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VIRGINIA BEACH LEARN ABOUT MAYORIAL CANDIDATE SABRINA WOOTEN

TAISH C. STEELE IS MAKING A
HUGE IMPACT IN EDUCATION

WOMEN'S SPORTS ON THE RISE

MEDIA PIE INCREASING MEANS MORE MONEY FOR THE INDUSTRY



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
JUSTICE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM CENTER

CULTURE | BUSINESS | ORIGINATORS

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THE FOCUS MAGAZINE

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Years of The Focus Magazine



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THE TRUTH IS

"The Focus" Magazine is a rising star among regional publications that reflects a new and balanced perspective on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Business, and Community. We stay FOCUSED through support from communities that want to know more about what's happening around them.

Each month "The Focus" spotlights small businesses, entrepreneurs, community events, political topics fashion and the arts. With our headquarters located in the heart of the Star City (Roanoke, VA), we are cultivating markets in Richmond, 7 cities, and Northern Virginia. With our media presence, we are poised to stay relevant and influence what people are talking about and doing.

HELLO

The Focus Magazine has been a voice for a group of innovators to project the positivity we desire to see, and make it manifest

I'M TOM A. PAGE-ROSE

May is full of giving honor. Of course we know the value of saluting our mothers for their commitment and dedication to serving our families. We also know that May is Military Appreciation month for their service and commitment to our country.

We learn so much from our mothers. This month we have a story from a mother who was inspired by her mother and her mother to do fashion at a high level. Another story from a mother that has made huge strides in the education space for the Richmond community as well as information from a mother who is a partner in one of the biggest investment firms in the world.

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Sabrina Wooten: A Trailblazer Transforming Virginia Beach

In the bustling realm of Virginia Beach politics, one figure stands out as a beacon of hope and progress – Sabrina Wooten. With an impressive background in community organizing, advocacy, and public service, Wooten has

emerged as a prominent and influential figure in the local political scene. Her mayoral campaign offers a fresh departure from traditional politics, presenting a vision of inclusivity, transparency, and advancement that

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deeply resonates with the residents of Virginia Beach.

Sabrina Wooten’s journey in public service reflects an unwavering commitment to social justice, equality, and empowering communities. As an impassioned advocate for underserved populations, she has tirelessly fought for affordable housing, educational equity, and access to quality healthcare. Her tireless work in these areas has garnered widespread recognition and support from a diverse range of constituents who view her as a trusted voice for the voiceless.

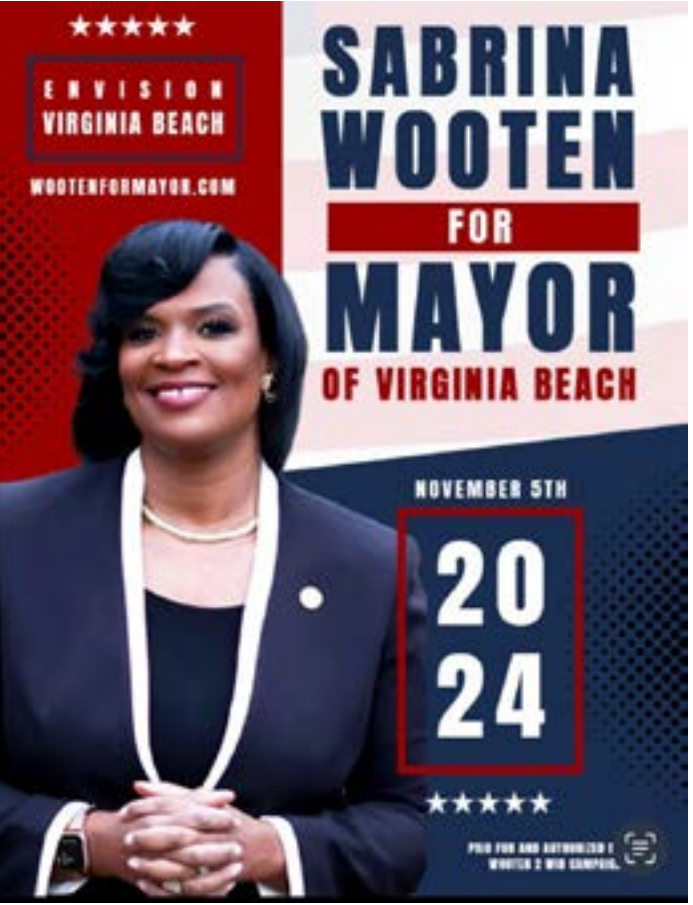
Transparency and accountability are the cornerstones of Sabrina Wooten’s political philosophy. Throughout her illustrious career, she has been a vocal champion of open communication, ethical governance, and responsive leadership. By fostering a culture of trust and collaboration, she has cultivated strong relationships with community members, stakeholders, and fellow policymakers, setting an exemplary standard for public service in Virginia Beach.

As a mayoral candidate, Sabrina Wooten has crafted an all-encompassing platform that addresses the most pressing issues facing the city. From fostering economic development and job creation to spearheading infrastructure improvements and championing environmental sustainability, her policy proposals are firmly rooted in an intimate understanding of the needs and aspirations of Virginia Beach residents. By prioritizing initiatives that promote social equity, civic engagement, and public safety, she exhibits a profound awareness of the challenges facing the community and an unwavering determination to confront them head-on.

One of Sabrina Wooten’s greatest strengths as a leader lies in her ability to unite people and bridge divides. Through her collaborative ap-

proach to governance, she has demonstrated an exceptional capacity to build consensus, inspire collective action, and drive positive change. Her inclusive leadership style, coupled with her strategic vision for the future, positions her as a transformative force in Virginia Beach politics, capable of uniting the entire city around a shared agenda of progress and prosperity.

Sabrina Wooten’s mayoral candidacy presents a unique opportunity for Virginia Beach to embrace a new era of leadership and revitaliza-



tion. With her unwavering commitment to public service, tireless advocacy for marginalized communities, and dedication to ethical governance, she embodies the qualities of a visionary leader ready to steer Virginia Beach towards a brighter, more inclusive future. By electing Sabrina Wooten as mayor, the residents of Virginia Beach have the chance to shape a more equitable, vibrant, and sustainable city that

reflects the values and aspirations of its diverse population.



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HAS TIKTOK BECOME OUR MORAL COMPASS

by Monica Manns, Ed.D, MEd, MRC

P. Diddy, R. Kelly, and Bill Cosby are examples of the worst of us, but unfortunate enough, they are also examples of the best of us. Collectively, these three men have had an impact on the media and music of the black community during the past seven decades. In each of the three instances, we were aware of or heard rumors about their demons, yet we chose to ignore them. It is not my responsibility to engage in the salacious advertisement of their atrocities; every social media outlet makes it available. The media and documentaries show a keen interest in following the rise and fall of individuals. It's interesting to note that I am eagerly anticipating documentaries about Harvey Weinstein or Ed Buck, the latter a prominent political donor whom was found guilty of murdering two men for whom he offered drugs in exchange for sexual favors, and it's suspected that there were many more victims. Both victimizers whose horrific acts went on for years with public knowledge and no accountability. Not only do these misogynistic acts transcend racial and sexual boundaries, but they also make me question the moral compass of America, a country I both love and hold accountable.

If we have one, where does it live, and what are we doing to ensure the continuation?

People used to believe that biblical teaching served as the foundation for the United States' moral compass. Increasingly, Americans do not attend church and choose to identify as spiritual rather than religious. This is potentially due to the fact that many religious institutions have been known to champion vices and profit over divine providence. These religious institutions have faced scandals and controversies that undermine their moral authority. High-profile cases of financial misconduct, sexual abuse, and political entanglements have led to disillusionment among congregants and the broader public. Americans are forming their moral values based on a combination of personal experiences, societal norms, and ethical principles rather than solely rely-



ing on religious teachings.

The American Constitution, a document her-

alded for its foundational principles of liberty, justice, and equality, paradoxically chooses to preserve the guilt of chattel slavery by not requiring actionable engagement in public reconciliation or restitution. This unresolved historical burden reveals a profound moral dissonance: while the Constitution “talks the talk” of high ideals, it does not “walk the walk” in addressing the systemic inequalities that persist. The contemporary actions of the Supreme Court, influenced by political and economic forces, further underscore the nation’s wavering moral grounding, revealing a chasm between its aspirational rhetoric and the lived realities of many Americans.

If moral grounding existed, American educational institutions would not be able to sustain its continuation. They no longer teach character or moral education, and many states have chosen to demonize social-emotional learning, which fundamentally fosters empathy and kindness. Conversely, we opt to teach history that makes one group comfortable and another helpless, or we choose to overwhelmingly provide instruction on material that is not applicable or relevant to the lives of 21st century students, all while restricting opportunities for critical thinking and daring discourse.

The continuation of the teachings of an American moral compass, if it exists, is likely less being taught by our elders. Elders (grandparents), more so than in the past, are “outside,” partaking in activities we were often unable to engage in during our 20s, 30s, and 40s. The choices and vices of others often compelled many mothers, and occasionally fathers, to assume the role of both parents. Stable single parents and two-parent households often find themselves responsible not only for themselves and their children, but also for the children left behind due to the choices and vices of others. They are tired. Other grandparents, none of whom I know, are participating in activities

such as pickleball and golf at curated senior living communities, which are known to have some of the highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases and questionable political affiliations. Collectively, the lack of availability and questionable choices may significantly reduce their capacity to actively contribute to the continuation of our American moral compass.

When speaking with young people, a signif-

icant number of them indicate that the knowledge they obtain from TikTok serves as their moral compass. In accordance with your algorithm, TikTok grants them unrestricted and consumable access to unbridled information. One possible explanation for Congress’ desire to prohibit TikTok could be that they don’t want to be subjected to a moral compass; it’s easier to engage in illicit activities when no one is watching or willing to publicly call you out.

If nothing I mention in this piece is a reflection of you, then please disregard my opinion or our cultures morally deficient behavior and call out the next predator instead of maintaining our silence and waiting for a Tik-tok reveal.



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A Full Circle Moment

by Erica Jenkins



In the heart of Roanoke, a vibrant celebration of fashion and inclusivity takes center stage each year at Roanoke Fashion Week. As the CEO and producer, I am proud to say that our commitment to diversity and inclusion is more than just a mission statement—it's the very fabric of our events. Since our inception in 2019, we have welcomed individuals from all backgrounds to participate in our showcases, creating a platform that reflects the rich tapestry of our commu-

nity.

The story of Roanoke Fashion Week is deeply personal and rooted in a legacy of fashion and entrepreneurship. My journey began at the age of 15, when my mother, one of the first African-American models in Roanoke, introduced me to the world of modeling. My mother was a true trailblazer—not only did she grace the runways, modeling in New York, Philadelphia, Rome and Milan,

we set the culture...

but she was also an accomplished artist and entrepreneur. In 1985, she created hand-painted T-shirts and took them to a trade show in New York City, where Macy's picked them up. Her influence was profound, shaping my understanding of the fashion industry and igniting a passion that would drive my future endeavors.

However, the legacy of fashion in our family doesn't start with my mother. My grandmother, a local fashion maven, opened a hat shop on Melrose Avenue in Roanoke in 1988. While my great-grandmother ran the shop during the day, my grandmother, who worked as a nurse at the VA, meticulously crafted all the hats and managed the business. Fashion has been instilled in me since birth, with each generation contributing to our rich heritage. I know my grandmother would be so proud to see how our family's passion for fashion has evolved and flourished.

Throughout my teenage years, I participated in various photoshoots and fashion events in Roanoke and Philadelphia gaining invaluable experience and insight. Later in life, after transitioning from modeling to producing fashion shows, I began organizing my own events in 2017, entirely self-funded. Determined to create a space that celebrated diversity and creativity, each show became a labor of love and a testament to the belief that fashion should be inclusive and accessible to all.

The full circle moment came when my mother and I walked the runway together at this year's fashion week event. It was a powerful experience, seeing her command the stage with the same grace and confidence that had inspired me years ago. Even as she continued to model, she embodied the very spirit of innovation and resilience that Roanoke Fashion Week

stands for. Watching her "slay the runway" was a reminder of the legacy we are building together, a celebration of both our individual journeys and our shared history.

Roanoke Fashion Week has grown over the past five years, but our core values remain unchanged. We continue to champion diversity, ensuring that our runway showcases talent from every corner of our community. From emerging designers to seasoned professionals, we provide a platform for everyone to shine. Our events are a vibrant mix of creativity, culture, and collaboration, reflecting the dynamic spirit of Roanoke.



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The Rise of Women’s Sports: Fueling Investor Interest and Marketing Efforts

Nicole Pullen Ross, New York Region Head of Private Wealth Management and Head of Sports and Entertainment Solutions at Goldman Sachs, joins ‘Squawk on the Street’ to discuss whether money flow will change how leagues will change women’s sports, if the increased buyers will grow the pie for the rights money, and more.

When asked this, Mrs. Pullen Ross confirmed it was “a no brainer.” She added “if you look at the media rights

which is the hallmark of how valuations are formed and how investors think about growth, it’s pretty extraordinary.” Eloquently breaking down how live sports “brings us all together” it made us want to look further into this subject.

In recent years, women’s sports have experienced a remarkable surge in popularity and recognition. The once-underrepresented sector is now capturing the atten-

tion of investors and marketing professionals alike. The growing interest in women’s sports is not only a testament to the incredible skill and talent of female athletes but also a reflection of the societal shift towards gender equality and inclusivity. This article explores how women’s sports are inspiring investors to put more energy into marketing both professional and emerging sports, leading to unprecedented growth and opportunities.



1. Shattering Stereotypes and Inspiring Change:

Women’s sports have long been overshadowed by their male counterparts, but that narrative is rapidly changing. Female athletes are shattering stereotypes, proving their capabilities, and inspiring generations to challenge gender norms. As the world witnesses remarkable performances in sports like soccer, basketball, tennis, and

more, investors are recognizing the immense potential for growth and the untapped market that women’s sports represent.

2. Increasing Media Coverage and Visibility:

One of the key factors driving the surge in investor interest is the increased media coverage and visibility of women’s sports. Major sporting events, such as the FIFA Women’s World Cup, the Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA), and the Women’s Tennis Association (WTA) tournaments, have attracted substantial viewership and garnered significant media attention. This exposure has led to heightened brand visibility, making women’s sports an attractive platform for marketing and sponsorships.

3. Growing Fanbase and Consumer Potential:

Women’s sports have amassed a considerable and dedicated fanbase that cannot be ignored. As more fans show their

support by attending games, engaging on social media, and purchasing merchandise, it becomes evident that there is a substantial consumer market for women’s sports. Investors recognize this potential and are eager to tap into this growing fanbase, leading to increased marketing efforts and investment in the sector.

4. Sponsorships and Partnerships:

Investors are not only interested in funding women’s sports but also in establishing long-term partnerships and sponsorships. These collaborations not only provide financial support to athletes but also help promote and market women’s sports to a wider audience. As more corporate sponsors recognize the value of aligning their brands with women’s sports, athletes and teams benefit from increased exposure and resources, further propelling the growth of the sector.

5. Inspiring the Next Generation:

The rise of women’s sports is not only about the present but also about inspiring future generations. As young girls witness powerful role models excelling in their chosen sports, they are encouraged to pursue their own athletic dreams. The increased investment and marketing efforts in women’s sports help create a positive cycle by attracting more talent, improving training opportunities, and ultimately ensuring the sustained growth and success of women’s sports.

“The fact Women’s Soccer signed a \$240 plus billion contract over four years,more than 40 times the last deal, I think the trend is following the enthusiasm we’re seeing.”

The surge in investor interest and marketing efforts surrounding women’s sports is a pivotal moment for female athletes and the sports industry as a whole. With increased media coverage, growing fanbases, and corporate sponsorships, wom-



WATCH NICOLE PULLEN ROSS FULL INTERVIEW ON CNBC

en’s sports are entering a new era of recognition, appreciation, and support. This momentum not only ensures the continued growth of professional women’s sports but also nurtures emerging sports and provides opportunities for athletes at all levels. As investors recognize the potential in this untapped market, women’s sports are poised to become a driving force in the sports industry, inspiring generations and creating a more inclusive and equitable sporting landscape.



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NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH:

A Reverent Tribute to the Sacrifices of Our Heroes

In a world where the hustle and bustle of urban life often overshadow the sacrifices of our military heroes, National Military Appreciation Month (NMAM) stands as a poignant reminder of the selfless dedication of those who have served in the armed forces. As a disabled veteran myself, I take immense pride in having served my country, and this comprehensive article aims to shed light on the significance of NMAM from the perspective of someone who understands the profound impact military service has on individuals and society as a whole. By exploring the history, purpose, and unique aspects of NMAM, we can truly appreciate the sacrifices made by our heroes.

The origins of NMAM can be traced back to the establishment of Armed Forces Appreciation by President Harry S. Truman in 1950. During a time of heightened tensions and the need to honor those who had served in World War II, President Truman designated a single day for the nation to pay tribute to the armed forces. Over time, this observance evolved and expanded, eventually culminating in the establishment of NMAM.

NMAM is a month-long observance held every May, dedicated to honoring and recognizing the contributions of our military servicemen and women. Its purpose is to foster a deep sense of gratitude, respect, and apprecia-

tion for the sacrifices made by service members and their families. For disabled veterans like myself, NMAM serves as a reminder that our dedication and sacrifices are not forgotten.

While both NMAM and Veterans Day pay tribute to our military heroes, they have distinct differences in observance and purpose. Veterans Day, observed on November 11th, commemorates all veterans, living or deceased, who have served in the United States Armed Forces. It is a day to honor their service and sacrifices. NMAM, on the other hand, is a month-long observance dedicated to recognizing the contributions of military personnel, providing an extended period for the nation to express its gratitude.

Disabled veterans face unique challenges and often require additional support and recognition. NMAM serves as a platform for advocacy, drawing attention to the challenges faced by disabled veterans and promoting awareness of the resources and support available to them. It is crucial to acknowledge the sacrifices made by disabled veterans and ensure they receive the care and assistance they deserve.

Throughout NMAM, various events and activities are organized to honor and celebrate our military heroes. Parades and exhibitions showcase the rich history and traditions of our armed forces, while community outreach programs provide opportunities for civilians to express their gratitude. Wreath-laying ceremonies at memorials and cemeteries pay tribute to fallen soldiers, emphasizing the solemnity and reverence of their sacrifice. Educational initiatives and veterans' employment opportunities also help bridge the gap between military and civilian life, ensuring veterans have a smooth transition into civilian society.

NMAM has a profound impact on our society in several

ways. Firstly, it fosters patriotism and national unity by reminding us of the values and ideals our military defends. Secondly, it raises awareness about military service and the sacrifices made by our heroes, promoting a deeper understanding and appreciation within the civilian population. Thirdly, NMAM supports active duty service members and veterans by providing them with the recognition and resources they need. Lastly, it strengthens the bonds between civilian and military communities, encouraging mutual support and understanding.

National Military Appreciation Month is a powerful tribute to the sacrifices of our military heroes. From its historical



origins to its impact on society, NMAM serves as a reminder of the selfless dedication and sacrifice of those who have served in the armed forces. As a disabled veteran, I am proud to have served my country, and NMAM holds a special place in my heart. Let us continue to support and recognize our armed forces, ensuring that their sacrifices are never forgotten.

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Fighting 4 Equity

“I want to inspire other leaders, encourage others to get more involved with education, and understand how voting influences decisions that impact our children.”

Taisha C. Steele is an extraordinary force in the field of diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice (DEIBJ), as well as mental health. With an impressive career spanning over twenty years, she has become a trusted ally, leader, and expert in these crucial ar-

eas. Taisha’s passion lies in collaborating with clients to cultivate corporate cultures that wholeheartedly embrace empathy, diversity, and varied perspectives.

The Focus was fortunate to speak with Mrs. Steele about her role and thank her for the impact she has been having. In our conversation we learned, when working with organizations, Taisha prioritizes relationships and service, crafting customized strategies that seamlessly integrate DEIBJ principles into their practices. She understands the importance of aligning with each client’s unique brand, mission, and objectives, ensuring that her solutions are as effective as possible.

Taisha’s track record speaks for itself. She has designed impactful workshops, dialogues, and strategies for senior management, people managers, and staff, acting as a catalyst for learning, reflection, awareness, and community-building. Her approach champions compassionate workplaces and fosters transparency, encouraging clients to extend grace to one another during periods of growth and learning.

Before her current role, Taisha held influential positions in the public school sector, where she spearheaded inclusive strategies to create equitable and inclusive havens for children. Being a part of the community was one her biggest joys. “I was fortunate to have educators living right in my community going up which aided in my success...” was a sentiment she shared.

As the inaugural senior equity advisor for Pearson, the top learning company in the world, she played a pivotal role in advancing DEIBJ both internally and externally. Taisha’s dedication to education extends to her role as an adjunct professor at Bluefield University, where she teaches courses on trauma-informed schools and the intersectionality of trauma.

Even during the challenging times of the COVID pandemic, Taisha continued to make a difference. She served on the Virginia Department of Education’s Task Force on Equity and Reopening Schools, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to fostering inclusive education. Her efforts did not go unnoticed as she was awarded the prestigious title of 2020 Virginia Counselor of the Year.

Taisha’s expertise extends beyond her professional achievements. She actively serves on multiple boards, leveraging her knowledge and influence to further advocate for diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice. Armed with a master’s degree in counseling and an education specialist degree in education leadership and policy, Taisha is currently pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership with a focus on DEIBJ. Her dedication to driving positive change and creating inclusive environments places her at the forefront of her field.

What was? What is?
What could be?

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First Baptist Church Gainsboro

June 19th
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The Entrepreneur's Guide to Success:

3 Essential Factors for Thriving in Business

Embarking on an entrepreneurial journey is an exciting and challenging endeavor. To ensure your success, it is crucial to understand and embrace the essential factors that contribute to thriving as an entrepreneur. This comprehensive guide will delve into three fundamental elements necessary for entrepreneurial success: unwavering belief, a strong network, and adaptability and persistence. By mastering these concepts, you can equip yourself with the tools needed to navigate the unpredictable landscape of entrepreneurship.

1. Steadfast Belief:

One of the fundamental pillars of entrepreneurial success is unwavering belief. You must have confidence not only in your product or service but also in yourself. Believe in the value and uniqueness of your offering, allowing your passion and conviction to drive your entrepreneurial journey. This belief will not only inspire you to overcome obstacles but also instill confidence in potential customers and investors.

- Cultivate a positive mindset: Adopting a positive mindset is essential for maintaining belief in yourself and your abilities. Surround yourself with positive influences and engage in self-affirmation practices to reinforce your confidence.
- Embrace failure as a stepping stone: Understand that failure is a natural part of the entrepreneurial journey. Learn from your mistakes and use them as opportunities for growth and improvement.

2. Strong Network:

Building a robust network is crucial for entrepreneurial success. Surrounding yourself with a supportive community of friends, customers, and advisors provides invaluable resources, guidance, and opportunities.

- Foster relationships with mentors and advisors: Seek out experienced individuals who can provide guidance and advice based on their own entrepreneurial journeys. Their insights can help you navigate challenges and make informed decisions.
- Cultivate a strong customer base: Focus on building strong relationships with your customers. Provide exceptional service, listen to feedback, and establish loyalty programs to nurture customer loyalty and encourage word-of-mouth recommendations.
- Collaborate with like-minded entrepreneurs: Networking with fellow entrepreneurs allows for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and potential partnerships. Attend industry events, join professional associations, and engage with online communities to expand your network.



3. Adaptability and Persistence:

In the fast-paced world of entrepreneurship, adaptability and persistence are key to staying ahead of the curve.

- Embrace change and pivot when necessary: Be open to adapting your business model, product, or service in response to market demands or unforeseen circumstances. Flexibility and the ability to pivot will help you stay relevant and seize new opportunities.
- Persevere in the face of challenges: Entrepreneurship is a journey filled with obstacles. Perseverance is essential for overcoming setbacks and staying focused on your goals. Develop resilience, learn from setbacks, and maintain a long-term perspective.

To thrive as an entrepreneur, it is vital to cultivate an unwavering belief in yourself and your product or service. Build a strong network of supporters, including mentors, customers, and fellow entrepreneurs. Lastly, embrace adaptability and persistence, as these qualities will allow you to navigate challenges and seize opportunities. By incorporating these fundamental elements into your entrepreneurial journey, you can set yourself up for long-term success and fulfillment. Remember, entrepreneurship is an ongoing learning process, so remain open to growth and continuous improvement.



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

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Steve@luminapayments.com



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in the library

Nick

Kids Soar
in Roanoke
Candace



Meet the
Coach
Coach Wilson



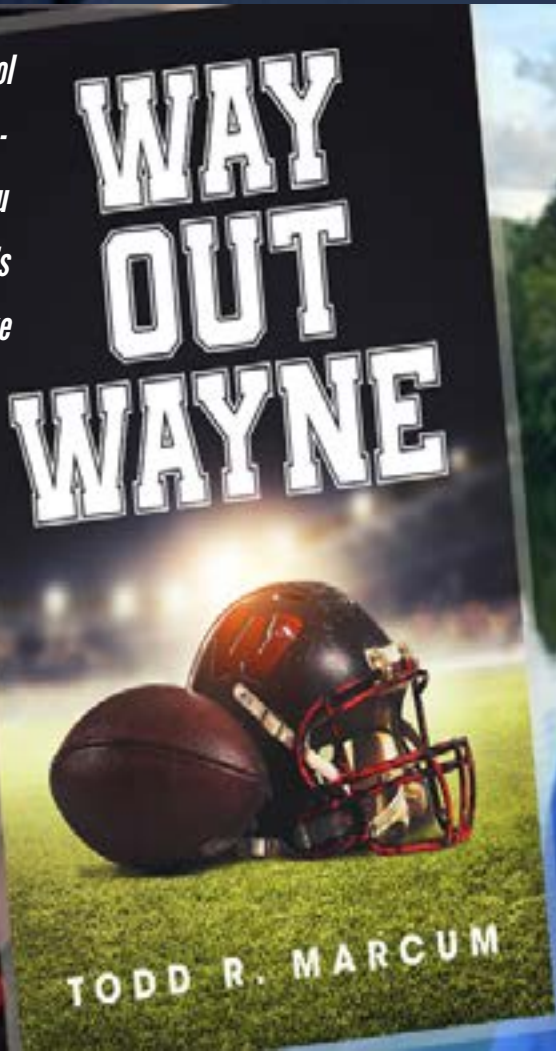

Joe Cobb
FOR MAYOR

PAID FOR AND AUTHORIZED BY JOE COBB FOR MAYOR

Good morning! I wrote a book. If you like high school football or a fun coming-of-age story with an Appalachian flair, you'll probably like it. If you don't, you probably won't. Take a look to see if it's for you. It's priced at 25% off during the launch. Thanks to Mike Powers for the photo.

WAY OUT WAYNE

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More Information :
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