

# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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## AvDyne Aeroservices, Black-owned aircraft maintenance company



*Jerome Hodges, President & CEO (center), AvDyne Aeroservices, an African American aircraft maintenance repair services company at BWI, hosted a Flight Day Picnic for Maryland youth. AvDyne provides aircraft maintenance at Dulles International and Reagan National Airport. Hodges also serves as president of the East Cost Chapter of the Tuskegee Airman. (See article on page 9) Courtesy Photo*

# How one family is conquering Sickle Cell Disease

By Stacy M. Brown

Jasmine Winston is studying biochemistry and spanish at Ohio State University with a primary goal in mind. The 21-year-old, who battles sickle cell disease, hopes to work as a doctor one day and learn spanish so that she can help others with the painful illness.

“Having sickle cell gave me the motivation to be a hematology oncologist, so I knew that I had to study science,” Jasmine told the Baltimore Times. “I study spanish because I know that sickle cell really affects all people of color, and I am hoping to go to Latin America and study the different variants.”

Jasmine’s mother, JJ Winston, has written two insightful books about sickle cell disease— “The Anniversary” and “The Commemoration.”

“My father passed away from sickle cell disease, and after he passed, I learned that my grandmother, two of my aunts, and my uncle passed away from the disease,” JJ Winston remarked.

“When I was dating my husband, I



*Jasmine Winston, age 21 battles sickle cell disease. The college senior is studying biochemistry and spanish at Ohio State University in hopes of becoming a doctor one day to help people of color. Her mother JJ Winston, who is an attorney and long-time sickle cell disease advocate has written two books to raise awareness about the disease.*  
Courtesy Photo/Winston Family

learned that he was completely unaware [that he carried the gene],” Winston continued. “It was important for me to raise awareness, so I wrote a novel to try and do that.”

Both of Winston’s books are available at Amazon.com and [www.novelistjjwinston.com](http://www.novelistjjwinston.com).

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sickle cell disease affects approximately 100,000 Americans. It occurs among about 1 out of every 365 African American births and about 1 out of every 16,300 Hispanic-American births.

Nearly one in 13 African American babies are born with the sickle cell trait. “My husband and I worked really hard to ensure that Jasmine is a strong woman and that she has every opportunity available to her,” Winston asserted, noting the struggle her daughter— and caregivers— face each day.

“If you have a child with sickle cell, it doesn’t mean it’s the end of the world,” Winston declared. “Your child is still a wonderful child who will reach his or

her goal, and you will, as a parent, help them.

“It’s so important that caregivers don’t burn out. Don’t make everything sickle cell. Take time for yourself. Take an hour, read a book, meditate, or just get away from the situation for a moment. If you have one child with sickle cell and others who don’t have it, take time for them too. That is important.”

Jasmine added that her disease has helped make her stronger.

“I have a high pain tolerance, and I know how to manage my pain,” Jasmine said. “Having sickle cell also forces the family to be a support group, and that is so important to have.”

Jasmine describes her pain as being similar to accidentally stepping on Legos. She said she feels pain all over, and visits to the emergency room are frequent.

“My doctors are really positive and helpful,” Jasmine remarked. “When I’m in the hospital— they know I’m studying to be a doctor— they help me with my homework and help me study for quizzes. That’s why it’s also important to be open with those around you about how you are feeling.”

The family makes sure to encourage others who are dealing with sickle cell. “It’s been an ordeal,” Winston reflected. “But it’s also a beautiful thing because Jasmine is such a beautiful person. I always tell her that I’d rather have her with sickle cell than not have her at all.”

Follow the family’s journey at [www.novelistjjwinston.com](http://www.novelistjjwinston.com), where JJ Winston offers free monthly newsletters and links to a YouTube page with a sickle cell challenge.

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# Guest Editorials/Commentary

## FEMA changing rules that deprive African Americans of crucial aid

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

Historically, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), relied on deeds to prove that land belonged to disaster victims before it sent relief funds to individuals.

The guidelines denied aid to many African American applicants whose homes or land were inherited informally without written wills. But, as first reported by NBC News, the rules quietly have changed.

As floodwaters and the after-effects of Hurricane Ida continue to ravaged Louisiana, Mississippi, and has now wreaked havoc in the northeast, FEMA officials revealed plans to NBC to announce significant changes in how they would verify homeownership for disaster relief applications.

FEMA says its mission is to assist those who inherited property without a will.

“What we’re trying to do is make sure that we understand each individual situation is unique and that we need not have a one-size-fits-all approach,” FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell told the news outlet.

“We’re going to continue to try to improve our program and make additional changes. Some of them we can do right away, like this. Some of them will require some regulatory change,” she said. “But we are really driving hard to make these changes.”

African Americans, particularly those in southern states, have routinely had difficulty proving property ownership.

Even without a damaging natural disaster, the Gullah Geechee community of St. Helena Island told the Black Press last year that they were fighting to protect their lands and the legacy left by their ancestors, who toiled for lifetimes under the brutal oppression of slavery.

Local tax officials held an auction of some of the property on the island belonging to families.

Officials cited delinquent tax payments that have accumulated over the years.

The descendants who have lived in the Gullah Geechee community, which extends the coastal areas of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, possessed deeds but lacked titles to their properties.

Many in the community discovered that their ancestors left no wills and never possessed a title. That was primarily because of oppressive laws.

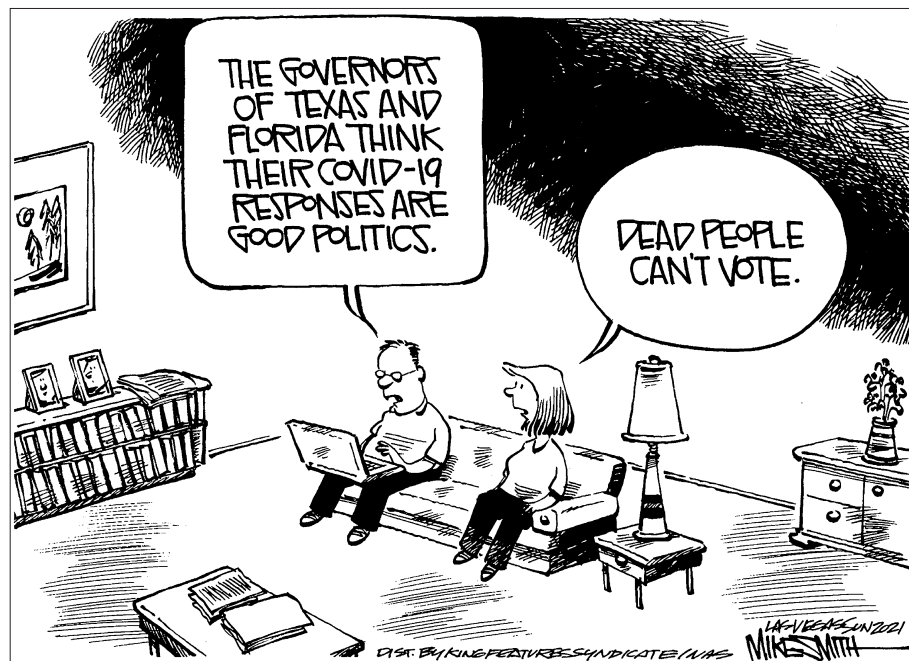
The freed slaves were deprived of an education and at the mercy of white men who sold the land for as little as \$1.25 per acre and never provided appropriate sale documentation.

“The heirs don’t have a title in their names,” said Sará Reynolds Green, an activist, and farmer who raises produce on the St. Helena plot of land passed down throughout her family’s generations.

While FEMA’s new rules don’t necessarily apply to St. Helena, they should provide a better playing field for African Americans affected by hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and other disasters.

“Updated guidelines will also expand the options for paperwork renters can submit to prove that they live at affected properties,” the NBC News team reported.

According to the report, “in addition to a written lease or rent receipts, renters will now be able to submit documents such as their car registration and letters from local schools or nonprofits. People in mobile homes will also have the flexibility to submit a letter from the property’s owner.”



## Community Affairs

### Project Restore applications open

Baltimore— The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is administering \$25 million to provide financial support to Maryland’s new or expanding businesses to help incentivize commercial investment in vacant retail and commercial properties.

Project Restore will provide two grant opportunities for businesses that plan on opening or expanding into previously vacant spaces:

**Rental Assistance Grant:** The maximum grant request amount is \$30,000 for rent for one year (rental payment up to \$2,500 per month) for qualified small business with 50 or fewer employees (full time equivalents).

Applicant’s monthly rent can exceed \$2,500, but the maximum that will be paid by the Rental Assistance Grant will be \$2,500 per month for one year.

**Business Operations Grant:** The maximum grant award amount is \$250,000 for one or two years for businesses that generate sales and use tax. Grant funds can be used for activities and costs related to sustaining and growing the business such as staff costs, capital improvements, marketing, inventory and supplies, utilities and the like and cannot be used for executive salaries or bonuses. Grant awards will be paid quarterly and will be based on sales and use tax generated by and submitted to the state in Calendar Year 2022.

For more information, visit:  
<https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Pages/ProjectRestore>.

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## My Personal History with the New York City World Trade Center

By Regi Taylor

I have a very personal history with the World Trade Center towers that motivates my efforts to commemorate the site and the loss of life that occurred there 20 years ago.

I received a telephone call from my eldest son late in the evening of September 10, 2001, to share that he would be commencing work-study with the World Trade Language Institute at One World Trade Center's 41 Park Row location across the street. He was invited as a Languages, Cultures and World Trade major at nearby Pace University.

Eight days earlier, over the Labor Day weekend, I returned my son to Pace to register for his sophomore year. While we were waiting for him to complete the registration process, my two younger sons and myself decided to do some sight-seeing from nearby Windows On The World on the 110th floor of the World Trade Center.

After the dizzying ride to the top of One World Trade Center on the nonstop express elevator to the dining room, which had not yet opened for business that Sunday afternoon, the concierge was kind enough to allow us a few minutes to enjoy the breathtaking views

One World Trade Center, 55th floor, to translate the term into a dozen languages for a \$100 fee.

Subsequently, I was successful in lobbying members of congress to support the campaign to encourage greater racial, ethnic, religious, cultural,

leave later that week, Wednesday, to catch up on work that was getting behind schedule. My wife vetoed that idea and went into labor for real that Thursday, February 25. As the sun rose that next morning, February 26, my wife was delivering our second son.

Returning home just before 9 a.m. that morning, I literally passed out from exhaustion. When I awakened around 1:30 p.m. I went into immediate shock to discover the World Trade Center had been bombed. Worse, I would arrive some days around noon, the approximate time of the explosion, to avoid the morning rush, than work as late as 9 p.m. to avoid the evening rush.

I had a close call on February 26, 1993, when the WTC was first attacked. My son had a close call on September 11, 2001, when the WTC was attacked.

Many years prior to these events, New York City's World Trade Center had loomed large in my life. It was a favorite destination for me and my wife during our courtship and early marriage.

In those days, the late 1980's, we regularly enjoyed free, live lunchtime and Friday evening jazz mini-concerts during the Spring and Summer months, whenever possible, in the plaza at the base of the twin towers.

On other occasions we passed through the WTC, arriving from our New Jersey home via PATH en route to free world class live jazz concerts held Friday evenings during warm weather on the pier at the nearby South Street Seaport, in lower Manhattan. The towers were a living part of New York City. We will forever mourn the loss.

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***“Serendipity intervened and he was not present when the planes attacked the towers due to setting his alarm for 7 p.m. instead of 7 a.m. and oversleeping. Although he never left home we were not able to confirm his status for more than six hours due to loss of communications in the region when the antenna atop One World Trade Center was destroyed with the tower.”***

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from the doomed iconic restaurant, where I pointed out landmarks in the boroughs and New Jersey to my eight- and four-year-olds.

On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, my son was due for his first class that morning by 9 a.m.

Serendipity intervened and he was not present when the planes attacked the towers due to setting his alarm for 7 p.m. instead of 7 a.m. and oversleeping. Although he never left home we were not able to confirm his status for more than six hours due to loss of communications in the region when the antenna atop One World Trade Center was destroyed with the tower.

Ten years earlier, I was so inspired with a design I had created one afternoon in Central Park to encourage racial amelioration in New York City, GOLDEN OpportUNITY FOR UNITY, that I contracted the services of the World Trade Language Institute, at

and gender diversity in New York. One congressman compared GOLDEN OpportUNITY FOR UNITY to the PEACE SIGN. I was able to secure the endorsement of one of the world's premiere sculptors as an unpaid advisor for this campaign.

Nine years before the World Trade Center was destroyed, 1993, I was making a weekly commute from Baltimore to New York City to work as Artist-In-Residence at the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding in midtown Manhattan.

My daily commute from New Jersey took the PATH train from Newark to the World Trade Center. From the WTC I would take the E train to Herald Square, then a one block walk to my office at 34th & 5th, opposite the Empire State Building.

After my pregnant wife had experienced a false labor early in the week of February 21, I decided I should

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# Coach Allison proudly looks forward to the ‘triple threat’ on Virginia fight card

By Stacy M. Brown

Mack Allison III says he recently experienced a treat that he won't soon forget.

After a challenging evening of practicing, the owner of the now-famous Time2Grind Boxing Gym in Northeast Baltimore has routinely provided a ride home to the young men he has trained. However, on one particular recent night, as he was closing up the gym with the three young men he trained, Allison witnessed something that made him smile.

“All three of them got in their own vehicles and drove home,” Allison recalled. “It just made me sigh and smile.”

The three— Mack Papi Allison IV; Tyrell “Iron Soldier” Boyd; and Malik Titus— will all appear on the same card in Sterling, Virginia, on Saturday, September 25, 2021 at the Dulles Sportsplex.

Allison IV will step into the ring as a lightweight with 15 professional bouts under his belt. Boyd, a super middleweight, will compete for the third time as a pro, while Titus, a heavyweight, and U.S. Army veteran, is making his professional debut.

“I call them the ‘Triple Threat,’” said Allison III, better known as Coach Allison. “It’s so exciting to see these boys grow to become men. They are fighting as professionals, and all three on the same card, and I couldn’t be prouder.”

Billed by promoters as “The Return of Big Time Professional Boxing in the DMV,” the fight card is headlined by Donte “Mr. Untouchable” Burts, who clashes in a welterweight bout with Juan Rodriguez.



**Mack Allison III, better known as Coach Allison calls the three boxers from his Time2Grind gym the “triple threat.” All three will compete in the “Return of Big Time Professional Boxing in the DMV” event on Saturday, September 25, 2021 at the Dulles Sportsplex in Sterling, Virginia. (Left to right) Middleweight Tyrell Boyd; Lightweight Mack “Papi” Allison IV; Heavyweight Malik Titus making his professional debut at the event on Saturday, September 25, 2021; Coach Mack Allison III; and three-year-old Amari Boyd, Tyrell’s son.**  
Courtesy Photos/Time2Grind Gym

Ricardo Volcin also takes on Brient Pierce Rodriguez in a heavyweight fight.

For Coach Allison, it’s all about his “Triple Threat.”

“I look at Tyrell Boyd, and he’s in the military with the Army, and with the Reserves on the weekend, and Mack and Malik both attended Eastern Shore and graduated high school,” Coach Allison said. “Boyd is a father who takes really good care of his son, and the other two

are such hard workers. This is what the gym is all about.”

Coach Allison opened Time 2 Grind in 2015, but has served for years as a mentor for many young people in the Baltimore area. He has trained dozens of boxers and has helped countless others achieve their goals of living a healthy and productive life.

“It’s not just me. It’s the community,” Coach Allison said. “It really does take a

village to raise children, and that is what we’ve been working hard to accomplish here in Baltimore. I can’t really express how proud all of us are of these young men whom we’ve seen grow from being young boys to young men.”

For tickets and information about the September 25 boxing card, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-return-of-big-time-professional-boxing-in-the-dmv-tickets-165772376641>.

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# Youth given introductory aviation experience in 'Flight Day Picnic' at BWI Airport

By Demetrius Dillard

In a special ceremony hosted by Avdyne Aeroservices and the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (EECTAI) dozens of youth were given their first glimpse of aviation with lively introductory flights in the second annual "Flight Day Picnic" at BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport on August 28, 2021.

The program also featured a number of special guests and presentations, including a few legendary icons who once served in the military as Tuskegee Airmen—namely, George Smith, William T. Fauntroy and Gen. Charles McGee.

The event was open to the community, attracted residents from all over Maryland and served as somewhat of a celebratory send-off before children returned to the classrooms for the 2021-22 school year.

Aside from listening to remarks from Tuskegee Airmen, enjoying refreshments and additional activities, and having aviation and aerospace science career resources at their disposal, the program's participants—consisting primarily of youth from the YEES WE CAN (Young Elites of the Eastern Shore West to East Coast Aviation Network) program—had the opportunity to take part in discovery flights.

In simple terms, a discovery flight is one's introduction to flying. The process typically involves taking short flights alongside a certified pilot or flight instructor, which gives passengers a chance to acquaint themselves with how it is to control smaller aircraft.

Unique experiences after this manner are particularly valuable for Black youth—many of whom never imagine flying in a plane or jet due to a number of reasons, from fear of heights to lack of opportunity and resources.

The Flight Day Picnic was the first time that the 45 youth in attendance from YEES WE CAN experienced discovery flights. Prior to the ceremony, they have had academics for the last three years but they have not had the chance to fly yet, said Cheryl Walker,



**Cheryl Walker, founder of YEES WE CAN, surrounded by the youth in the program preparing for their discovery flights. Photos: Paris Brown**

founder and executive director of YEES WE CAN.

"Today presents that opportunity, and I'm so honored that Mr. Jerome Hodges has made this opportunity available for us, that our youth can now come out and finally get their discovery flight time," Walker said. "It's always an inspiration when our youth get to have an opportunity to not only see, but sit, at the feet of our elders, and the elders who have paved such an incredible way for the field of aviation and flight, and opening it up to minorities.

"This is a minority group of youth, and they now get to see there was someone 100 years old— or older— who has already done this, the same thing they are now getting an opportunity to do only because they paved the way for that."

"YEES WE CAN" students range in age from the fourth grade to the 12th grade, added Walker, who grew up as a military child. Some are aspiring pilots and others plan to go into a field of aviation science, be it engineering, computer technology mechanics and a broad spectrum of other related interests.

The Tuskegee Airmen in attendance were recognized during a notable portion of the ceremony.



**Original Documented Tuskegee Airmen in attendance at the event included (l-r), George Smith, Colonel Charles McGee and William T. Fauntroy, Jr.**

Smith, 94, traced his interests in aviation to the days when he was enrolled in the ROTC program at Howard University.

"I think it's good to give a lot of people the exposure that they need," said Smith, a native of Washington, D.C., who served in the Air Force during World War II.

Brigadier General Charles McGee, one of the oldest living and highest ranking members of the Tuskegee Airmen, is among the most decorated and distinguished military officers in modern history.

McGee was encouraged to see so many youngsters interested in aviation. At one point, he was in their position and hoped to use his wisdom and insight to influence them to achieve at the highest level, regardless of whether or not they choose to fly as a career.

"Looking at all these young folks out here, I'm indeed pleased because as a retired Tuskegee Airman, my goal is to help motivate youth in aviation," said McGee, a resident of Bethesda. "The young folks are our future and we need to be sure that they are mentored and on the right track."

William "King" Hollis, a motivational speaker and author based in Atlanta, shared words of encouragement with the youth and handed out free, signed copies



**Youth from YEES WE CAN preparing to take flight with volunteer pilot**

of his latest book "The Best Gifts Come from the Bottom." As an alumnus of Tuskegee University, he was humbled to meet and interact with some of the original Airmen.

According to 2020 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, only about 3.4 percent of aircraft pilots and flight engineers are Black. Fortunately, Avdyne Aeroservices and EECTAI recognize how sorely underrepresented Black Americans are in aviation, and collaborated to provide an indelible opportunity to young people.



# AvDyne Aeroservices, Black-owned aircraft maintenance company, prides itself on customer and community service

By Demetrius Dillard

Of the more than 3,100 companies specializing in aircraft maintenance in the U.S., only two of them are minority-owned. The Baltimore area is home to one of the two.

AvDyne Aeroservices, LLC, a Black-owned aircraft maintenance company based in the BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, is one of the leading aviation support service providers in the region. In addition to its community-oriented initiatives, AvDyne Aeroservices prides itself on inspiring the next generation of aviation mechanics.

When founder, president and CEO Jerome Hodge began AvDyne in 2000, the business had five mechanics. Over the past two decades, AvDyne's workforce has expanded to 55 mechanics with additional locations at Reagan National and Dulles International airports.

AvDyne's team of distinguished professionals have contributed the most to the company's exponential growth over 20 years, Hodge said. About 90 percent of the business's capacity is with airlines, holding contracts with American, United and Delta.

"I've got a really good core group of people that work for me, and I believe that if you support your people, your people will support you," said Hodge, a native of Georgia by way of Miami. Hodge's 21 years of service in the military gave him ample experience and exposure to flying and working with aircraft. His journey in the aviation industry began when he was a mechanic on C-130 helicopters.

Moreover, AvDyne provides opportunities for disadvantaged local youth to gain aviation maintenance experience as paid summer interns and serves as a sponsor and participant in the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (ECCTAI), which recently hosted a "Flight Day Picnic" that gave Black youth exposure to flying.

"I think it's our core duty. When you're in this position you have to reach



**Jerome Hodge,**  
*President & CEO, AvDyne Aeroservices*

back, get that next group of kids and give them opportunity—especially our kids," said Hodge, also the president of ECCTAI.

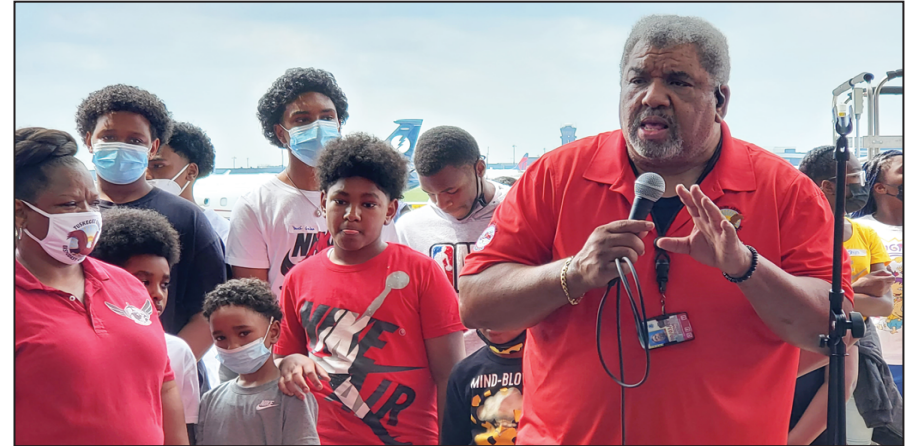
"Our Black minority kids, they don't even know these opportunities are available, so we've got to make sure and let them know what's available and give them that opportunity."

Hodge was pleased with the outcome of the Flight Day Picnic, held Aug. 28, 2021 at BWI Airport.

"As long as I can, we'll be doing this," he said in reference to the Flight Day Picnic being a yearly occurrence. "I make it my business that we expose kids as much as possible."

AvDyne Aeroservices is pushing toward another meaningful venture: opening a school that would train up-and-coming aircraft mechanics.

Aircraft mechanics are in high demand in the U.S. In fact, more than 300,000 of them will be needed in the country over the next decade, according to Hodge. AvDyne's developing school program, still awaiting final approval and



**Jerome Hodge hosted a Flight Day Picnic for Maryland youth. Cheryl Walker (left) is founder and executive director of YEES WE CAN (Youth Elites of the Eastern Shore West to East Coast Aviation Network), a youth aviation-training program. Photo: Paris Brown**



**Jefferson Gregory, a youth participant in the Flight Day Picnic event. Photo: Paris Brown**

inspection from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), will implement intensive training that will teach the intricacies associated with aircraft maintenance and aviation support.

AvDyne's comprehensive services also include: aviation support to various government entities; ground support equipment maintenance; aircraft line maintenance; airframe and engine inspections; airplane modification; oxygen service; structural repair; avionics service and installations; and exterior and interior refurbishment, among many other related tasks. The company is built on demonstrating high levels of professionalism while adhering to "integrity, honesty and sound business practices in every

customer encounter so as to enhance stable growth, security and longevity within the aviation maintenance industry."

Partnering with the Sarah's House project in Anne Arundel County and the THRIVE program for urban young adults to obtain professional training on the path to gainful employment, AvDyne's community service efforts have been nothing short of exceptional.

Befittingly, its motto is concurrent with its business model: "Do the job as though your life depends on it and always provide our customers with more: more than Asked; more than Required; and more than Expected because someone's life does depend on it."

# Couple seeks to give back by providing healthy juice and raising health awareness

By Stacy M. Brown

Todd Sheridan and Nichelle Roane founded Treehouse Juicery five years ago mainly because Sheridan needed to heal.

“In college, I was very stressed and focused on typing essays, studying, writing, and maintaining somewhat of a social life,” said Sheridan, who graduated from Goucher College with a Bachelor’s degree in Business Communications.

“I neglected my eating habits,” Sheridan reminisced. “I was so tired of the gastric ulcers, hypertension, and being pre-diabetic that I went cold-turkey vegan one day during the summer of 2012. That changed my life forever.”

At Treehouse Juicery, Sheridan and Roane sell pure cold-pressed juices.

They offer four staple flavors of real juice with natural nutritional content packed with enzymes, minerals, micro-nutrients, and electrolytes.

The duo’s mission remains to nourish customers with good juices and spread a health awareness message to families.

“I’ve been introduced to a plant-based journey which has been a very healing and disciplining experience for me,” Sheridan recounted.

Roane said she has been a healthy consumer all of her life. She holds an associate’s degree in psychology from the Community College of Baltimore County and regularly practices yoga.

Their business journey was not without challenges, Roane stated.

“One challenge we had to overcome was not having the resources and the necessary exposure available to scale the business,” she said. “Coming from corporate America, we didn’t have any extensive kitchen experience. We were



**Todd Sheridan and Nichelle Roane founded Treehouse Juicery five years ago with a mission to nourish customers with good juices and to spread a health awareness message to families. A big part of their giving back to the community is spreading health awareness and donating their surplus juices to families in food deserts and impoverished communities. Courtesy Photos/Treehouse Juicery**



**The Treehouse Juicery offers pure cold-pressed juices with natural nutritional content packed with enzymes, minerals, micro-nutrients, and electrolytes.**



completely self-taught. We didn’t have any mentors at the time who could help teach us the intricate details of starting a business, the funding involved, and the connections one would need.”

The former high school mates who are now engaged, started from the bottom, creating graphics, logos, menus, and connections. They also shelled out lots of cash to test recipes and flavors.

“It’s been a long journey, but we’ve overcome the knowledge gap and financial hurdle by winning grants and gathering plenty of market research,” Roane said. “We became First Place Grant Recipients at a business plan competition facilitated by CCBC’s Center for Business Innovation.

“The seed funding allowed us to establish our foundation, create an

online presence, and afford marketing to boost sales,” she further offered.

Sheridan and Roane also earned acceptance into two renowned cohorts—the National Minority Small Business Council and Made in Baltimore.

“We are optimistic that our affiliations have and will continue to help us succeed,” Roane said. “We also always take the opportunity to build relationships with new customers and fellow business owners in hopes to collaborate and support each other’s missions.”

Sheridan concluded that the couple wants customers to know that a big part of their giving back to the community is spreading health awareness and donating their surplus juices to families in food deserts and impoverished communities.

“We know how little to no nutritional food options are lacking in the inner cities,” Sheridan said. “Kids and families rely heavily on terrible consumables masquerading itself as food. Food is supposed to nourish your body. Unfortunately, if people in food deserts are given access to fresh and healthy options, it usually is not as affordable as the less nutritional foods are. So we at Treehouse Juicery stand by our mission to give access to nutritious and delicious cold-pressed juices the entire family can enjoy, especially those in need.”

To learn more about Sheridan and Roane’s company, Treehouse Juicery, visit: [www.treehousejuiceryonline.com](http://www.treehousejuiceryonline.com).

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# Rambling Rose

**Chick Webb, an African American  
Jewel in East Baltimore**



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Hello everyone, I pray that your Labor Day Weekend was safe, happy and fun. By the time you read this I will be on vacation. But before I go, I want to leave you with something to do and I will see you when I return. I will not be on social media while I am out of town, unless my son decides to post something about his parents visiting him in South Carolina.

I received a note or I should say a press release from Ronald Miles, the CEO/President of RJY Chick Webb Council, Inc. about the Chick Webb Memorial Recreation Center. I found it to be quite interesting and wanted to share it with you. It seems that Chick Webb Memorial Recreation Center is moving from the darkness into the light. On August 10, 2021, the Department of Recreation and Parks presented its Construction and Design Plans to the Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation. The Council submitted written a verbal testimony that supported the Department with recommendation to address the nomenclature from a gymnasium to multi-purpose/cultural or wellness center, and the clarity of a teen room to an inter-generational workspace.

Drowned in African American History is the Chick Webb Memorial Recreation Center, located at 1401 E. Monument Street, AKA 623 Eden Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Built in 1947, this Center is the only recreation center in the nation built by renowned African American entertainers, the Black business community, benevolent groups and individuals. The renowned entertainers included friends of the Jazz Drummer, King and philanthropist William Henry "Chick" Webb. The entertainers and friends responded to the "Death bed wish of Chick Webb who stated, to his physician, Dr. Ralph

Jonathan Young, "I am sorry I haven't done anything yet myself, but I'll call my friend Joe Louis and he'll fill any house in Baltimore." Chick Webb died June 16, 1939. Now, check this out, the story gets more interesting.

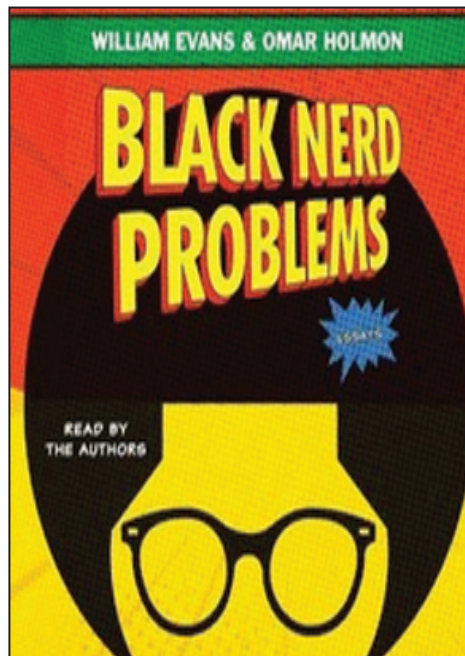
The house [venue] chosen for the event was the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory. More than 7,500 people from all walks of life attended the Chick Webb Fundraising Concert held on February 10, 1940 at a cost of \$1.15. The entertainers included: Joe Louis, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, the Nicholas Brothers, Jackie "Moms" Mabley, the Ink Spots, and a host of many others. On the success of the concert Dr. Young stated, "We want to prove to Chick Webb that we mean to do something for the development of Negro youth in Baltimore".

Anyway, it is so much more to this fascinating story, but the bottom line is that the Department has conducted working group meetings and public meetings to develop the plans for the improvement of the Chick Webb Memorial Recreation Center. In addition to the meetings, the Department conducted a survey to provide data for the improvement of the Center. The RJY Chick Webb Council, Inc. provided outreach across the city and across the country for the purpose of elevating the Chick Webb Center to become an intergeneration center for current and the transformational community. Further, the Council is promoting the Center as a national venue that may spur tourism and economic development.

If you are interested in getting involved or want to support the cause, you can contact Ronald Miles at [riychickwebb@gmail.com](mailto:riychickwebb@gmail.com).



*The Rollex Band is performing at a special event called "Black & White Virgo Party" on Friday, September 10, 2021 from 7 p.m. at "Not Just Crab, 8731 Liberty Road in Randallstown, Maryland. The special event is our little brother, Carlos Hutchins Birthday Party including his buddies; Kevin and Shonda. I am telling you, there will be a whole lot of jumping up and down, doing the James Brown in there!*



*William Evans and Omar Holmon, founders of the popular website, "Black Nerd Problems," will be on sale Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at Gallery Books. The book consists of a love letter to nerd culture as well as a sharp and unprecedented sociopolitical critique. For more information, call Jennifer Musico at 917-685-2516.*

Well, my dear friends, I am out of space and out of time. My Boo-Boo and I am going to continue to enjoy our vacation. Remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me



*You can catch Tanya Dennis, the wife of radio personality Randy Dennis every Wednesday at the weekly Farmer's Market in the Hilton Garden Inn at Owings Mills, Maryland from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with her Bling Tees and lots of rhinestones.*

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# Things parents should know sending their kids back to school

By Breonna Randall  
Howard University News Service

For the first time since March 2020, millions of students, pre-kindergarten to high school seniors, will be attending in-person classes. Aside from attending class, they will be also participating in extracurricular activities, like sports, music and clubs. Parents have many concerns and questions. Howard University News Service reached out to five physicians for answers, Dr. Hadie Shariat, pediatrician, Howard University Hospital; Dr. Katherine Hager, Infectious Disease Fellow, Howard University Hospital; Dr. Catherine Marshall, pediatrician at Balboa Pediatrics; Dr. Andrea Goings, pediatrician, Baby Doc House Calls, and Dr. Stacey Eadie, pediatrician at her own private practice, Peds in a Pod.

## Should I get my child vaccinated?

The unanimous opinion among our doctors was if your child can get vaccinated, they should. The only thing that has proven to be effective so far in fighting COVID-19 is the vaccine, they said. While a tiny fraction of people has died from the vaccine, more than 600,000 have died from the disease. Children under the age of 12 cannot be vaccinated, though pharmaceutical companies are working on a vaccine for them.

## What if my child is too young for the vaccine?

In this case, the doctors advise, your child should stay away from unvaccinated adults, stay away from crowded indoor places, always wear a mask and keep practicing social distancing and good hygiene. Also always remember to keep up with your local safety guidelines. Guidelines and prevalence of coronavirus are different in different cities and states. Residents may need to be more careful in some locales.

## What kind of mask should my child wear and how many do they need?

The readily available blue and white surgical masks are the best option for students of all ages. They will protect your child if they are wearing them properly. The mask should cover their nose and their mouth. If the mask falls to the ground or gets wet either by sneezing into it or from water, they should be discarded, and a new mask put in place. Younger



*Children, especially younger children, seem to always have a sniffle or runny nose. However, in today's climate, it's better to be safe than sorry. Keep your children home and quarantine them until they can take a COVID-19 test at a medical facility, not an at home rapid test.*

Photo Credit: istock/NNPA

children should carry about a half a dozen surgical masks with them a day.

Students in grades 9-12 should not need to change theirs as often. They may only need to have about three. For older children doubling up by wearing a surgical mask and a cloth mask on top throughout their school day is the best option.

If your child is most comfortable wearing only a cloth mask, that is fine, but remember it needs to be cleaned daily, never wait more than a day to clean or rotate your child's cloth mask. N-95 masks are said to be the best option, but only if they have been fit tested by a doctor to a child's face. Children with disabilities who are not able to wear a mask all day should wear a shield.

## What should be on my back-to-school shopping list?

You should buy everything that you would already get but more. Make sure your child has more than enough supplies, so they won't need to ask their classmates to share. Young children like to chew on their pens and sharing those supplies could increase the spread of germs. Aside from masks, you may want to add new items like hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes.

## What are some school habits my child needs to break and new ones they should include?

The number one habit that children of all ages need to break is sharing. They

handles and locks to their lockers. Finally, most schools do not have automatic sinks or dryers. So, students should consider using paper towels to turn handles off and on and opening doors after washing their hands for at least 20 seconds.

## Are there warning signs that my child may have been exposed to the coronavirus?

Children, especially younger children, seem to always have a sniffle or runny nose. However, in today's climate, it's better to be safe than sorry. Every day after you child comes home, spend two minutes with your child and let them tell you about their day without asking any specific questions. In that time, they may tell you if they shared toys or snacks with anyone that they shouldn't have. If your child is having a cough or runny nose, yes it could be allergies or a common cold, but do not risk the safety of your family and others. Keep your children home and quarantine them until they can take a Covid-19 test at a medical facility, not an at home rapid test. A two-year old may get sick and have just a runny nose or sore throat from the disease, but if they infect their grandmother, for example, she could end up in the hospital on a ventilator.

## Are extracurricular activities okay for my child to participate in?

There is nothing wrong with your child returning to their extracurricular activities, just as long as these activities are supervised and are following all Center for Disease Control and Prevention and local health guidelines.

should not share toys, school supplies, food, drinks or anything else. It won't be easy to get young children to unlearn "sharing is caring," but it is very important that they try their best.

Other habits students need to break is any unnecessary touching. Hugging or kissing other students is a no-no. Students have been away from their friends for a very long time, and they may want to show physical affection towards each other when they reunite but it is very important that they don't as much as possible.

They should also use disinfectant wipes to clean their desks between classes and the

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# Western High School launches partnership with Sister School Global Initiative in Nigeria

Baltimore— Western High School Principal Michelle White announced the formation of a new partnership between Western High School, Baltimore, Maryland, USA, and the Sister School Global Initiative (SSGI) Lagos, Nigeria. Principal White and HRH Princess Dr. Moradeun Ogunlana developed the partnership to expand their young women's understanding of diverse world cultures and preparation for future global leadership roles.

"This is a distinctive opportunity for Western girls who are setting their sights on leadership roles, not just in Baltimore but in the world," said Principal White. The official signing ceremony takes place on Wednesday, September 15, to celebrate a shining new path for students' personal, academic, and professional growth.

Princess Ogunlana is the founder and CEO of the Sister School Global Initiative through the African Women's Health Project International as part of its seven adopted United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030.



**HRH Princess Dr. Moradeun Ogunlana**  
**Founder and CEO**  
**Sister School Global Initiative**  
 Courtesy Photo

Its commitment is to pair high-performing secondary schools in Africa with outstanding sister schools in other parts of the world. She is excited to begin with Western High School, with its illustrious alumnae and legacy as

America's oldest all-girls public school.

The signing ceremony begins a robust cultural exchange between students of the schools including collaborative virtual projects and a structured timed program to eventually include visiting and living in each other's country.

Dr. Brenda Morant (WHS alumna), Founder/CEO of the Atlanta-based International Women's Think Tank (IWTT) and Board Member of the Western High School Foundation, Inc. (WHSF), brought IWTT's principles of global understanding and international contacts to her work on the WHSF Board. Having connected Principal White and Princess Ogunlana for a series of conversations towards partnership, Dr. Morant will continue to serve as the liaison and facilitator for upcoming joint projects.

The first project is to have each student body create videos reflecting the learning environment and spirit of sisterhood in their American and Nigerian schools. The videos will include visual arts, music, and dance to convey vividly each school's culture. At the same time, the schools will begin to pair individual students with a "sister" abroad, providing guidelines and

coaching on how to break the ice and build authentic relationships with people from different backgrounds.

According to the Princess, "We believe individual relationships, sharing cross-cultural experiences and perspectives, are the key to personal maturity and women's professional ascension...and as importantly, to a more harmonious



world." As evidence of the power of individual relationships, her longstanding friendship with Brenda Morant and new friendship with Principal White are the basis of the implementation and ongoing success of the new Sister Schools programs.

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# Ravens face former teammate turned elite TE Darren Waller

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens travel to Las Vegas to face the Raiders this week for the season opener. When they take the field at Allegiant Stadium, there will be a very familiar face on the opposite sideline.

Former Ravens' wide receiver/tight end Darren Waller has experienced a career, resurgence with the Raiders and is now considered one of the top tight ends in the league.

Before ascending to a top player status in the league, Waller faced the Ravens in the pre-season finale after joining the Raiders in 2018. Waller caught one pass for 13 yards in the game.

The Ravens will see a much different player when they face him in the regular season the first time. He is finally meeting the potential that Baltimore saw in him when they evaluated the 6' 6" and 255-pound playmaker.

The Ravens selected Waller in the sixth round (pick 204) in the 2015 draft. Waller was named the sixth wide receiver on the roster that season before landing on injured reserve in late October. A four-game suspension in 2016 due to violating the league's substance abuse policy followed by a one-year suspension in 2017 for a



*The Ravens face the Raiders and former teammate Darren Waller on Sunday September 12, 2021 at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas for the first game of the 2021 NFL season. It's easy for the Waller's former teammates to pull for him given his story when he played in Baltimore but they hope his success doesn't come at their expense.* Photo Credit: Kirby Lee/USA TODAY Sports

second violation brought Waller's time with the Ravens to an end.

The Raiders signed Waller from Baltimore's practice squad in 2018. He posted six receptions for 75 yards that season. A seven-catch, 70-yard

performance got Waller off to a hot start in 2019. He finished the season with 90 receptions for 1,145 yards and three touchdowns.

The 2020 season was even better when Waller posted 107 receptions for 1,196

yards and nine touchdowns. He is looking to build on his previous success. It starts with Week 1 against his former team.

Ravens safety Chuck Clark knows what they are dealing with after seeing Waller's success now, and facing him in practice in Baltimore.

"Yes, we knew what type of matchup threat he was, for sure—definitely," Clark said of their days lining up against each other with the Ravens. "He's one of the top tight ends in the league right now. He can make plays, he's big, and he's fast."

Waller's success depends heavily upon continued targets from Raiders quarterback Derek Carr who has three Pro Bowl nominations on his resume.

"They've got a good quarterback that's running the system, and he's got good guys out there that can make plays, and they know where to go with the ball. He can throw the ball. His deep ball is good, so he can do that, as well. They've got a good system and they're effective," Clark said.

It's easy for the Waller's former teammates to pull for him given his story. However, this week they hope Waller's success doesn't come at their expense.

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