

NOVEMBER 2021

THE FOCUS

Something For Everyone.

STOP KILLING
EACH OTHER

DAY OF THE DEAD

CELEBRATING OUR CULTURE

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
JUSTICE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM CENTER

FROM THE STAR CITY TO THE WORLD.
CULTURE | BUSINESS | ORIGINATORS

November 2nd
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FOR COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

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- **EMPHASIZE TREATMENT OVER INCARCERATION.**

WHAT'S INSIDE



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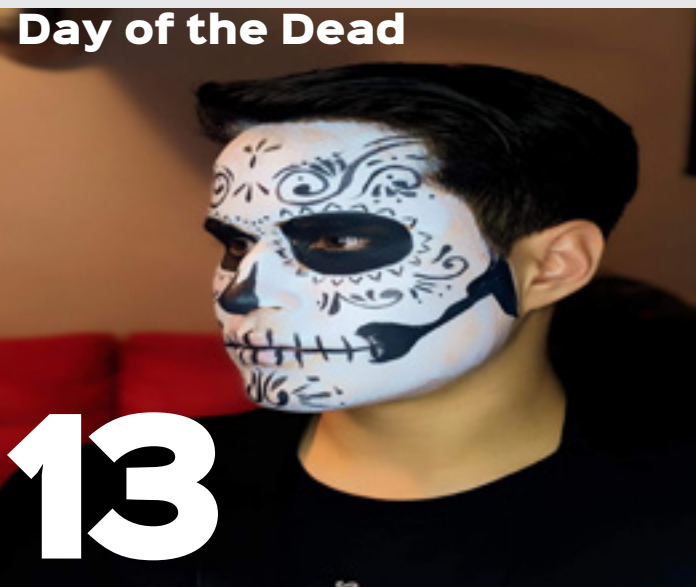


6



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Images for stories courtesy of J.J. Janae Photography, Facebook, and NuFocus Media



editor



What It Do!

When I got to my ship in the Navy, my new homie from Detroit said that to me. Not really sure because I had never heard someone ask me, I responded "I'm good." He gave me a pound and I knew that we were speaking a similar dialogue.

In order to truly digest The Focus Magazine, it's stories, and the people writing them, you have to at least try to understand the language we speak.

We are pleased to continue to bring a voice of a culture oftentimes misrepresented by the stories the alternative desires to tell.

Everyone has a voice, everyone matters, everyone can learn from someone else.

Stay Focused My Friends and enjoy.

TomA Page-Rose



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Make Roanoke Skate Again!

My name is JC, and when I was 14, I moved to Roanoke, Virginia. It was then that I realized that I wanted to start a skateboarding and at the time I didn't have the means or the money. I ended up getting a cheap skateboard for Christmas that year, and I immediately went outside and shoveled off the sidewalk so I could skateboard.

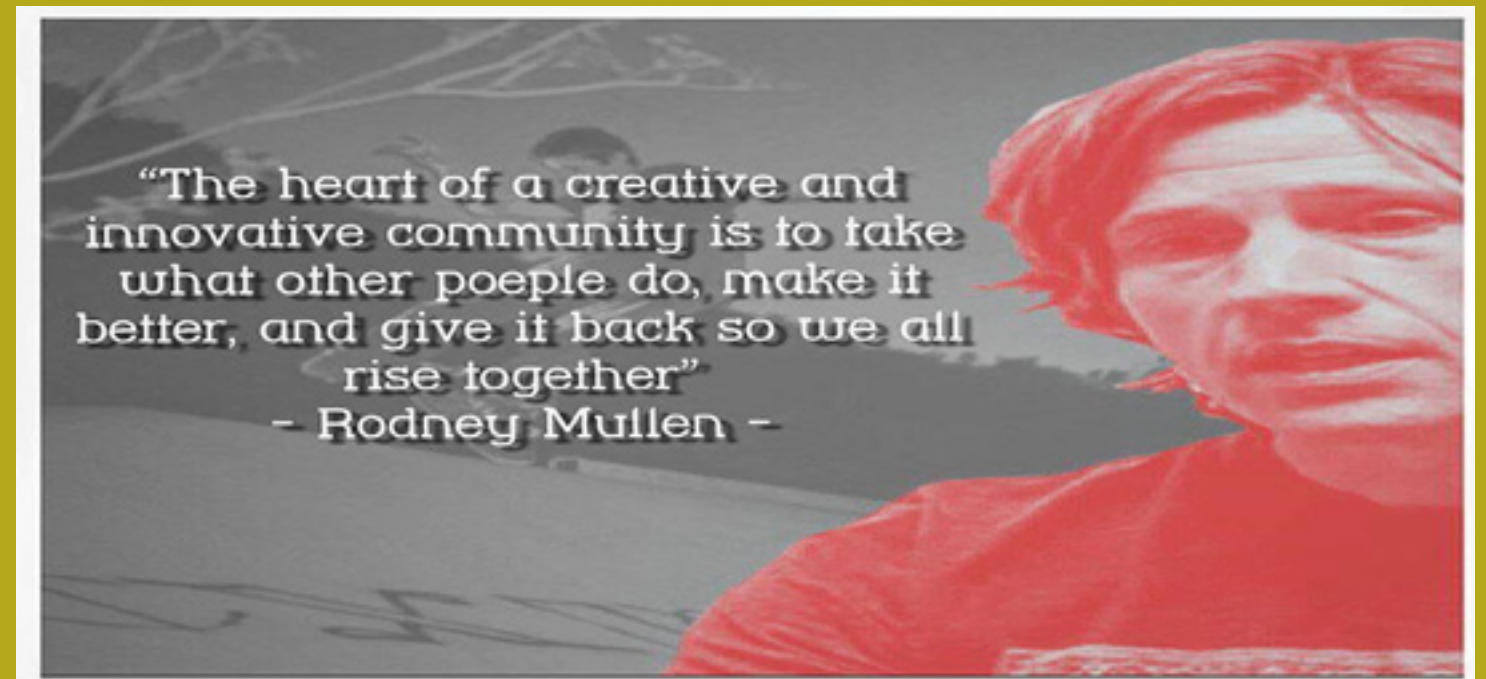


Recently I moved back to Roanoke after being gone for six years. The Wasena Skate Park was pretty much out of commission when I left, ramps busted, homeless living under ramps, and everything was starting to deteriorate. But now, with the pandemic, and all the COVID relief money going towards revitalizing the community. The Roanoke Skatepark Initiative has been trying to get a better skatepark, an actual skate park, and built in Roanoke for the community. The skateboard community.

At the present moment, there are a lot of dedicated skaters



in Roanoke that are pushing for a new skate park, so that teens and young adults, even older adults can have a place to call their own. So they can enjoy doing what they love, in a place where it's acceptable. That's what keeps people out of trouble having something to do, having a hobby that they enjoy, instead of something that's forced on them. Say your dad wants you to play football, and you don't want to, so you just go off and do other things to rebel against him that might or might not get you into trouble. But skateboarding, provides an outlet for rebellion, but it's positive rebellion, and that's what we want. We want people to stand up for what they want in positive ways and help build the community instead of tearing the community down.



That's why I've made it a point to write about the Roanoke Skatepark Initiative, and trying to get a skatepark built in Roanoke to help with the development of young people and help them find a way to be productive in the community.

I'm JC, and skateboarding will live on in Roanoke.

Focus Fashion is an entity of NuFocus Group better known as NFX. NFX is a full service digital media company owned by Tommy Page. Mr. Page already had a magazine called The Focus. In 2017 when Erica Jenkins started working at NFX. Tommy asked if she wanted to highlight fashion to the magazine and Erica replied fashion needs its own magazine. That's how we started Focus Fashion Magazine. They wanted a magazine that included diversity to our backgrounds. So after creating a few Focus Fashion issues they decided to do an all inclusive Focus and Fashion Latina magazine. Erica being from New Jersey is very familiar with a different backgrounds of the Hispanic Culture, and wanted to embrace that. Many people are not aware of the diversity of Latin culture and the many countries that influence its fashion. Focus Fashion Latina is based on that





Latin Edition



ARE YOU READY TO START

ABOUT SERCAP

Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. (SERCAP) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides training, technical, and financial assistance to both low-to-moderate income (LMI) individuals and rural communities to address water, wastewater, housing, and community development needs. Initially founded in Virginia, the organization has expanded to serve seven southeastern states, including: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

SERCAP'S MISSION

SERCAP'S Mission is to improve the quality of life for low-income individuals by promoting affordable water and wastewater facilities, community development, environmental health, and economic self-sufficiency.

SERCAP'S IMPACT

Since the agency's founding in 1969, SERCAP's programs and services have positively impacted rural communities and LMI individuals through the provision of adequate access to clean, safe drinking water, environmentally sound wastewater facilities, improved community infrastructure, and affordable housing that is warm, safe, and dry.

**When accessing SERCAP's services if you need assistance due to language barriers, mobility impairments, visual or hearing impairments, or other disabilities please let SERCAP staff know, so the agency can provide necessary accommodations.*

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CAREERS IN WATER/WASTEWATER OPERATIONS AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

State-certified Water/Wastewater Operators and Stormwater Managers, run community water/wastewater systems so that residents and businesses have reliable access to clean, safe drinking water, environmentally sound wastewater facilities, and well managed local infrastructure.

Water/Wastewater and Stormwater Professionals:

- Water Operators treat water, making it safe to drink.
- Wastewater Operators remove harmful pollutants from domestic and industrial liquid waste so it is safe to return to the environment.
- Water/Wastewater Operators manage a system of machines, often through a system of control boards, to transfer and/or treat water and/or wastewater.
- Stormwater Managers control the use of stormwater runoff in a community through: planning for runoff; maintaining stormwater systems; and regulating the collection, storage, and movement of stormwater.

TRAIN TO BE A WATER/WASTEWATER OPERATOR OR STORMWATER MANAGER

SERCAP has partnered with Mountain Empire Community College to provide a comprehensive Water/Wastewater Operator Training Program. SERCAP will help interested individuals to prepare for the program, register for classes, apply for financial assistance, study for the certification exam, and find an internship/apprenticeship with a water/wastewater treatment facility. The Program is designed to provide participants with the tools, resources, and support needed, to get them trained and into the workforce.

- Program classes are delivered Online, followed by a 6-month in-person internship at a water/wastewater treatment plant.
- SERCAP places participants in an internship and assists in making connections in this new career
- After 6 months working in a water/wastewater facility, participants will be eligible to sit for the state licensing exam.



***SERCAP Water/Wastewater Operator and Stormwater Management Training Program is made possible by Training from Mountain Empire Community College.**




spring point

**SERCAP's Water/Wastewater Operator and Stormwater Management Training Program is made possible by Funding from Spring Point Partners.*

SERCAP's Water/Wastewater Operator and Stormwater Management Training Program will help participants to succeed by providing:

Pre-Training Assistance

- Support to complete GED, if needed
- Application Assistance for Financial Aid
- Registration Assistance for Classes
- Supplies, including a Laptop Computer

Training Assistance

- Placement Services to assist Participants in securing an Internship/Apprenticeship at a Water/Wastewater Treatment Facility

Post-Training Assistance

- State Certification Exam Preparation/ Tutoring Assistance
- Financial Assistance to cover State Exam Fee
- Networking and Job Placement Services

BENEFITS OF BEING A WATER/WASTEWATER OPERATIONS OR STORMWATER PROFESSIONAL

Water/Wastewater operators are the first line of defense in public health. They deliver safe, plentiful drinking water to their customers and ensure that fire hydrants have enough water to fight fires. Being a water operator is a very meaningful career choice—you make a huge, positive difference in the health of your community.

Water/wastewater operators have an average nationwide salary of \$40,000 per year, but experienced operators can earn around \$80,000 per year in large communities—more in supervisory positions. Many utilities offer excellent benefits and opportunities for career advancement.

Many water operators are retiring, and there is expected to be an operator shortage in the near future. It's a great time to enter this industry, whether you're just starting your career or looking for a career change!

For more information or to apply to participate in the program, contact SERCAP at 540-345-1184, or visit the agency on-line at www.sercap.org.

A WHOLE NEW THING?

www.sercap.org

Trials of a Forbidden King

I don't think I've ever seen a man so fine
Staring into his eyes that shine with a passionate drive
In him the urgency for his life to thrive
To be successful his limit past the skies
Not just book smart but knowledgeable of many things
Like the roots that gave him life
Ancestral Kings and Queens
The sacrifices they made and the choices they never had
He walks with his head high and strolls with pride
Hands a little rough from all the hard labor he's done
But he takes it all in stride
Because he's determined he's going to be someone
To get out of the hood with ideas of businesses to run
Altho times are rough for this strong black man
He's determined to shine thru all this darkness thrown at him
because of the color of his skin and past mistakes
For the actions of others their punishment he takes
But be strong my Kings don't break
Because it's not up to them
You determine your own fate

Written By: Jamie Robinson

Celebrating the day of the dead.

For me, the Day of the Dead was a tradition that inadvertently became one of the most significant in my life when I was at the University of New Mexico at the Centro de la Raza (UNM) since 2002 when my grandfather Gabriel Cortez passed away. I learned about this pre-Hispanic celebration, putting the altars decorated with the art of papel picado, the sugar skulls, the meanings of the candles, food and incense or copal. This tradition is celebrated on the first and second days of November. On November 1st. we celebrate the souls of children who have passed away and on November 2nd the lives of adults. These days we honor our loved ones who have passed away.

I began to put an altar in my house to continue with the tradition that I learned since my maternal grandparents had passed away. My grandmother Aurora Zubiata passed away in 2006, the same year that I came to live in Roanoke Virginia. Over time, I started acquiring new things to decorate my altar, where I had to have my Virgin of Guadalupe, the photographs of my grandparents, famous people like Celia Cruz, Frida Kahlo, Selena and other famous people who have passed away.

Picture of my cousin Cesar and my grandparents in Juarez, Mexico.



Altar at Casa Latina, Roanoke, Virginia 2019

As the years passed and my children grew up, it was our tradition that they celebrate Halloween and while they were enjoying a party that I had at my house, I spoke to my children, neighbors, and friends about my altar of the day of the dead. This is how I started the tradition for my circle of friends and neighbors. In 2018 and 2019 I began making altars in the windows of two local restaurants in Salem and Roanoke Virginia. In 2020 I also made a virtual altar where people could put photos of their deceased to remember them.

My purpose of creating the altars is to raise awareness of this beautiful tradition that has become part of my family, my culture, and my community. Especially now that we have lost many, many loved ones due to the pandemic, shootings, and attacks. I think it is more meaningful to remember how beautiful their lives were. I heard an expression that said, "God, I'm not asking you why you take [Them] from me, but I thank you for have been giving me the opportunity to have lived with them" Let us remember our deceased with affection, the memories that we create with them, we remember what they liked, what they taught us and above all what we believe, that those days, their souls come to visit us.

And you? Would you like to start this significant tradition by setting up your own altar to celebrate and commemorate the lives of your loved ones who have passed away? Contact us.



Halloween party with my son, neighbors and friends, learning about Day of the Dead in Salem, Virginia. 2015

* This article is dedicated to my parents Gabriela and Luis Roberto who have already departed to a better life. Rest in peace, Mommy and Daddy.

Celebrando El día de los muertos.



Altar at the window of El Muchacho Alegre in Salem, Virginia. 2018

Para mí el día de los muertos fue una tradición que se convirtió sin querer en una de las más significativas de mi vida cuando estaba en la universidad de Nuevo México en el Centro de la Raza (UNM) desde el año 2002 cuando falleció mi abuelo Gabriel Cortez. Aprendí sobre esta celebración prehispánica, poniendo los altares decorados con el arte del papel picado, las calaveras de azúcar, los significados de las veladoras, comida y el incienso o copal. Esta tradición se celebra el primero y segundo día de noviembre. El 1ero de noviembre celebramos las almas de los niños que han fallecido y el 2 de noviembre la vida de los adultos. Estos días honramos a nuestros seres queridos que han pasado a mejor vida.

Yo empecé a poner un altar en mi casa para seguir con la tradición que aprendí ya que mis abuelos maternos habían fallecido. Mi abuelita Aurora Zubiate falleció en el 2006, el mismo año que llegué a vivir en Roanoke Virginia. Con el tiempo, me fui haciendo de cosas nuevas para decorar mi altar, donde no podía faltar mi virgen de Guadalupe, las fotografías de mis abuelos, de personas famosas como Celia Cruz, Frida Kahlo, Selena y otras personas que han fallecido.

Conforme pasaron los años y mis hijos crecieron, era nuestra tradición que celebraran el día de Halloween y mientras ellos disfrutaban de una fiesta que hice en mi casa, les hablé a mis hijos, vecinos y amigos sobre mi altar del día de los muertos, así que empecé a hacerlo de una tradición para mi círculo de amigos y vecinos. En el 2018 y 2019 empecé a hacer altares en las ventanas de dos restaurantes locales en Salem y Roanoke Virginia. En el 2020 hice también un altar virtual donde las personas pudieran poner fotos de sus difuntos para recordarlos.

Mi propósito de crear los altares es para crear conciencia de esta hermosa tradición que se ha hecho parte de mi familia, mi cultura y mi comunidad. Especialmente ahora que hemos perdido muchísimos seres queridos a causa de la pandemia, de tiroteos, de atentados y pienso que es bonito recordar lo bonito de sus vidas. Yo escuche una expresión que decía, "Dios, no te pregunto por que me lo quitas, pero te agradezco habérmelo dado". Recordemos a nuestros difuntos con cariño, las memorias que creamos con ellos, recordamos lo que les gustaba, lo que nos enseñaron y sobre todo que creemos, que esos días, sus almas vienen a visitarnos.



Altar at my home in Salem, 2018. Family members.

¿Y tú? ¿Quisieras empezar esta significativa tradición poniendo tu propio altar para celebrar y conmemorar la vida de tus seres queridos que han fallecido? Comunícate con nosotros.

*Este artículo está dedicado a mis padres Gabriela y Luis Roberto que ya partieron a una mejor vida. Descansen en paz, mami y papi.



Presentation in Roanoke College of "Pan de Muerto" (Bread of the Dead) 2017



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- HEARING FROM THE YOUTH ON THEIR FEARS ABOUT THE VIOLENCE THAT THEY ARE SEEING.

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Save Lives Just put the guns down

So I was asked to write an article about those lost to gun violence but I'm not writer. There have been hundreds to thousands lost because people no longer have the heart to fight. "Oh God forbid I get punched in the face today for the stupid words that I said so I am going to ruin multiple lives because I have no heart". That's is basically what you are screaming at the top of your lungs when you pull a gun on someone whose only threat to your life is their two hands and the words that crushed your soft little soul. Not only did you end someone else's life you have now created generational hurt, lack of trust and disgust for your fellow human. I'm not going to name names because it's too many to even begin. But people you need to find a way to do better at resolving the exact same issues that most three year olds can resolve and be back to being best friends in ten minutes. But we adults as well as you teenagers that consider yourself to be so smart are clearly lacking in the common sense and basic problem solving. I don't completely blame the government even tho the taps on the wrist they give and the lollipops they pass out for thoughtless crimes do play a huge part in people's decisions to be so stupid when confronted with conflict. Pull out a gun and pull the trigger and you yourself has now started the physical and mental destruction of multiple beings as well as your own. But hey a small tap on the wrist, twenty years of your "life" are certainly not the correct price to pay for senselessly taking a life and leaving children without a responsible parent. In my opinion life should mean just that...when you take a life you should stay incarcerated until your heart stops, there should be NO pleas allowed if you didn't consider their life no one should allow you to plea for yours. I don't know how to fix what I consider to be a pandemic of ignorance but we as humans have definitely got to do better. And stop crying about "Black Lives Matter" when we blacks have killed more of our own than any other race. That is the type of thinking that has us putting ourselves in these stupid situations. Wake up.

Written By: Jamie Robinson



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YouthBuild Program Partners:



The total cost of the YouthBuild Roanoke program is \$1,498,750.00. \$1,199,000.00 (80%) is funded through a U.S. Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration grant. The other \$299,750 (20%) is funded through in kind and other non-governmental sources.



Justice Business Ecosystem



Building is what we do

Providing much needed resources and support mechanisms with equity, diversity, and inclusion in mind to minority owned as well as all other disadvantaged businesses to assist them to achieve success within the first two years of launching their business idea is the main focus of the

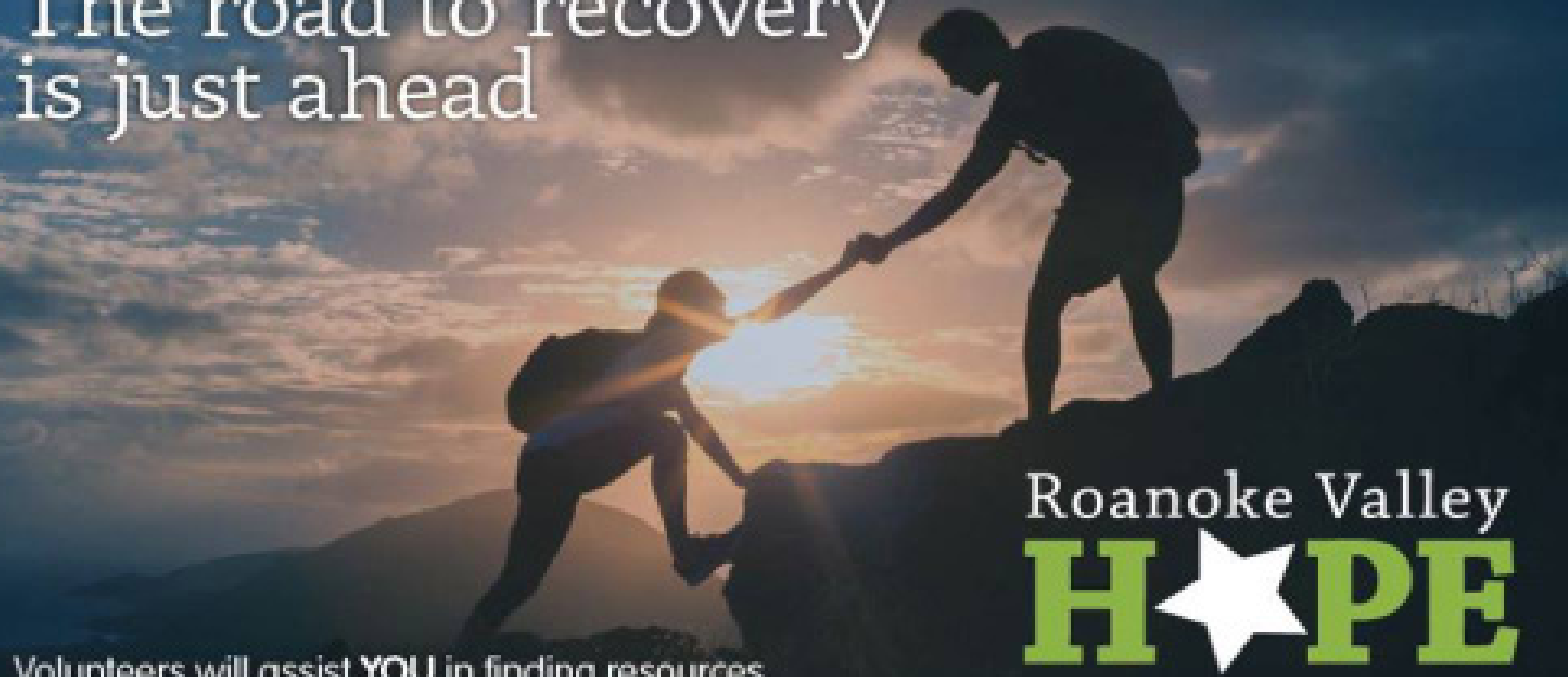
Workforce + Entrepreneurship = Business Enterprise



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The Roanoke Valley HOPE Initiative (RVHI) "with Angels" is designed to provide a gateway to professional resources for persons suffering from SUDs (Substance Use Disorders), in any form (opiates, meth, marijuana, alcohol), within the greater Roanoke area, specifically but not limited to Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Salem, Vinton, Botetourt and Craig, who ask to enter the HOPE program. This program is also designed to inform the community at-large as to the severity of the Opioid epidemic confronting this community

Learn more at www.bradleyfreeclinic.com



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The Dream Initiative has created NFXLTX (NuFocus Latinx), a program that provides services to the Roanoke & Southwestern Virginia area where there are socioeconomically disadvantaged families. These families have a higher probability of being minority, non-English speaking, & immigrant populations. Due to systemic issues within many faucets, these families find themselves in financial struggles often. Our program is established to help address a few of the basic human needs of these families.

SPANISH

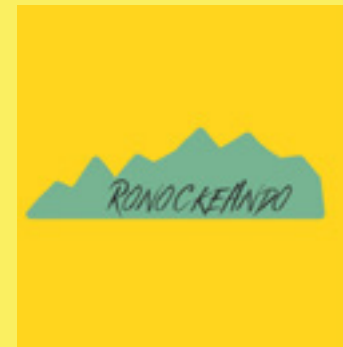
Dream Initiative ha creado NFXLTX (New Focus Latinx), un programa que brinda servicios al área de Roanoke y el suroeste de Virginia, donde hay familias en desventaja socioeconómica.

Estas familias tienen una mayor probabilidad de ser poblaciones minoritarias, no angloparlantes e inmigrantes. Debido a problemas sistemáticos, estas familias se encuentran a menudo en luchas financieras. Nuestro programa se estableció para ayudar a abordar algunas de las necesidades humanas básicas de estas familias.



Lirios Lila was established to support entrepreneurs (most of us started our own mini business with the pandemic)

Lirios Lila se estableció para apoyar a los emprendedores (la mayoría de nosotros comenzamos nuestro propio mini negocio con la pandemia)



Spanish Music Radio Station in the Focus Radio App Developed by local artist and musicians.

Estación de radio de música en español en la aplicación Focus Radio Desarrollada por artistas y músicos locales



The DREAM Festival is focused on supporting Local and international professionals that provide support and entertainment DREAM stands for D:Dance R:Ronockeando E:Entrepreneurs A: Artist M:Music Coming in the fall 2022

El Festival DREAM está enfocado en apoyar a profesionales locales e internacionales que brindan apoyo y entretenimiento DREAM significa D: Dance R: Ronockeando E: Emprendedores A: Artistas M: Música Próximamente en el otoño de 2022



A through Z is developed to help community members that wish to declutter their homes, (furniture, clothing, and household items) with a sustainable idea in mind (to repurpose items that can be used in people's homes)

De la A a la Z se desarrolló para ayudar a los miembros de la comunidad que desean ordenar sus hogares (muebles, ropa y artículos para el hogar) con una idea sostenible en mente (para reutilizar artículos que se pueden usar en los hogares de las personas)



A video blog of a bilingual 5 year old girl that shares her experience of living with 3 brothers with special needs. Creating awareness and support for siblings in the special needs community.

Un video blog de una niña bilingüe de 5 años que comparte su experiencia de convivencia con 3 hermanos con necesidades especiales. Crear conciencia y apoyo para los hermanos en la comunidad con necesidades especiales.



Eco friendly furniture giving a second chance to furniture and having our environment in mind. Rather than throwing away our community benefits from having household items donated to them.

Muebles ecológicos, dando una segunda oportunidad a los muebles previamente usados y teniendo en cuenta nuestro medio ambiente. En lugar de tirarlos a la basura, beneficia a nuestra comunidad al recibir donaciones de artículos para el hogar.



A forum where the Spanish Speaking community can learn about mental illness, special needs, and counseling. We create connections within different programs that provide help with grief and social issues that are imperative to create a supporting environment.

Un foro donde la comunidad hispanohablante puede aprender sobre enfermedades mentales, necesidades especiales y asesoramiento. Creamos conexiones dentro de diferentes programas que brindan ayuda con el duelo y los problemas sociales que son imperativos para crear un entorno de apoyo.



A bilingual business, the closet exchange provides secondhand clothing for all the family. Developed by a family with special needs with children or like we like to call it Different Abilities.

Un negocio bilingüe, el intercambio de guarderropas ofrece ropa de segunda mano para toda la familia. Desarrollado por una familia con niños con necesidades especiales o como nos gusta llamarlo Diferentes Habilidades.



Hecho en casa and Beautifully Homemade are home decorations made from recycled items.

Hecho en casa y Beautifully Homemade son decoraciones para el hogar hechas con artículos reciclados.

Para más información puedes mandar un correo electrónico a nfxltx@gmail.com o comunícate con nosotros por texto o whatsapp al 540-307-1449

Roasted Fresh in Roanoke

Asher's Coffee Beans are high-quality, eco friendly and we specialize in unique blends and trendy single-origin coffees. You can find us online at www.asherscoffee.com. We deliver local and ship internationally. Every order is roasted fresh before arriving and packaged in 100% certified residential compostable bags. Get your Asher's Coffee Beans today and see what a difference it is to drink craft coffee! Brew strong and carry on.



Los granos de café de Asher son de alta calidad, respetuosos con el medio ambiente y nos especializamos en mezclas únicas y cafés de origen único de moda. Puede encontrarnos en línea en www.asherscoffee.com. Entregamos localmente y enviamos internacionalmente. Cada pedido se tuesta fresco antes de llegar y se empaqueta en bolsas compostables residenciales 100% certificadas. Obtenga sus granos de café Asher's hoy y vea la diferencia que es beber café artesanal. Prepara un buen café y sigue adelante con tu día.

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Workforce Entrepreneurship
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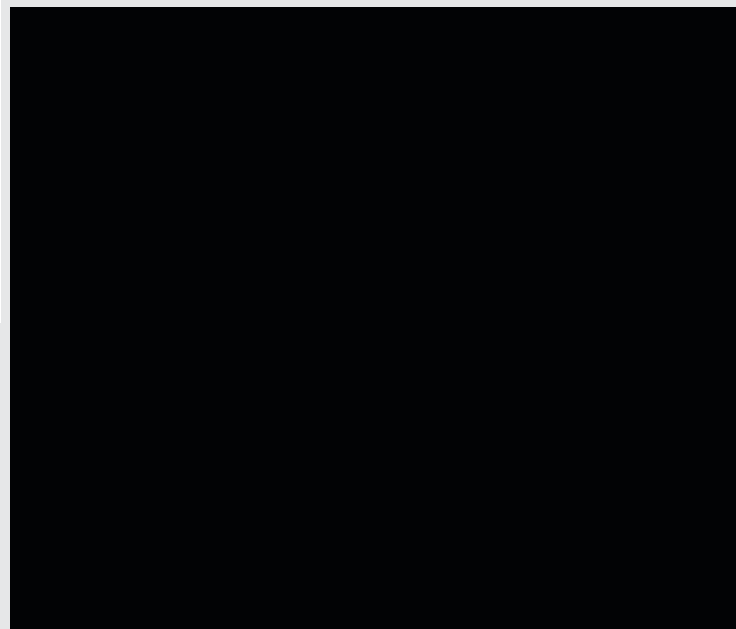


NuMusic By Tommy

Curren\$y releases new project "Still Stoned on Ocean" with production from Roanoke's very own 808-Ray. Young Thug released his new album "Punk" which has features from artists like: A\$AP Rocky, Drake, Future, Post Malone and more. Last month Drake and Kanye West both dropped their new Albums. Drake's sixth studio album "Certified Lover Boy" was an instant classic, breaking records one of which held previously by himself. Kanye West's "Donda" album featured artist like "Jay-Z, Da-Baby, Lil Baby, The Weekend, and more. With all the releases from music's biggest names, it's safe to say music lovers will be greatly entertained. Check out the new releases on Focused Radio and let us know what you think.



FLEMING-ROSE BUILDING





Steve Martin

Business Advocate

About me

I have close to 30 years in the Financial Services Industry. I also have Restaurant Management and Foodservice sales experience. I love to help people succeed.

Steve Martin

- 919-417-7470
- steve.martin@getbeyond.com
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CALL



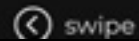
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