasibility work, small-scale pilots, regional implementation projects, competitive projects, entrepreneurship initiatives and site or infrastructure development.

A strong project usually starts with an identified regional need—an industry or workforce area that employers are saying they need help with. For example, employers in a particular technical field may report that they cannot find enough people with a specific skill. A community college, workforce organization, local government and group of employers could work together to develop a training pipeline. The employers help define the skills, the educational partner provides training, the workforce organization supports recruitment, and the horaiitiee help establish regional participation.

That type of partnership is closer to the GO Virginia model.

The program wants to see collaboration, employer involvement and meaaurable economic outcomes. Projects should connect to the region's Growth and Diversification Plan and show how the proposed work will strengthen targeted industries, build a stronger workforce and lead to higher-paying employment.

This is why an individual entrepreneur may not be the direct applicant, but can still benefit from the ecosystem being built. Small businesses can serve as employers, vendors, instructors, mentors, industry advisers or participants in a larger entrepreneurship initiative.

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | LEGACY

CAPTAIN DESMOND WALKER

Leadership earned. Legacy in motion.



THE FOCUS MAGAZINE SALUTES

The Focus Magazine proudly salutes Captain Desmond Walker on his promotion to the rank of Captain. This milestone reflects commitment, discipline and leadership - and stands as an example for family, community and the next generation of leaders.



A family moment. A career milestone.





Honor. Courage. Commitment.

UNITED STATES NAVY

BACK TO SCHOOL, back to being a FULLY GROWN ADULT

Apparently, being the adult means getting everybody where they need to be—even when you have carefully designed a life that does not require you to function this much before 9 a.m.

BY TIERRA WALKER



Three daughters. Three different seasons of motherhood.

And apparently, I'm still on morning drop-off duty. I have three daughters. One is a young adult now, and looking back, her school years were relatively easy. And yes, I drove her to school until the fourth grade. My 14-year-old, who is headed to high school this year, was driven to school through fourth grade too. So maybe I did this to myself. But somehow, after all these years of parenting, this year's back-to-school adjustment feels particularly tedious.

PARENTING HITS DIFFERENT AT EVERY AGE



My ninth grader has been accepted into an Academy, which is wonderful. I am proud of her. It is an opportunity that we intentionally chose because education matters in our family. Her bus stop is also approximately a mile from my house. And her bus comes at 6:30 in the morning. So, congratulations to both of us on her acceptance, because apparently we got into the Academy. I have to drive her to the bus stop. Then I return home. And at 8:20, I have to leave again to drive my third grader to school. I cannot adequately express how much the idea of having to be outside of my house this many times before 9 a.m. disgusts me. Why does the world start so early?

Parenting in Your 20s, 30s and 40s Is Not the Same Job

I am an adult. I have spent years learning myself well enough to know when I am most productive. I run a company. I have intentionally structured my schedule around the hours when my brain works best and when I can produce my best work. And now the school system has apparently rejected my strategic plan. There are things to be said about having children in your twenties versus your thirties. And let's not even get started on the forties. I had my youngest daughter at 39. There is something very different about parenting when you're older. When you're younger, you may have more physical energy, but you're still figuring yourself out. You're building your career. You're learning money. You're learning relationships. You're learning boundaries. You're learning what kind of adult you even want to be. Then you get older. You know yourself better. You've built some things. You've figured out that waking up unnecessarily early is against your personal values. And then you have an eight-year-old. The advantage is that she gets a version of me that knows considerably more about life than the mother her oldest sister had. The disadvantage is that this version of me has opinions about mornings.

Strong ones.





THREE DAUGHTERS.

three different seasons.

Motherhood changes because the mother changes too.

The Things We Trade for Education

Education has always mattered deeply to me, which means I have also had to accept that getting the right education for a child isn't always convenient. Ideally, I would homeschool. There are many things about homeschooling that I believe in. Unfortunately, I am not a teacher in the sense of teaching children all day. Mostly because I don't like children very much.
LOL.

I love my children tremendously. Other people's children are wonderful—in reasonable doses. But we actually did homeschool during COVID and continued for an additional year. And I watched what it did for my middle daughter. It helped develop her thirst for knowledge. She became more curious. There was room to explore things beyond what a classroom schedule dictated. It gave me an entirely different appreciation for what education can look like when it is shaped around the child.

So there is absolutely something to be said for homeschooling.
There is also something to be said for knowing your ministry.
Mine is not elementary education.
And because I run a company, homeschool would require a trade-off that I am not sure would ultimately serve any of us well.
So instead, I find myself doing what so many parents do: trying to find the right environment for each individual child. That becomes especially important with my youngest.

She needs the right fit. She needs structure, understanding, accountability and a school environment that recognizes that children do not all learn, behave or develop in exactly the same way.

Finding that balance has been challenging.

But I think we may finally be getting there.

Maybe That's What This Season Is About

Read full article on My Substack



Halloween Safety Tips with Paris & Peaches!

Keeping our furry friends safe, happy, and comfortable this Halloween.



Peaches shows off her adorable butterfly costume.



Paris looks spooktacular in her sweet witch costume!

Halloween is fun for the whole family, including our pets! Paris and Peaches remind us that the best celebration is one that keeps animals safe, calm, and comfortable. Here are a few simple Halloween dos and don'ts for pet parents.

Treats: What's Safe and What's Not?

- **Do:** Offer pet-safe treats made for cats or dogs. A small amount of plain pumpkin can be a fun seasonal treat for some pets.
- **Don't:** Share Halloween candy. Chocolate, xylitol, raisins, and candy wrappers can be dangerous for pets.

Costumes: Cute and Comfortable

- **Do:** Choose lightweight, breathable costumes that allow your pet to walk, see, hear, and breathe normally.
- **Don't:** Force a costume if your pet seems stressed. A festive bandana or themed collar is a great option for pets who prefer something simple.

Halloween Night Safety

- **Do:** Keep pets indoors, away from open doors, candles, cords, and loud commotion.
- **Do:** Make sure tags and microchip information are current.
- **Don't:** Leave pets unattended in costumes or around candy and decorations.

Whether dressed up like Peaches or keeping it simple like Paris, every pet deserves a Halloween that is safe, happy, and stress-free. The cutest costume is always a healthy pet!

Happy Halloween from Paris & Peaches!

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EMPOWERING AMBASSADORS.
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES.

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COMMUNITY

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YOUR MISSION

1. **BUILD** your team.
2. **FILL** at least three Great Crates with holiday support for military and veteran families.
3. **KEEP COLLECTING.** Additional donations welcome. Toys can be collected separately in toy boxes.
4. **BRING** your supporters with you to Winter Wonderlane.

Together We Make a Difference!

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2026
VSSN's Winter Wonderlane
Promenade Temecula

VSSN
VETERANS SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT NETWORK
SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED

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READY TO ACCEPT THE MISSION?
REPLY "I'M IN"
AND WE'LL GET YOUR TEAM ACTIVATED.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GREAT CRATE HOLIDAY CHALLENGE

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- **Annuities:** a steady, reliable income stream for retirement, for a set period or for life.
- **Flexibility:** use cash value for medical bills, debt, education, or a home down payment.
- **Final Expense:** coverage to help pay funeral costs and final bills, so your loved ones aren't burdened.

Coach Ty

LICENSED AGENT

FINANCIAL GROWTH STRATEGIST

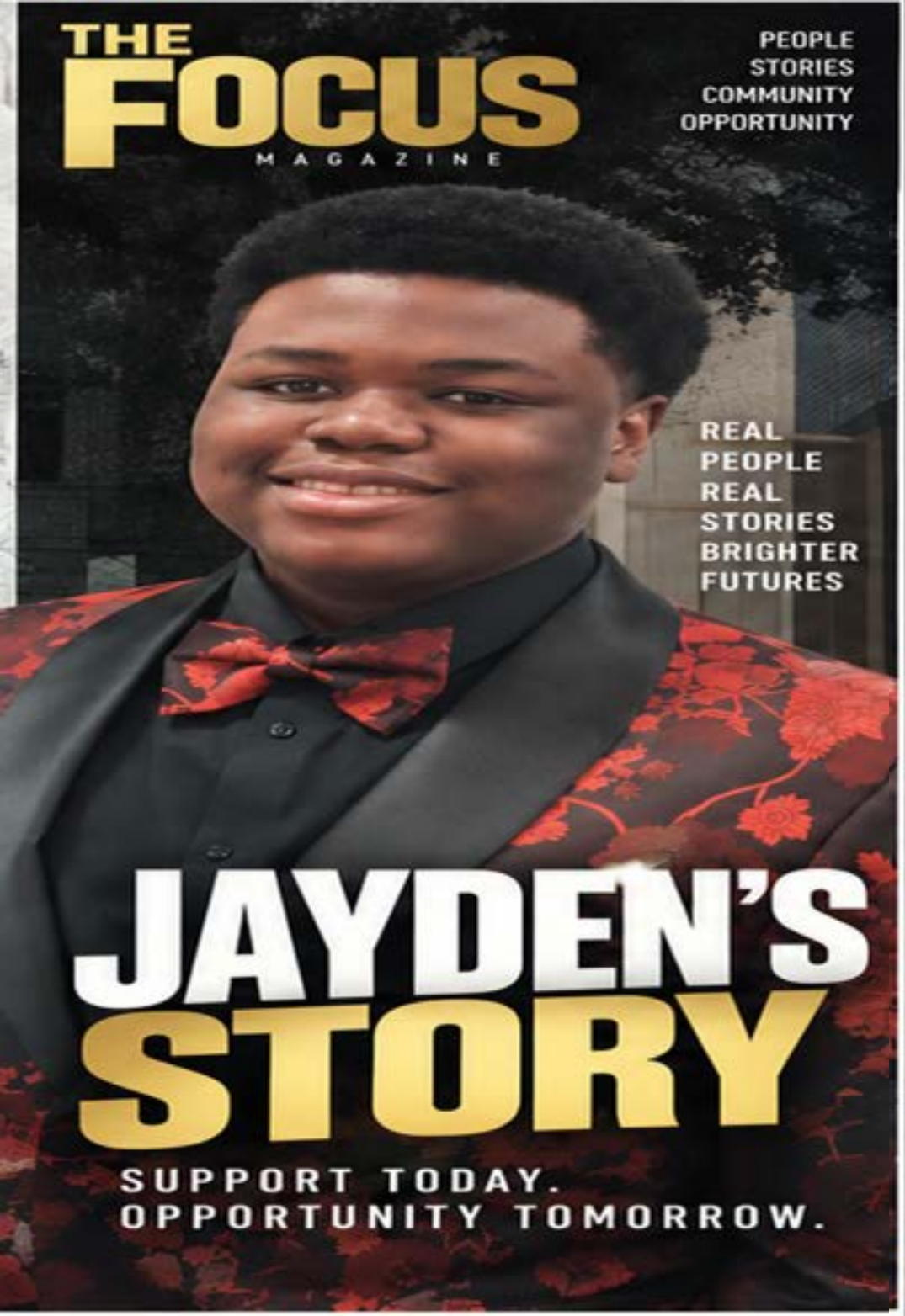
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PEOPLE FIRST

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

When I first heard about People First and Urban Strategies, I did not completely understand what they did.

I thought they were simply people my mom talked to. I knew they helped us receive food from the food pantry when we were going through hard times, but I did not realize how much support they could provide to a family.

Over time, I learned that People First was much more than I originally thought.

More Than A Food Pantry

Sometime around 2024 or 2025, my family was having a difficult time. People First helped us get food when we did not always have enough in the house.

At first, that was how I knew them. They were the people who helped my mom and made sure we had something to eat.

That support mattered because food was one of the things I worried about while I was still in school. But it was not until my family faced another serious problem that I began to understand the full purpose of People First.

When Our Housing Was At Risk

Around the beginning or







BUILDING WHAT'S NEXT



Struggling Through High School

While my family was dealing with these challenges, I was also struggling in high school.

I had trouble waking up on time, keeping up with school and dealing with the fact thaat we did not always have enough food in the house.

My first counselor was a woman named Ms. Tiffany. I did not see her for very long—usually only about an hour once a week.

She was not a bad counselor, but there were some things I did not like at first. My mom told her that the reason I could not wake up on time was because I spent too much time playing my PS5.

I tried to explain that I only played my game after I finished my schoolwork, but it felt like nobody was listening to me.

After my mom left, Ms. Tiffany spoke with me privately. To sum it up, she believed what I was telling her, but she also wanted to help me find a solution.

She had me set several alarms so I could get up in the morning.

I still struggle with waking up on time today, so the alarms did not solve the problem completely. However, they helped enough to keep me from failing because of my attendance.

Support That Made A Difference

Ms. Tiffany helped me with more than waking up for school.

She was also able to help me get a laptop and tickets to my school dance. Those things may not sound major to everyone, but they made a difference in my life.

The laptop gave me something I needed for school. The dance tickets allowed me to participate in an important high school experience instead of feeling left out.

That support, combined with the help I received from my sister and my girlfriend, allowed me to graduate from high school and finally put that part of my life to rest.

Graduating meant I could begin thinking about what came next.

Building A Future In Technology

Flash forward to now.

I am doing okay in life, especially for a very young adult. I am currently receiving training that can prepare me to work in different technology fields.

I mainly want to learn how to repair technology, but I understand that I have to begin with the basics.

Luckily, I am also being paid while receiving the training. That income allows me to continue buying food for my sister and myself.

It is amazing how much food you can get for a low price at Kroger.

Being able to help provide food makes me feel like I am moving forward. I am no longer only watching my family struggle. I am beginning to build skills, earn money and take on more responsibility.

More Than A Story

What People First Means To Me

My understanding of People First has changed.

At first, I knew them as the people who gave my family food. Then they helped us remain in our home. Their support also connected me with people and resources that helped me make it through high school.

Now I am receiving training, earning money and beginning to explore a future in technology.

I still have challenges. I still struggle with waking up on time, and I am still learning what direction I want to take. I do not have everything figured out yet.

But I graduated. I am receiving training. I am helping buy food for my sister and myself. Most importantly, I am moving forward.



People First turned out to be much more than I thought.

They showed me what can happen when people listen, provide the right support and help a young person find a path toward something better.

"From hard times to new possibilities, Jayden's story shows how housing stability, educational support and workforce training can help a young person begin building a future."

FOR

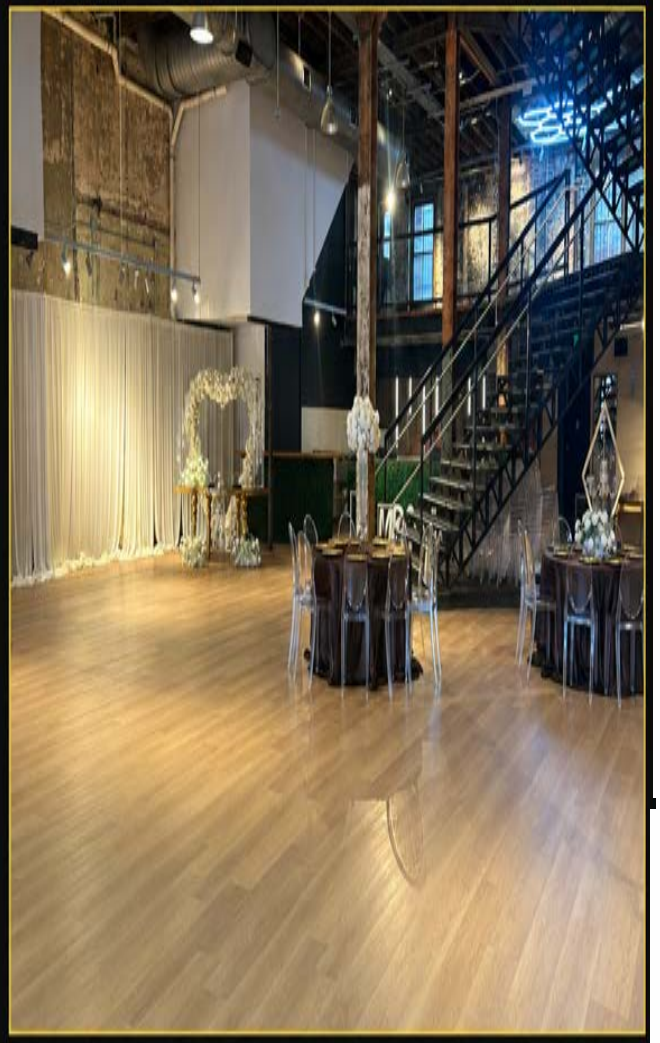
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YOUTH VOICES | 757 CULTURE

Cousinz FESTIVAL '26

Norfolk Showed Up and Showed Out

BY AHMAD COSTON

Norfolk was really outside for Cousinz Fest this year. You could feel the energy as soon as people started showing up. Everybody was there to have a good time, listen to music and represent the 757. It wasn't just giving regular concert vibes. It felt more like the whole city came together for one big event.



THE LINEUP

Real Music. Real 757.



T.I.



KEYSHIA COLE



THE-DREAM



PLIES



DJ ENVY

757 Always Pulls Up!

The lineup was one of the biggest reasons people came out. T.I. came back to Norfolk, along with Keyshia Cole, The-Dream and Plies. DJ Envy was also there keeping the crowd hype. Seeing artists that big perform in Norfolk was a big deal because it shows that the 757 can bring in major artists and have a crowd ready for them.

Cousinz Fest also means more because it was created by people from Norfolk. Pusha T and Fam-Lay both grew up here, made it big and came back to put something together for their hometown. Instead of just taking their success somewhere else, they brought something back to the city. Now that Cousinz Fest is in its third year, it's starting to become something people can look forward to every year.





NORFOLK GIVES BACK

The community part is probably what makes Cousinz Fest different from other festivals. There are scholarships, local business partnerships and home improvements connected to the festival. So it's not just about everybody coming out, listening to music and going home. Some of the money and attention goes back into the community. That makes the festival feel like it actually means something to Norfolk.

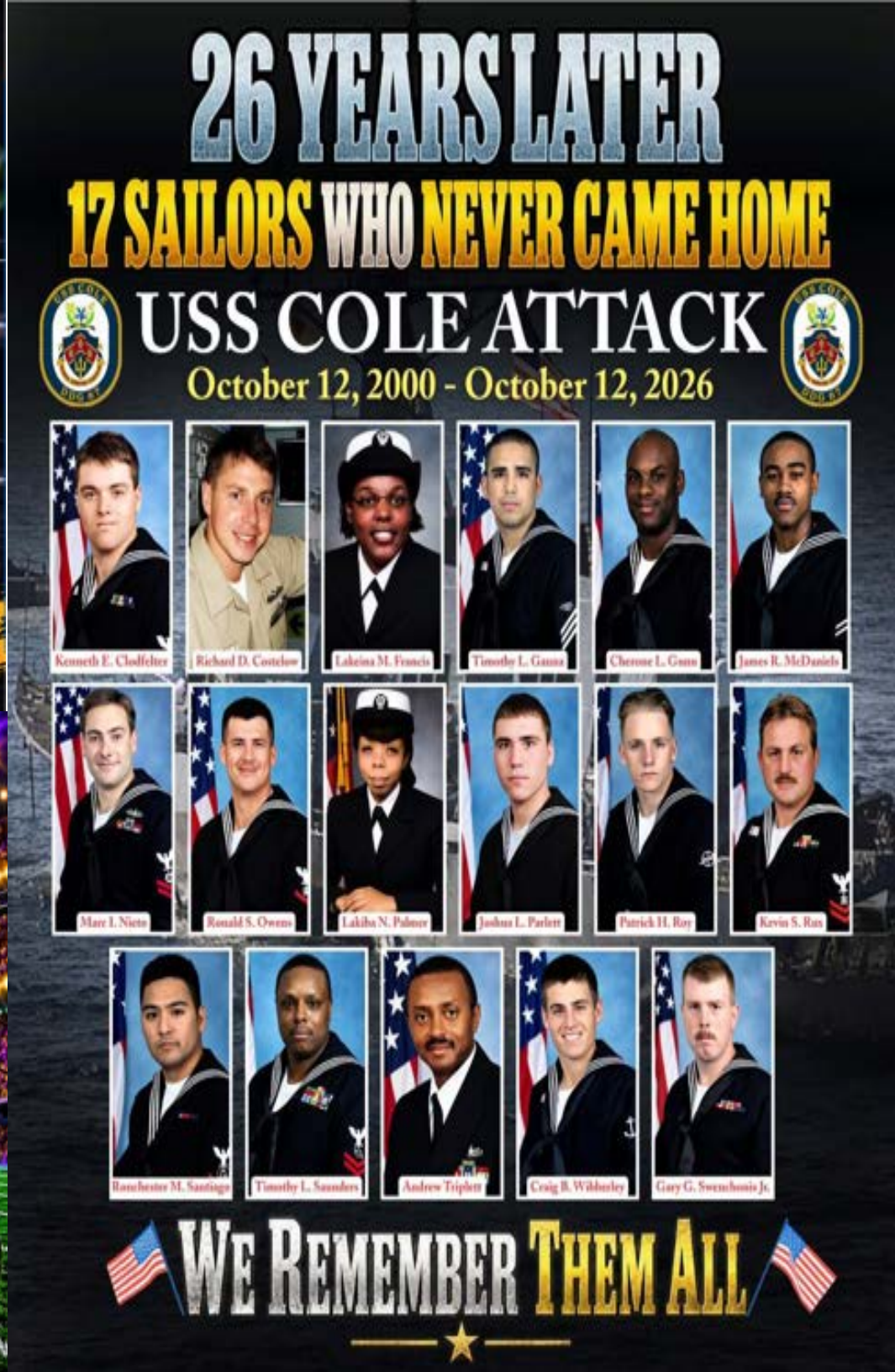
Cousinz Fest shows that Norfolk has a lot to offer. We have our own artists, our own culture and people who are willing to come back and invest in the city. Seeing everybody come together for something made in the 757 is something to be proud of. Cousinz Fest isn't just another concert. It's something Norfolk can call its own.






REAL CONVERSATIONS
DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES
SAME ENERGY
Let's Talk About It
PEOPLE
CULTURE
COMMUNITY
ENTERTAINMENT
REAL LIFE
NEVER AGREE
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Let's Talk About It
GAME PICKS
RANKINGS
WEEK 6
SKEETER
54 WINS (OVERALL RECORD)
6 WINS (WEEK 6)
VS
D40 FONZARELLI
48 WINS (OVERALL RECORD)
8 WINS (WEEK 6)
WHO WILL WIN THIS WEEKEND?
REAL CONVERSATIONS. DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES. SAME ENERGY.
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TUNE IN. PULL UP. IT'S A VIBE.


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17 SAILORS WHO NEVER CAME HOME
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October 12, 2000 - October 12, 2026
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Richard D. Costelow
Lakeina M. Francis
Timothy L. Ganza
Cherone L. Gunn
James R. McDaniels
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- **QUALIFIED OVERTIME**
  Eligible taxpayers may deduct up to $12,500 ($25,000 married filing jointly).
- **QUALIFIED TIPS**
  Eligible taxpayers may deduct up to $25,000.
- **CERTAIN QUALIFIED NEW-VEHICLE LOAN INTEREST**
  Eligible taxpayers may deduct up to $10,000.

Eligibility rules and income phase-outs apply. These are deductions, not blanket exclusions from all taxes.

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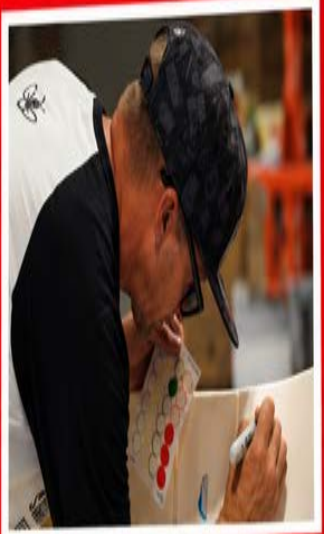
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Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting
Nov. 4, 9 a.m., 529 Ruffner St.

Question Submission Deadline
Nov. 13, 4 p.m.

Proposal Submission Deadline
Dec. 14, 4 p.m.

THE CITY OF NORFOLK

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HONORING THREE DECADES OF SERVICE WHILE CELEBRATING THE YOUTH, FAMILIES, PARTNERS, ARTISTS, ADVOCATES, AND COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS WHO HAVE HELPED TWP GROW INTO A POWERFUL FORCE FOR CHANGE

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Calling all high school juniors and seniors!

People First Empowered by USI is hosting a special college tour of Norfolk State University and Old Dominion University on Nov. 11 - and YOU'RE invited!
This guided tour gives students the chance to walk the campuses, explore academic majors, learn about admissions and get inspired about their next steps after high school. Transportation and lunch are provided, so all that's left is signing up and seeing what opportunities are out there!

Nov. 11
8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
259 Granby St., Ste. 300

To register, contact the People First Education Specialist (757) 390-4625 or your assigned FSS. Or register online: https://tinyurl.com/4t3z3kzn
Don't miss out on this opportunity to explore your future!
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