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# PROFILE

—WAVE MAKERS—

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**First the Seed**  
Genesis 1:11

And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so.



# KATHERINE MORAVEC & WARREN ALLEN

AGES: BOTH 31

BY ELLEN BRABO

**K**ATHERINE MORAVEC, AN EMERGENCY MEDICINE DOCTOR AT ECU HEALTH – BEAUFORT HOSPITAL IN WASHINGTON, NC, AND HER HUSBAND, WARREN ALLEN, NOT ONLY SHARE A LIFE BUT ALSO JOINTLY OWN AND MANAGE TWO ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN – 1906 BISTRO AND BOURBON, AND THE WEST MAIN. ADDITIONALLY, WARREN WEARS THE HAT OF CO-OWNER AT ELITE TRUCK, A COMPREHENSIVE WORK VEHICLE EQUIPMENT PROVIDER COVERING EVERYTHING FROM LARGE FLEET DEALS TO SINGLE CUSTOM ORDERS. WARREN HAS BEEN NAMED THE 2024 YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR.



**Why did you choose your profession?**

**W:** I chose marketing and start-ups because of the opportunity for growth, the learning and the challenge it provided. There is an incredible amount of work that goes into it but ultimately there is a lot of flexibility that comes with it. I was fascinated early on by growth in e-commerce and technology companies and that continues today with our growth and investment at Elite Truck.

**K:** I loved math and chemistry in high school so the obvious major for me in college I thought was Chemical Engineering, but as I progressed in college, I changed directions and went Pre-Med. Still completing my Chemical Engineering degree and then going to medical school afterwards. I realized Emergency Medicine is in a great position to help people who are in a vulnerable situation.

**Who in Beaufort County has influenced your life the most?**

**W:** Our progress with our building renovations and business openings has been most influenced by Jonathan Russell, the Washington City Manager, and members from the city such as utilities and the fire department. Everyone has been helpful with getting the required permits and inspections, working with us to keep the ball rolling.

**K:** There are a lot of moving parts with any project and we have received a lot of support from the city to smooth out the obstacles.

**W:** Jonathan has been a call away for anything big or small – be it the dumpsters needing to be emptied more frequently or electric services turned on. Anytime we have had complications or needed clarity in the process, he has helped us navigate the projects and getting them done.

**K:** I would add my biggest Beaufort County influence, since I do spend a lot of time at work, has been Emilie Pendley. She is from Beaufort County and is a local physician who is largely invested in the community, from the EMS aspect to being at the hospital, giving countless hours to help our county and those to the east. She's been a good female career role model.

**It's a beautiful day in Beaufort County and you have the day off. How are you spending it?**

**K:** We would get up in the morning and walk our dog to a coffee shop, saying hello to our neighbors along the way. Then we'd pack up and pick up the boat from Inner Banks Marina to get out on the river for a few hours. We'd ride the boat over to Backwater Jacks for lunch and enjoy a few more hours on the river. Then clean up before heading downtown to one of our favorite spots. If it's a Friday night, we are going to the wine tasting at Wine and Words.

**W:** Or dinner at The Hackney. It sounds like a perfect day.

**K:** There are so many good options! We don't get tired of our favorite spots.

**If you were to plan Beaufort County's future and it was to come true, what would you like to see happen?**

**K:** I would love to see more festivals in the streets and concerts in the park – things that really bring the community together!

**W:** I would love to see increased collaboration across restaurants, charities, and organizations to produce the events Katherine mentioned for the entire community. More forward thinking from the stakeholders in Washington, realizing that there may be exponential growth that needs to be accounted for, or growth will be limited based on the actions taken.

**Why should people consider working, living and playing in Beaufort County?**

**W:** I believe the pace of life is something that more people are starting to consider. Here in Beaufort County you can enjoy walking to get coffee in the morning. You have restaurants and bars all within a few blocks. I think that there are still opportunities to move here and grow in the community because it is not oversaturated. It is a great town especially for young people and families to consider.

**K:** I think the water access is amazing with multiple public ramps. Living in Indianapolis before I came to North Carolina, I've experienced full size cities, but here there really is a neighborly feel. You make friends fairly quickly around here and we've really enjoyed it.





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**WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR PROFESSION?**

I love working with kids and I played sports through college, so connecting both of those to help kids get out.

**WHO IN BEAUFORT COUNTY HAS INFLUENCED YOUR LIFE THE MOST?**

I would say the principal and assistant principal that hired me. They provided me the opportunity to come down and gave me the chance to be a teacher.

**WHAT WAS YOUR INITIAL IMPRESSION OF BEAUFORT COUNTY AND HAS IT CHANGED?**

If so, how? Wild! Aurora is so far separated from the other schools that we travel to for different reasons. It was a culture shock – Aurora has one stop light!

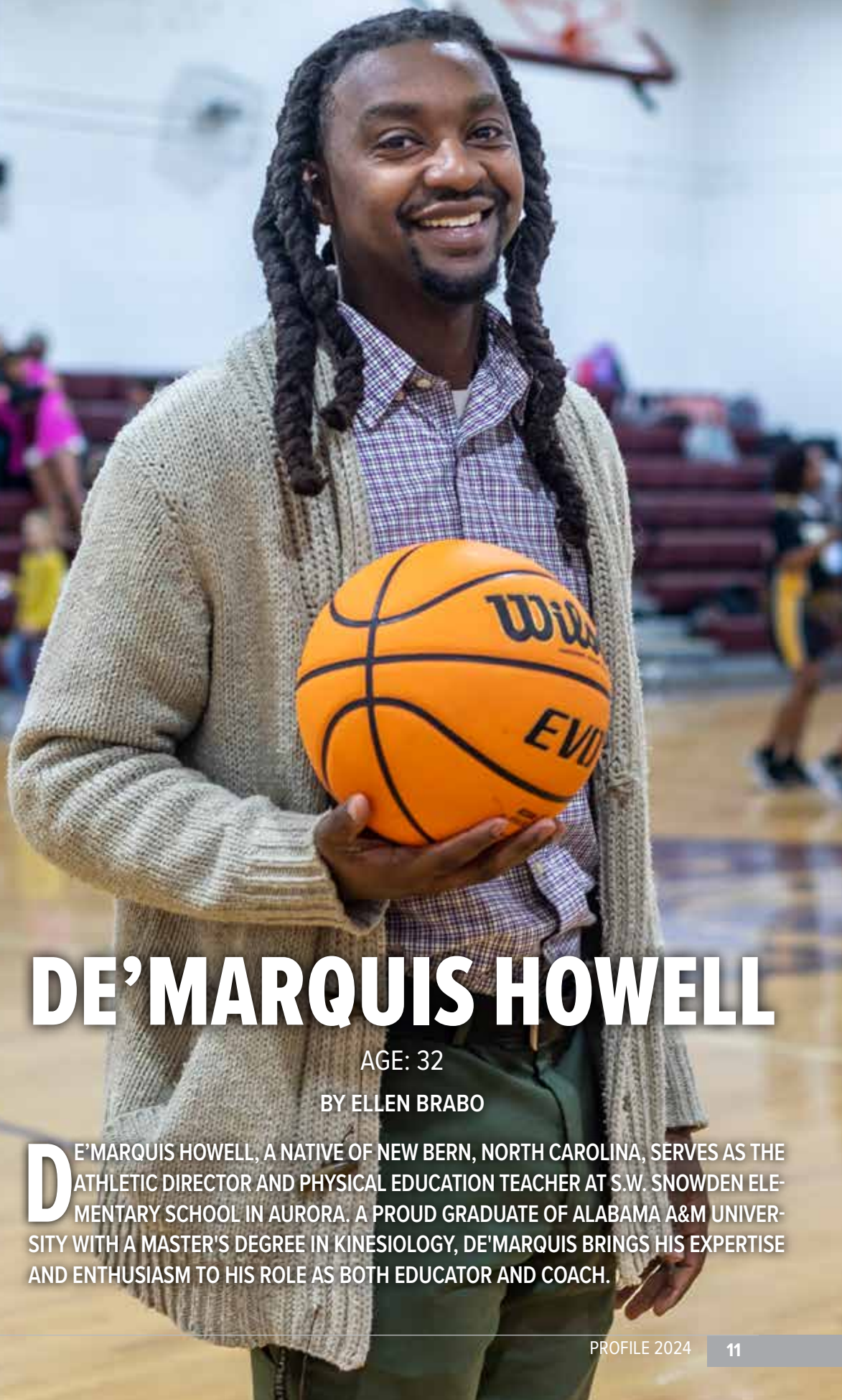
[My impression] has changed and grown. There is a lot of community and parent involvement.

**IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN BEAUFORT COUNTY AND YOU HAVE THE DAY OFF. HOW ARE YOU SPENDING IT?**

I am going to put together some basketball runs and get some kids together. The alumni love to come out and play with the kids. It is always competitive and fun! I am trying to stay active.

**HOW WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED IN THEIR TOWN'S LEADERSHIP?**

Giving them avenues to create and getting in their minds that they can do whatever once they put their mind to it.



# DE'MARQUIS HOWELL

AGE: 32

BY ELLEN BRABO

**D**E'MARQUIS HOWELL, A NATIVE OF NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA, SERVES AS THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER AT S.W. SNOWDEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN AURORA. A PROUD GRADUATE OF ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY WITH A MASTER'S DEGREE IN KINESIOLOGY, DE'MARQUIS BRINGS HIS EXPERTISE AND ENTHUSIASM TO HIS ROLE AS BOTH EDUCATOR AND COACH.



# CASEY LEWIS SCHULTE

AGE: 34

BY ELLEN BRABO

CASEY LEWIS SCHULTE DONS THE CAP OF BIOLOGY AND FORENSICS TEACHER AT NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL. A GRADUATE OF NC STATE UNIVERSITY, WIFE AND PROUD MOTHER OF TWO BOYS, SCHULTE BELIEVES IN THE TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT TEACHERS CAN HAVE ON STUDENTS, OFTEN VIEWING THEM AS REAL-LIFE SUPERHEROES. BEYOND THE CLASSROOM, SHE IS ACTIVELY EXPLORING THE ROLE OF EDTECH IN ENHANCING HER TEACHING METHODS, SEEKING FELLOWSHIPS TO DEEPEN HER UNDERSTANDING OF CONNECTING COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS TO THE CLASSROOM. IN HER “ME TIME,” SHE DELVES INTO A DIVERSE ARRAY OF BOOKS, FINDING SOLACE AND ENRICHMENT THROUGH THE PAGES SHE TURNS. CASEY WAS RECOGNIZED AS THE 2023 BURROUGHS WELLCOME FUND NORTHEAST REGION TEACHER OF THE YEAR.



### WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CONSIDER WORKING, LIVING, AND PLAYING IN BEAUFORT COUNTY?

This past year I have had the wonderful opportunity to travel all around the state of North Carolina – from the mountains to the sandhills. There are some great things going on in the state, but I know that we live in the best part of the state. The community that I have been a part of growing and am still a part of today, you can't find that everywhere. I love how our community sees a need and fills it. I think when you walk downtown Belhaven or Washington, and people are smiling and speak to you, they really encourage you to be a part of the community. You don't see that everywhere across the state. It's unmatched. It's the people that make this place special.

### WHO IN BEAUFORT COUNTY HAS INFLUENCED YOUR LIFE THE MOST?

I would not be the person I am today without my parents and my grandmother, all who have been residents of Beaufort County. My mom and dad have instilled in me this idea of having a servant's heart and giving back to my community. They have been such a good role model for me. On a professional level, I have had so many amazing teachers that taught me here in Beaufort County. Two of them that have just really inspired me are Master Sgt. Charlie Woolard, my JROTC instructor and track coach, and Miss Jennifer Cornelius, my AP U.S. History teacher. Woolard taught me the importance of building relationships with students. He modeled it so amazingly. And Cornelius was the one to teach me the importance of holding kids to standards. Having high expectations for your kids because they will meet your expectations every single time.

### WHERE WOULD YOU TAKE SOMEONE TO VISIT IN BEAUFORT COUNTY FOR THE FIRST TIME?

They have to go to Spoon River! I love it and it is beautiful. If you haven't been, you need to go. Then shopping at the Refinery and Market 3 Stopping for a sweet treat from Mad Batter. After that I would take them out on the boat.

### IF YOU WERE TO PLAN BEAUFORT COUNTY'S FUTURE AND IT WAS TO COME TRUE, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN?

From an educator's lens, I would love to see more people get involved in the school system. That could be in a variety of different ways. Maybe you have a free hour at lunch time, and you come in and you read to students, volunteering at a book fair, donating cleats, or simply come share your story with a class. I want people to be more involved with their local school before they start to criticize



### JUST FOR FUN: WHY ARE PEOPLE SO OBSESSED WITH TAYLOR SWIFT AND TRAVIS KELCE?

I am a big Taylor Swift fan. I haven't been to a concert, but I love the empowerment she gives her Swifties. I enjoy watching football, whether it's here at Northside or at the collegiate level. I wouldn't say Travis Kelce is my favorite player, but I just love that you have a power couple. You have two people who are king and queen of their craft - what a great overlap. I think people love rooting for a love story. Even if you don't like Taylor Swift involved in football, it gives you a nice chuckle, something positive compared to all the other news.

it. There's room for help from everybody. I would love to see opportunities to build STEM in Beaufort County more – that's the way the future is going – and encourage our students in these programs. I just want to see a relationship built where we can take our kids dreams and make them a reality. I would love to see our 'Adopt-a-Panther' program implemented at all schools so that no kid goes without all year long.

### WHAT ARE SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES YOUR GENERATION FACES VERSUS OTHER GENERATIONS?

I graduated high school from Northside in 2007 and cell phones were just coming out.

As a teacher today, these students that are coming through my classroom now, technology is playing such a big role in how they learn. This is a generation that needs instant answers. That is the first thing I think of that is drastically different. It was a lot more direct instruction when I was here, but kids don't respond to that as much anymore. They want to be engaged and entertained, so I am trying in my classroom to bring in ways that they can learn some 21st century skills – adaptability, flexibility, communication. How can I build in opportunities for them to learn from one another? I am using technology to support their learning, not as the way that they are learning.

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# ALEX SEFTON

AGE: 29

BY ELLEN BRABO

**A**LEX SEFTON, A GRADUATE OF THE CAMPBELL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW IN RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, SERVES AS AN ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY FOR BEAUFORT COUNTY. IN HIS ROLE, ALEX PROSECUTES CRIMINAL DEFENDANTS IN BEAUFORT, MARTIN, WASHINGTON, HYDE, AND TYRRELL COUNTIES, REPRESENTING THE STATE, THE PUBLIC, AND THE CITIZENS OF BEAUFORT COUNTY TO SAFEGUARD THEIR INTERESTS. OUTSIDE THE COURTROOM, HE VOLUNTEERS AS THE HEAD VARSITY COACH FOR PUNGO CHRISTIAN ACADEMY'S HIGH SCHOOL TEAM, SHOWCASING HIS COMPETITIVE EDGE WHILE AIMING FOR A PERFECT 10-0 SEASON IN HIS THIRD YEAR AT THE HELM.



## JUST FOR FUN: WHY ARE PEOPLE SO OBSESSED WITH TAYLOR SWIFT AND TRAVIS KELCE?

I think it's more Jason and Travis Kelce, and then Taylor Swift. Jason is more like the "dudes dude" – a football guy. Travis has more flare and theatrics, getting excited on game day. You get both types of guys there. On the flip side of that, Taylor Swift, the fantastic global super star. I can still remember listening to T-Swift in 9th grade. She brings a whole new crowd to football. You mix that crowd with the Kelce crowd, I don't know the Venn diagram, but I don't too many people who would fall outside of it. The people outside of it probably wouldn't have watched football anyways, but I would say it brought a lot of people to football and I love that. It has been interesting to see the timeline of the season. At the beginning it was, "We have a Taylor spotting!" up in the booth and now it's just expected. It's a really cool thing for football and I am pumped for T-Swift.

## WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR PROFESSION?

I grew up with a younger sister, so I was always very protective of her. I am a protective person and I look out for those I care for. In my role as an Assistant District Attorney, I care for the public. I have the opportunity to be the voice for those who don't have a voice and to protect those who aren't able to protect themselves. In law school I did an internship with a private criminal defense firm, and I really thought I wanted to be a defense attorney. However, when I took a North Carolina Prosecutor class my third year, I realized I had the right coin, but I was on the wrong side of that coin. In my role as a prosecutor, I can protect more people. I am super competitive and, in the courtroom, it's super competitive, so I love that!

## WHO IN BEAUFORT COUNTY HAS INFLUENCED YOUR LIFE THE MOST?

I'd say it's two people – Tom Anglim and Seth Edwards. I felt like I was in school until the 25th grade. I felt like I started being an adult at 25, and not only as a baby lawyer, but also as a baby adult; it was the first time I was not in a school setting. Both of them, through their help here at the office, mentored me in the field of law, making me become a better attorney. Also, the lessons that they have taught me filled in as that mentor figure going into the abyss of the adult world. I hit the jackpot with Tom and Seth. They are two of the most incredible men that I have ever met – respectful, respected, and damn good at what they do, serving the citizens of Beaufort County.

## WHAT WAS YOUR INITIAL IMPRESSION OF BEAUFORT COUNTY AND HAS IT CHANGED? IF SO, HOW?

I grew up in a small town so coming here, I traded the mountains for the water. First impression was it's a cute town on the water with a mix of country life. Downtown feels like a Hallmark movie walking down the streets.

## IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN BEAUFORT COUNTY AND YOU HAVE THE DAY OFF. HOW ARE YOU SPENDING IT?

I am taking advantage of our beautiful scenery by going down on the waterfront. Taking advantage of the new breweries that were not here when I first started. I'd want to make the most of being by the water with an ice cold drink in my hand listening to some live music. That's tough to beat.

## WHERE ARE YOU TAKING SOMEONE DURING THEIR FIRST VISIT TO BEAUFORT COUNTY?

One hundred percent, Backwater Jacks! I love the vibes – like a beach town without a beach.



A portrait of Camry Sadler, a woman with dark hair, wearing an orange patterned shirt, smiling at the camera.

# CAMRY SADLER

AGE: 34

BY HOLLY JACKSON

**C**AMRY SADLER WAS NAMED BELHAVEN'S NEWEST TOWN CLERK IN SEPTEMBER. SHE IS A PINETOWN NATIVE AND ALUMNA OF EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY. SHE IS A FORMER SAFETY COORDINATOR FOR FACILITY SERVICES AT ECU HEALTH BEAUFORT HOSPITAL. HER DAY-TO-DAY INCLUDES MAINTAINING IMPORTANT TOWN COUNCIL DOCUMENTS, WORKING WITH TOWN MANAGER LYNN DAVIS AND TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS, MANAGING THE TOWN WEBSITE AND CEMETERIES.

## AS SOMEONE WHO WORKS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HOW WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE MORE YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED AND BE MORE CIVIC-MINDED?

I did not come from any local government, and I am still learning. I think do your research. I did not research. I did not follow along with any politics, government, anything like that. But just having the knowledge or a basic understanding of it - there's a lot to learn about your community.

## AFTER DOING YOUR RESEARCH AND NOW WORKING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HAS YOUR OPINION OF BELHAVEN CHANGED? IF SO, HOW?

Yes, and no. Belhaven is still this cute little tiny town, but there is a lot of politics that you don't see growing up - that you don't really hear about until you are here. Working for a government agency - you learn that a lot of people are very political here. They are going to hold people that work here to a higher standard. They're also going to let you know about every little thing that's happening in this town and what needs to be fixed.

## DO YOU FEEL, IN GENERAL, THAT POLITICIANS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS LISTEN TO YOUNG VOICES?

I do, here. I don't have experience anywhere else, but I do here. Our mayor, our manager and even our council - I feel like they do listen, and I think they actually kind of reach out towards the younger generation. They know I look at things differently than they look at things so a lot of times they do ask my opinion on some things or how to handle some things or what we can do in Belhaven for toddlers, because I have a toddler. I think they value younger generations.

## WHAT WOULD ENTICE A YOUNG PERSON TO COME TO BEAUFORT COUNTY?

I think it's the river. We spend a lot of days, summer days especially, even fall out on the river, on the boat, beach areas. I think that is an attraction to Beaufort County for younger people.

## WHAT ARE SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES YOUR GENERATION FACES VERSUS OLDER GENERATIONS?

I think your home and work life balance. I'm a mom of four so it is a struggle - my home life and trying to work a full-time job, not just a job but a career. Right now, I'm getting ready to start my clerk's school at UNC's School of Government, and I'm going to be gone four weeks out of the year. Well, my kids are going to be here and they still have school and cheer and wrestling and all that going on. I think trying to find the balance of chasing a career and still being a mom.

## JUST FOR FUN: WHAT IS SOMETHING TOTALLY RANDOM, OFF THE WALL, THAT YOU THINK ABOUT OFTEN?

I wake up sometimes, very often, and I want to pack up a move to a new city. I don't know why. I love where I live. I love my job, and everything about it, but deep down it's like I want to explore. I want to take my kids, homeschool them and just explore. I would love to move to the mountains, and then the beach.



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**WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT PROFESSION?**

I felt like I saw a need, and started it as a sole proprietorship. I felt like I saw a need in town, because there is a population of people who want something different.

**IF SOMEONE VISITED BEAUFORT COUNTY FOR THE FIRST TIME, WHERE WOULD YOU TAKE THEM?**

I would probably take them for coffee, because I feel like I can't do anything without doing that first...Probably Goose Creek State Park. I really like to go there...I really have a love for the Estuarium. I think it's neat. I would definitely take them along the riverfront, because there is a lot of beauty in that.

**WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CONSIDER LIVING, WORKING, PLAYING IN BEAUFORT COUNTY?**

I think it is growing and has a lot of potential. It has room to grow without becoming Greenville. I think that the good part is that there is a downtown that is solid and concrete and established and has history. As a business owner, I try to think of things that people are looking for so they don't have to drive out of town.

**WHAT ARE UNIQUE CHALLENGES THAT YOUNGER GENERATIONS FACE THAT OLDER GENERATIONS HAVE NOT OR DID NOT?**

As a business owner, appropriately managing social media alone is like a part-time job. I've gotten myself into a habit of posting in the morning so it's done regardless of what it is. Usually, if I don't have something to make first thing in the morning I will have saved a picture of something from the day before and use that for first thing in the morning. Social media is tough, you have to be really careful about what you're putting out there and just staying on top of it so you keep people engaged and how you engage them is different for different age groups. In this area, you're trying to reach two totally different audiences...Social media is definitely a thing that it never was before, and now it's turned into straight up marketing.

**WHAT WAS YOUR INITIAL IMPRESSION OF BEAUFORT COUNTY AND HAS IT CHANGED?**

It hasn't changed. I feel like the county is split down the middle. You have people that are wealthy and then you have people who are nearly poverty stricken...I'm sure there is middle ground in there. There's people that fall in between, but they probably even look super wealthy compared to some of the poverty that is here...I think because Washington is a water community it's going to draw in people from other places to move here especially for retirement, but again it's that money that keeps it going as well. I'm not trying to paint it in a negative or evil light, because that is revenue for the town and growth and encouragement.

**JUST FOR FUN: WHY ARE PEOPLE SO OBSESSED WITH TAYLOR SWIFT AND TRAVIS KELCE?**

I don't know! I think people want the love story. I think it's hard in Hollywood - people never stay together so I think they see them as this couple that could actually make that happen.

# COURTNEY SPEAR

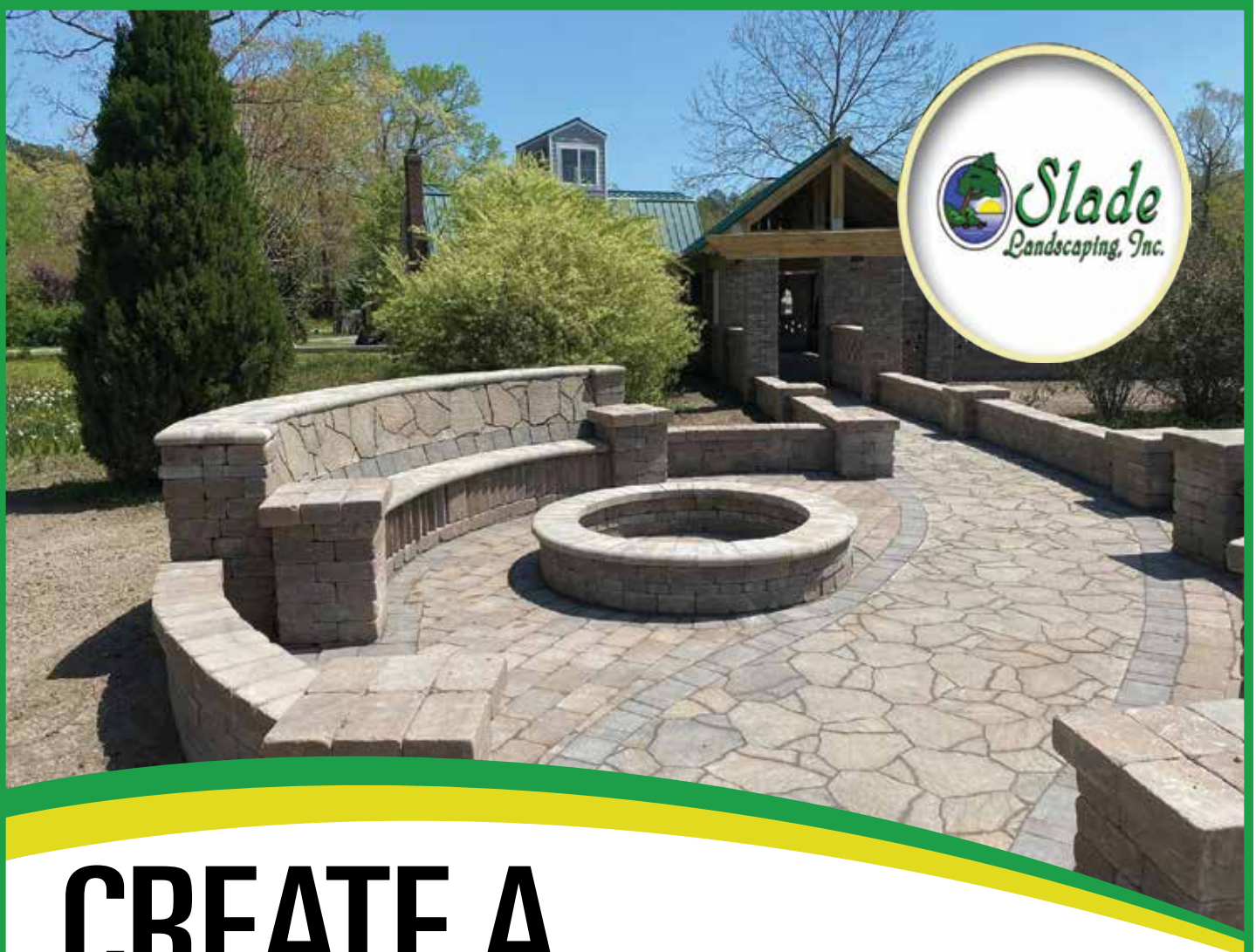
AGE: 38

BY HOLLY JACKSON

**C**COURTNEY SPEAR IS THE FOUNDER AND OWNER OF SUN MOON AND BLOOM ON MARKET STREET IN DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON. THE EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA NATIVE AND EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY ALUMNA OPENED THE FLORAL SHOP IN OCTOBER AFTER MOVING TO THE AREA FROM WILMINGTON WHERE SHE WAS A CERTIFIED SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST AT NOVANT HEALTH NEW HANOVER REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER.







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# CHARLOTTE STUBBS

AGE: 27

BY HOLLY JACKSON

**C**HARLOTTE STUBBS, AN EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY ALUMNA, IS THE EVENT AND VENUE MANAGER AT THE WASHINGTON CIVIC CENTER. HER DAILY RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE CONVERSING WITH CLIENTS TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE EVERYTHING THEY NEED, HELPING EVENT PLANNERS WITH DESIGN AND WORKING WITH STAFF TO PRESERVE THE CHARM AND CHARACTER OF THE 118-YEAR-OLD BUILDING THAT WAS FIRST A TRAIN DEPOT.



## JUST FOR FUN: WHAT IS YOUR COFFEE ORDER?

I make my own at home. I have an espresso machine so I make a latte every day. Whether hot or iced, typically it is a plain vanilla latte. Sometimes I'll put a little cinnamon on it, or if I'm on a caramel kick, I'll do a caramel drizzle.

## WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CONSIDER WORKING, LIVING, PLAYING IN BEAUFORT COUNTY?

Really, the people. The people in Beaufort County are absolutely wonderful, and it feels like a really nice down home town. I think it's one of the biggest draws that the people here are so friendly, and the added feature is that it's beautiful and it's historic. One of my favorite pastimes is to get out for a short walk, and walk around the water and the Harbor District and see the other people out enjoying it. It never fails that the parkway is packed full of people, people sitting in their cars or sitting out there enjoying the views.

## WOULD YOU CHOOSE BEAUFORT COUNTY A SECOND TIME AS AN AREA TO WORK IN?

I would choose it over and over. We did choose to move back here to Eastern North Carolina. We were in Wilmington which is where I am from, and we love it, but it didn't feel like home even though I am from there. For us and I think that's because of the people. The people here in Eastern North Carolina are just so friendly and just so wonderful. They really make you feel at home.

## WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD? IS IT POSITIVE, NEGATIVE OR SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN?

I think it's positive. It's kind of what you want to focus on. It's definitely positive especially here in North Carolina and Beaufort County. I think a lot of people here have a really positive outlook on life. It kind of lends itself to that work-life balance. I think a lot of people in Beaufort County feel that when you live in such a beautiful place and you have all of these great amenities it's really easy to see the positives in the world and the positives with people.

## WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU OVERCAME ONE OF YOUR FEARS, AND HOW DID YOU DO IT?

One of the things I was not comfortable in starting out was public speaking. I think it's something that's tough for a lot of people. Whether it's in front of crowds or even a small group of people I got over that by immersing myself in it and doing it more and more. I think it's one of those things that when you pretend you're good at it you naturally get better at it. So now I'm at the point where I'm doing a one-on-one talk with a client and her whole family and it doesn't really bother me or being in some meetings or being in city council meetings.

## HOW WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED IN TOWN LEADERSHIP AND BE MORE CIVIC-MINDED?

I think a lot of it is really just asking. I would really encourage people to go up to their city council members or even mayor or city manager and just ask what opportunities there are. I think it's really important for people to be involved, and I think younger people don't know where to start, but there's plenty of opportunities.





# RYAN PILKINGTON

AGE: 24

BY HOLLY JACKSON

**R**YAN PILKINGTON IS AN EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY ALUMN AND PARK RANGER AT GOOSE CREEK STATE PARK. HE HAS ALSO WORKED AT THE PARK AS A SEASONAL EMPLOYEE AND IN MAINTENANCE. HIS JOB RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE ADMINISTRATION, NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LIKE PRESCRIBED TREE REMOVAL, SPRAYING INVASIVE SPECIES, PLANNING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, FIRST RESPONSE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT.

## WHAT WAS YOUR INITIAL IMPRESSION OF BEAUFORT COUNTY, AND HAS IT CHANGED?

I think initially when I first came out here, I thought it was a really small county with not many people and very rural. It still is and that's how I generally think about it, but I really do enjoy working here. My ideas and impressions of Beaufort County have gotten better. It's a great place to be. I'm from Greenville. I'm from Pitt County. I grew up there as well, and I live there now so I kind of had a standard. Beaufort County is smaller than Pitt County, population wise, but I love it. It has a lot of beautiful things to offer.

## WHAT ARE SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES YOUR GENERATION FACES?

I think ours now is social media, because that's not something that was around before. Technology too - even out here at the park we still have a lot that relies on technology. When that technology goes out...for certain things we are dead in the water... Obviously, we can still do the natural resource side of things and we can lead a program without technology, but even out here in the park it's kind of interesting to see how much we rely on technology nowadays.

## WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD? IS IT POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?

I would say probably neutral. I think there are some really bad things going on in the world and some really sad things that are going on. I also think there are a lot of positive things and happy things going on.

## IF YOU COULD PLAN BEAUFORT COUNTY'S FUTURE, AND IT ALL CAME TO FRUITION, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN?

I think if I had to plan Beaufort County's future - I would say add more things to bring in a younger generation... There are some things bringing young folks in, but I feel like there could always be more. Anything to bring in those younger families. If they are going to move here, they are going to bring younger children who are eventually going to grow up, and they are going to bring in younger people.

## IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE TO WORK IN BEAUFORT COUNTY A SECOND TIME, WOULD YOU?

Yes, I would. I think it has a lot of great opportunities - natural resource wise. I think the thing I love the most is probably the different landscapes you can see - the waterfront, the forest and wetlands at Goose Creek State Park.

## JUST FOR FUN: IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH THREE PEOPLE, LIVING OR DEAD, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE AND WHAT WOULD YOU EAT?

U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt. I really respect him, and the work that he did with National Parks and establishing parks in the National Parks system. Denzel Washington, because I like his work a lot. I think that he is a good person for sure, and I think he has a lot of wisdom. For the third one, I would say Kevin Hart. He's very funny. As far as what we would eat - probably a good steak.





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**HOW DO YOU BALANCE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AT TCCS AND HARVEST CHURCH?**

It's not really two full-time jobs, so there is time to do both the best I can. They are similar in that I'm around kids in a Christian environment and have a chance to make a difference in their lives. I love working with kids and I love sports, so I think I have the perfect combination.

**HOW DID YOU GET STARTED?**

I've always loved sports and played basketball, volleyball and softball from middle school until I dislocated my knee cap during my senior basketball season. I learned to support my teammates from the bench and learned to connect with them in more of a coaching-like role after I couldn't play anymore. I started at Harvest Church 10 years ago as an intern, then became an assistant and now I'm the youth minister. I started teaching 5th & 6th grade English at TCCS as a sub in 2019-20 and stayed another year during COVID. One of the senior parents at the time, Laurie Jefferson, really pushed me to continue teaching and I added athletics after Roger Clausen retired as the AD. It's worked out really well so far.

**WHAT IS THE MOST FUN PART OF YOUR JOB AT TCCS?**

Watching our students come alive at sporting events. It's different than in the classroom, because they get to make noise cheering on their schoolmates. I am amazed at how many things we do with just 150 kids in the school. There's opportunities for everybody and it's really cool when they take advantage of them.

**WHO MENTORED YOU?**

My parents always made sure we were a part of our community and connected with other people while growing up. It can be isolating to be home-schooled, but they made sure I was taking part in activities. I owe them everything. Tera Garret, my youth pastor, and current lead pastor Brian Oliver always encouraged me to keep moving forward and Laurie Jefferson pushed me to teach at TCCS.

**WHAT'S THE BEST PART ABOUT GROWING UP AND STAYING IN OUR AREA?**

Friendly people who end up like part of your family. There's more of everything and lots of options for young families from youth sports to arts programs. You can plug into the community and participate in just about anything. The new restaurants and coffee shops are also great for our area.

# CAROLINE GARDNER

AGE: 29

BY STEVE BARNES

**C**AROLINE GARDNER WAS HOME-SCHOOLED THROUGH THE TEACH PROGRAM GROWING UP IN JAMESVILLE. SHE ATTENDED BEAUFORT COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, THEN TRANSFERRED TO EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY, WHERE SHE EARNED HER BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK.







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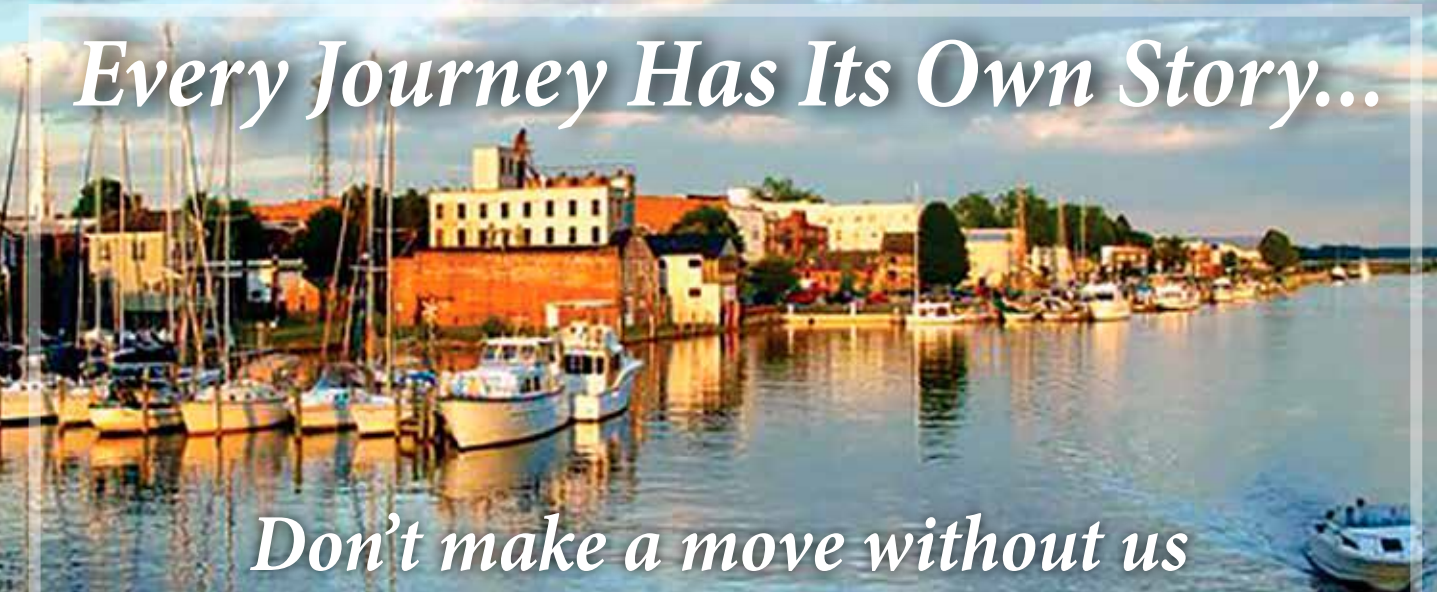
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no vision."

Helen Keller

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The Blind Center aims to support our community by offering inclusive programming and services. Our expanded eye glass program has recycled no longer used eyewear to hundreds of people who could not have accessed eye wear otherwise. Our partnership with Lions Club International affords us the opportunity to schedule and staff mobile eye clinics for the rural areas of community, and our monthly hearing clinics reaches out not just to our members but to the community at large.

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Our programming continues to grow with dedicated spaces for basket weaving, loom work, technology training, and open studio hours. There are many opportunities for volunteers to come out and do what they enjoy. If you have a special skill to share, call the center at 946-6208 or email Volunteer@theblindcenter.org.

Our newly added ENCight Gardens will support the need for fresh produce to address the growing rates of nutrition based health issues in our community. Hands on cooking curriculums created by a professional chef and blind adults ensures that participants know how to prepare their meals to honor their health and their tastebuds.

The Nutrition, Food Surety, and Garden projects would not be possible without the help from Vidant Health Foundation, AmeriCorps, and AmeriCorp VISTA



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[www.theblindcenter.org](http://www.theblindcenter.org)

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description: Man in dress shoes and trousers onto ADA sidewalk using a white cane. Crosswalk is shown behind him. Image spans center of two pages.

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02

### ROCK-A-THON

Form a team or sponsor a member to Rock- a- way to fund programming

03

### OPEN HOUSE/ VOLUNTEERING INFO

Come check out our new campus, gardens, and volunteering opportunities

## MORE FAMILY FUN

04

### SPRING PLANTING

Help us to feed our community by joining us in planting food crops.

05

### NOISY EGG HUNT

Our accessible egg hunt features “noisy” eggs. All participants will be reliant on their ears to locate their eggy treasures!

09

### MUSIC IN THE DARK

The return of Music in The Dark takes on a fun spin as we gather in the gardens! Bring a picnic or savor our offerings. Be sure to check the schedule to see what’s cooking!

09

### MOVIES BY MOONLIGHT

How about dinner and a movie? complete audio descriptions and fabulous food trucks. Truly perfect for date night, friends, or family.

## TIS THE SEASON

10

### SIGN UP FOR THE MAGICAL TREESCAPE

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11

### KRIS KRINGLE RETURNS!!

Our annual Kris Kringle Craft Show gets a magical spin set amongst the resting gardens. Hot Cocoa, pictures with Santa, amazing food, and a great lineup of artist, crafters, local businesses and musicians will delight the family.

# JOHNATHAN HARDIN

AGE: 39

BY HOLLY JACKSON

**J**ONATHAN HARDIN IS A WASHINGTON NATIVE, WHOSE INSPIRATION FOR BECOMING A FIREFIGHTER CAME FROM WATCHING “BACKDRAFT” DOZENS OF TIMES. HE IS DIVISION CHIEF AND FIRE MARSHAL AT FIRE STATION 1 IN WASHINGTON ON MARKET STREET.

## WHERE WOULD YOU TAKE SOMEONE VISITING BEAUFORT COUNTY FOR THE FIRST TIME?

Any time I have family come to town, I take them downtown and show them the older buildings... We'll walk the waterfront, walk Main Street and look at all the shops. I like to show them everywhere in town, because there's a lot of history right around town. I like to take them downtown. We have a unique area down there.

## IF YOU WERE TO GO ON AN EXTENDED VACATION, WHAT WOULD YOU MISS MOST ABOUT BEAUFORT COUNTY?

I feel like when I go to other places, you don't have the politeness that you have here as far as you say 'hey' to somebody here they'll say 'hey' back to you and they'll ask you how your day is. I feel like a lot of times you go outside Beaufort County or out of North Carolina in general and you just don't have that same hospitality.

## DO YOU THINK BEAUFORT COUNTY'S FUTURE IS HEADING IN A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE DIRECTION?

I would say positive. I've been in the Fire Marshal's office for two years now, and just in the two years I've been in here I've seen a really big influx of new businesses coming to town. When I first started doing inspections, I would see a lot of buildings stay vacant, and now it's very rare that you go and see a vacant building. It's really cool, because a lot of times you've got companies coming in whether it's a small mom-and-pop shop or an industrial building, they're renovating old structures. They're not becoming dilapidated. They actually use them and pay homage to those buildings.

## IF YOU COULD PLAN BEAUFORT COUNTY'S FUTURE, AND YOUR PLANS COME TO FRUITION, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN?

What I'd like to see is more things to do. I would like to see some other things to do - especially if you have a family. I have a 16-year-old and a 13-year-old, and they're always looking for something to do. I think we're doing good, but I think that's one area that we're lacking is just something to go to as a family and enjoy.

## WHO IN BEAUFORT COUNTY HAS INFLUENCED YOUR LIFE THE MOST?

I'd say my parents, Gwen and James Hardin. Looking back, as a kid, they were always working hard to make sure I had what I needed.

## JUST FOR FUN: WHAT'S THE BEST TELEVISION SERIES OR MOVIE YOU'VE WATCHED AND WHY?



The original “Backdraft.” As a kid wanting to be a firefighter. I saw that movie and said that's what I want to be when I grow up.



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# JARED ADAMS

AGE: 32

BY STEVE BARNES

**B**ATH NATIVE JARED ADAMS PLAYED FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, GOLF AND BASEBALL WHILE AT NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL. THE 2009 GRADUATE PLAYED CLUB GOLF WHILE OBTAINING HIS UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE DEGREES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION WITH A MATH CONCENTRATION FROM EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY. THE 32-YEAR OLD ADAMS WASN'T PLANNING ON RETURNING TO HIS ALMA MATER, BUT HAS BEEN IN CHARGE OF THE PANTHERS ATHLETIC PROGRAM SINCE THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR. HE IS ALSO THE HEAD BOYS BASKETBALL COACH AND THE GOLF COACH AT NHS.

## WHAT WAS YOUR PLAN WHEN YOU GRADUATED FROM ECU?

To get into coaching basketball on the college level somewhere, but obviously my path led me back here. I graduated in December of 2013 and there were jobs open at Ayden-Grifton HS and here. I also interviewed for a basketball staff position at Appalachian State and made the final three. I started in February of 2014 and haven't looked back. I had coached baseball in the Belhaven rec league every summer under Mike Proctor and also helped him maintain the fields. That helped me discover my passion for coaching. I coached the JV basketball team under him here and when he retired to deal with his health issues, I took over as AD. It was definitely the right call to come here. I've always loved sports and knew I wanted to coach when I couldn't play anymore.

## WHO INFLUENCED YOU?

My dad and Mike Proctor. My dad taught me how to compete and how to stay with things until the job was done right. I learned to compete through golf and still really enjoy playing and coaching it. I think it instills character and it's a sport you can play your whole life. Coach Proctor taught me how to run a solid program, how to have productive practices and how to deal with all the other things you have to handle in a high school situation. I'm very grateful to both of them. I've also taken a piece or two from every coach I've had.

## WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR JOB?

The entire process of going through a season with a particular group of kids is satisfying and rewarding, but the biggest thing is watching kids mature and improve during their time here. Most struggle as freshmen and then to see them put it together at some point is very rewarding. I try to coach them to be better than they were the day before and adopt that mindset. It's really neat to watch their skills and character improve.

## WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR SPARE TIME?

I got married in November of 2022 and we have a three-month old daughter, so I try to spend as much time as I can with them when I'm home. My wife has been very supportive of my passion for athletics and coaching and has taken more than her share of raising our daughter. I try to help her as much as possible and I like to watch college basketball on TV when I can.

## WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT BEAUFORT COUNTY?

We like the coastal community aspect and the small town atmosphere. It's easy to feel comfortable here and it still feels like home. We have a very supportive community here at Northside and I'm grateful for that.





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# TRENTON FLEMMING

AGE 27

BY STEVE BARNES

**T**RENTON FLEMMING HAS COME ALMOST FULL CIRCLE GEOGRAPHICALLY. HE GREW UP AND PLAYED HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL IN COLUMBIA, S.C., THEN PLAYED FOR DIVISION III JOHNSON UNIVERSITY IN TENNESSEE, COACHED IN MINNESOTA FOR A YEAR, MOVED TO WASHINGTON D.C. TO CONTINUE HIS CAREER AND CAME CLOSER TO HOME IN AUGUST OF 2023 TO TEACH 7TH GRADE ENGLISH AT P.S. JONES MIDDLE SCHOOL IN WASHINGTON AND COACH THE VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM AT SOUTHSIDE HS IN CHOCOWINITY.

## WHAT THINGS ABOUT WASHINGTON REMIND YOU OF GROWING UP IN COLUMBIA, S.C.?

It's nice to be back in what I call the South. There are a lot of the same family and traditional values here that I grew up with, which is nice. Washington is the smallest place I've lived, but there's also the least commotion and I can relax without having to look over my shoulder. I think there is good diversity here and P.S. Jones is a melting pot. I've enjoyed it here a lot so far.

## WHAT MAKES WASHINGTON/BEAUFORT COUNTY ATTRACTIVE TO YOUNG PROFESSIONALS?

The location is outstanding. We're close to several airports if we want to travel, we're close to the beach and it's a very walkable community. Fitness is important and it's easy to exercise here. I really enjoy walking on the boardwalk

along the waterfront and seeing what's new downtown. It's not too touristy and there's a good variety of food.

## WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED THE MOST ABOUT TEACHING MIDDLE SCHOOL KIDS?

Middle schoolers challenge me every day. Not every student is on the same level, so I have to figure out how to break things down so they understand. I try to empower them to set goals and take ownership of their education and think long term. It's fun to see them figure things out after they say they can't.

## THE SOUTHSIDE BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM HAS STRUGGLED THIS SEASON. HOW HAS IT MADE YOU A BETTER COACH?

This season has been a series of teachable moments. We lost two senior starters to season-ending injuries, which is very tough for them. However, it presents an opportunity for a younger guy

to step up. We had very little varsity experience returning from last year, so I've tried to build relationships with all of them so our future will be brighter. We have grown as a unit and learned that there's no time to hang our heads and feel sorry for ourselves. It's important for young people to learn to persevere through hard times.

## YOU'VE COACHED AT THE SMALL COLLEGE LEVEL AND PRIVATELY. HAS THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL BEEN A GOOD FIT?

Absolutely. I have a passion for basketball and have figured out that I can make a real impact at this level. I have proven to myself that I can make a positive impact at P.S. Jones in the classroom and at Southside on the court. I've known that I wanted to be a coach for a long time so I can help through basketball. We are planting seeds here right now and it will be fun to watch them grow.



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**WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU OVERCAME ONE OF YOUR FEARS AND HOW DID YOU DO IT?**

"The first thing that comes to mind would be wakeboarding, when you are trying to land a new aerial trick while being towed by a boat while standing on a wakeboard. It isn't an easy sport to begin with. And on my level, you are always trying to master the next trick. And what comes with that is some pretty hard falls and the potential of hurting yourself. You may not land it the first time, but when you finally do, there is the reward factor of achieving something that you had previously failed at. You learn to overcome the fear by knowing the feeling of what a good result can be."

**WHERE WOULD YOU TAKE SOMEONE WHO IS VISITING WASHINGTON FOR THE FIRST TIME?**

"This obviously will seem biased, but presuming they need a place to stay, I would make sure they booked a room at the Bath Harbor Marina and Motel. From there I would definitely take them to downtown Washington and show them the new shops, get some lunch or dinner, and take them to the brewery for some beers. And I would show them the waterfront, which I've already done with several other friends. It always proves to be a good time."

**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES YOUR GENERATION FACES VERSUS OTHER GENERATIONS?**

"I think as a young person just getting started out, the interest rates are pretty insane right now and make for some very difficult decisions. The dollar definitely doesn't go as far as it used to, which obviously impacts housing. It makes it very difficult to navi-

gate your way particularly for first time homebuyers. It definitely is not easy right now."

**HOW WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE YOUNGER PEOPLE TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN THE TOWN OR COUNTY LEADERSHIP?**

"The one thing I believe would help, is to promote and urge young professionals to become more involved. One way would be through the Washington Young Professionals group, of which I am a part of. As a group, we are trying to connect the younger demographic across the board and get them more involved with Beaufort County so there are younger voices at the table. The young professionals host a monthly meeting, which affords them to get together and share their opinions. If they happen to need help it can also serve as a means of assistance and support. I've met some really good friends as a result of being a part of this group."

**WHO INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST WHEN YOU'RE FIRST GETTING STARTED?**

"It would definitely be my dad. He was super into boating, primarily sailing. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't have the interest in boating and water sports that I do today. He started taking me out for the very first time, when I was just one or two. He would take us sailing or power boating all of the time which included trips to Ocracoke or trips just up the river to Washington, NC. We would go all over the place. And, I definitely have to say my friend Kara Austin in Wilmington. She is the one who pretty much mentored me to get into boating more and pushed me to take that next step in my career. I worked with her a lot when I was in school at UNC Wilmington."

**JUST FOR FUN: IF YOU HAD A BOAT WHAT WOULD YOU NAME IT?**

"To be honest, I have seen so many good boat names, but if I were to name a boat it would be Telltales. For those with no knowledge of boating, it would conjure up thoughts of telling stories or tales. But for those familiar with sailing, they know telltales are the two little strings on the mainsail. Depending on the direction they are pointing, they determine if you have the right wind direction and if the sail is in the correct position to optimize the wind efficiency."

# CORBIN MINOR

AGE: 27

BY CLARK CURTIS

**C**ORBIN MINOR GREW UP IN BATH, WHICH IS WHERE HE QUICKLY FELL IN LOVE WITH THE WATER. THROUGH MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL, IF HE WASN'T IN THE CLASSROOM, YOU COULD FIND HIM ON THE WATER FOUR TO FIVE DAYS A WEEK. HE WAS ALWAYS HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS WHO SHARED HIS SAME PASSION FOR THE WATER. WHILE ATTENDING COLLEGE AT UNC WILMINGTON, HE CONTINUED HIS PASSION FOR WAKEBOARDING, AND OTHER WATER SPORTS ON THE SIDE, AND RETURNED TO BATH AND OPENED HIS OWN BUSINESS, WAKE2WAKE WATERSPORTS IN 2018. HE AND HIS WIFE CARRO ALSO RUN THE BATH HARBOR MARINA AND MOTEL, WHICH HIS PARENTS PURCHASED OVER TWENTY YEARS AGO.







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# LOGAN VAN STAALDUINEN

AGE: 25

BY STEVE BARNES

**L**OGAN VAN STAALDUINEN GRADUATED FROM NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY IN THREE YEARS AFTER PLAYING MULTIPLE SPORTS AT PUNGO CHRISTIAN ACADEMY IN BELHAVEN. THE BATH NATIVE LEFT RALEIGH WITH A DEGREE IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND THANKS TO FORTUITOUS TIMING, HAD A JOB WAITING FOR HIM AT HIS OLD SCHOOL. VAN STAALDUINEN BECAME THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AT PCA FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR IN ADDITION TO COACHING THE BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM AND THE GIRLS SOCCER TEAM.

## DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT POSITION OR DID IT CHOOSE YOU?

It definitely chose me. I was a manager for the Wolfpack basketball team the first two years Kevin Keatts was there and wanted a graduate assistant position so I could get into college coaching. I was doing a camp at PCA the summer before my senior year and athletic director Melanie Sawyer, who was my AD when I was here, noticed my work. She had been here a long time and was looking for change. She thought I would be a good choice to step in for her and I decided to take it after I graduated.

## NOT MANY PEOPLE STEP INTO A LEADERSHIP ROLE AT THEIR ALMA MATER AT 22 YEARS OLD. WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST SURPRISE?

One of the big reasons I took the job was to teach and coach three of my siblings. I am the oldest of five. The biggest surprise was the level of respect they gave me and how well we got along on a daily basis. I've been coaching my youngest brother, Drew, since he could dribble and he and his friends are seniors this year. I've really enjoyed watching all of them develop on and off the floor. I wasn't sure how it would work out when I took the job, but it's been an awesome decision so far.

## WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

We've expanded our middle school sports programs, added girls soccer and tennis and also had girls golf one year. We are also adding boys tennis this spring. We won the 1A Wells Fargo Cup for all-around program excellence in 2022-23 for the first time in school history.

I'm also proud to be a male role model for our students and realize I need to work hard and set high standards for them to follow. I've also expanded my personal faith in order to be a Christian mentor to them. The Lord has definitely blessed me with the way my life lined up. I couldn't have done it on my own.

## HOW HAS THIS AREA CHANGED SINCE YOU WERE IN SCHOOL HERE?

I got married during my time at N.C. St. and my wife, Taylor, and I were amazed how much things changed while we were away.

Downtown Washington is an amazing place after the streetscape project with all the new businesses and downtown Belhaven has come a long way also with Riverforest Manor being redone and Spoon River opening. We like to walk around downtown Washington and go into the shops to see what's new. We can get coffee, a meal, or ice cream if we're in the mood and there's lots to see along the waterfront.

## IF YOU COULD BE INVISIBLE, HOW WOULD YOU USE THAT SUPERPOWER?

Probably when Mr. Daniels is looking for me to help him with a job, like moving something, or when I hear my name on the PA system to report to the office. It would be okay if I couldn't be found sometimes.





# BRONTÉ LABBÉ

AGE: 29

BY CLARK CURTIS

**B**RONTÉ LABBÉ IS ORIGINALLY FROM LOS ANGELES, BUT MOVED TO WASHINGTON A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AGO. LABBÉ IS THE VISUAL ARTS AND MARKETING DIRECTOR FOR THE TURNAGE THEATRE AND THE BEAUFORT COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL. AS THE VISUAL ARTS DIRECTOR SHE OVERSEES ALL OF THE GALLERY SPACES. AS MARKETING DIRECTOR SHE MANAGES ALL OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING SCHEDULES, AS-WELL-AS THE BRANDING, GRAPHIC DESIGN, AND WEBSITE MAKEOVERS AS NEEDED.

## WHO IN BEAUFORT COUNTY HAS INFLUENCED YOUR LIFE THE MOST?

I would have to say, Alayna Boyer. She was an intern at the council right when I was first getting started. It was a time when I not only needed a co-worker I could lean on and really trust, but a friend. Alayna was born and raised in Eastern North Carolina, and was able to assist me in keeping a finger on the pulse of things in the area. She has been such a good friend and a great asset to me over the last year.

## WHERE WOULD YOU TAKE SOMEONE VISITING BEAUFORT COUNTY FOR THE FIRST TIME?

I definitely would take them to the historic Turnage Theatre, as it is such a very special place. And, of course, the waterfront. That's what sold me on the area. It is so special and always worth seeing if you have visitors coming into town.

## WHAT ARE SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES YOUR GENERATION FACES VERSUS OTHER GENERATIONS?

I think one of the unique challenges that my generation faces is definitely the fight for a seat at the table. Currently that table feels as if it is very full, so it is difficult sometimes to be invited and to have a say. It is important for people to understand that the perspective of those who are younger is always needed when you are looking to grow. Just being open to see things from another perspective, is critically important.

## WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CONSIDER WORKING, LIVING, AND PLAYING IN BEAUFORT COUNTY?

I think Beaufort County is a very special place to work, live, and play. Even though we are a rural county we do have a lot of opportunities here, especially with our nonprofits. Our nonprofit network is really unique and special, and seems to serve very special niches. Being from Los Angeles where resources were very unavailable and scarce, it is refreshing to be in a place where there are a lot of opportunities and you are invited to take advantage of them. You are oftentimes met with a lot more understanding here, which goes a long way for people like me who are from a much bigger city.

## HOW WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED IN THEIR TOWNS' OR COUNTYS' LEADERSHIP?

Definitely through the Arts Council. There are a lot of opportunities here through attending classes or volunteering, and just coming to events and being a face in the crowd. Beyond that there are advancement opportunities for growth at Beaufort County Community College. Washington is so special if you want to get involved. Just show up and be a face in front of someone and there will be opportunities to get involved. The area truly is unique.

## JUST FOR FUN: IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH THREE PEOPLE, LIVING OR DEAD, WHO WOULD THEY BE AND WHAT WOULD YOU SERVE?

Vivienne Westwood, a fashion designer and style icon, my Mama, Gail Labbé, and my childhood best friend, Lizzette Llamas. All there for dinner would be a fun group. As for the meal, my Mama's Crawfish étouffée.





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# STEVIE GREEN

AGE: 27

BY STEVE BARNES

**A**FTER HIS OUTSTANDING MULTI-SPORT CAREER AT WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL ENDED WITH GRADUATION IN 2014, STEVIE GREEN WANTED TO LEAVE AND STAY GONE FOR A WHILE. HE PLAYED FOOTBALL, THEN COACHED IT AT FAYETTEVILLE STATE AFTER STARTING AT ELIZABETH CITY STATE, THEN WORKED IN APEX AFTER LEAVING FAYETTEVILLE. HE CAME HOME THIS FALL TO TEACH EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN AT WHS AND COACH FOOTBALL, GIRLS BASKETBALL AND TRACK.





#### **WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT BEING BACK HOME?**

I'm either at school, on a field or in a gym or at my house, so I'd say the slower pace. I don't get out much, but when I do, I like that there's no traffic and that I usually don't have to wait in line wherever I am. Washington's pace fits me a lot better than the city pace did. I also enjoy being around when my family needs me.

#### **WHAT CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF WASHINGTON STAND OUT AND WHY DID YOU COME BACK?**

It seemed like I was always outside playing a sport or riding bikes with my friends when I was younger. I was busy with football or summer basketball and decided I wanted to go away to college to have a different experience. I didn't come

home much, maybe a day or two, but the challenge of building the girls basketball program drew me back.

#### **YOU HAD AN OUTSTANDING FOOTBALL CAREER AT FAYETTEVILLE STATE AND WERE A PAM PACK ASSISTANT THIS PAST FALL. WHY BASKETBALL?**

I played football because I was good at it and enjoyed it, but basketball has always been my favorite sport. I can't play football anymore, but I can still get up and down a basketball court.

#### **WHAT'S BEEN THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE SO FAR?**

Teaching a majority of the team how to play. We have good numbers, but not much experience. I feel like I can build this program how I want to and it will be

fun when success comes, because there hasn't been any for a while. The best part is to watch their skills improve. We are so much better than we were three months ago and I know I made the right call coming home.

#### **WHAT ARE THE POSITIVE THINGS ABOUT WASHINGTON IN YOUR OPINION?**

Washington has more recreational offerings for kids than they used to. Rec sports is a great way to introduce sports to kids at a young age and having something to do keeps them out of trouble. I've grown to appreciate being near the water and the fact that it moves at the right pace. I don't know who or where I would be without Washington. I have great memories of growing up here and am looking forward to being around as an adult.

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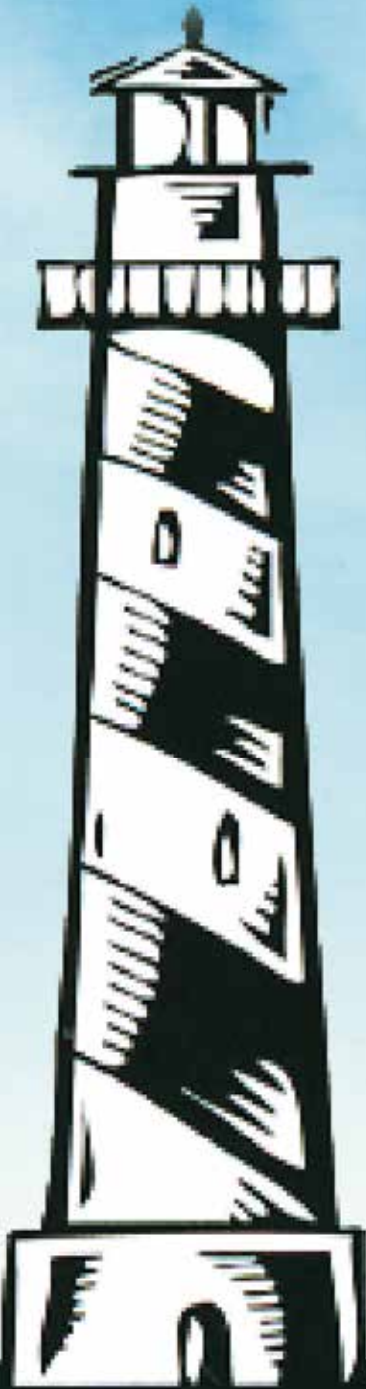
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**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES YOUR GENERATION FACES VERSUS OTHER GENERATIONS?**

I think a lot of people my age have the belief that the older you get it is too late to start your own business. But we have to remember that our dreams do not end until the day you are put to rest. I also think, myself included, that it is important to learn patience, as I want things to happen quickly. It's important to understand that things do take time.

**WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD? POSITIVE, NEGATIVE OR SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN?**

I'm not going to say it is not safe, but I do think about a lot of things that are going on around the world, like the war stuff in Gaza. I try to keep a positive attitude and believe I can push through it all if I don't think so hard about it.

**WHO INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST WHEN YOU WERE JUST STARTING OUT WITH YOUR BUSINESS?**

My mom and dad are definitely at the top of the list. It may sound silly but my actual dream about having my own business was a motivator. And seeing a lot of YouTubers who are influencers and successful with their merch businesses, inspired me to start my own business.

**WHAT IS IT LIKE LIVING IN BEAUFORT COUNTY?**

I really love living here because I can walk downtown from my house all the way down to the river and back. I also love being along the riverfront to watch the sunrises and sunsets. I also like attending many of the events along the waterfront.

**IT IS A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN BEAUFORT COUNTY AND YOU HAVE THE DAY OFF. WHAT WILL YOU DO?**

Watch YouTube videos of other YouTubers, editing stuff, working on my business, calling my good friend Julia, or just playing outside with friends around the neighborhood.

**JUST FOR FUN: WHAT IS THE BEST SERIES OR MOVIE YOU'VE EVER STREAMED AND WHY DO YOU LIKE IT?**

"Most definitely Cobra Kai, a martial arts comedy. There is so much action and I'm really wowed with some of their karate moves. I'm certainly guilty of binge watching the entire series. And when I need a good laugh or want to laugh on purpose I stream Chris Tucker's live shows. The first time I ever watched him I busted out in tears."

# JOSIAH JOHNSON

AGE: 17

BY CLARK CURTIS

**A**T THE YOUNG AGE OF 17, JOSIAH JOHNSON, IS MAKING HIS DREAM OF SELLING CUSTOM DESIGNED MERCH COME TRUE. IN NOVEMBER OF 2023, HE CREATED A CUSTOM LOGO, AND LAUNCHED HIS COMPANY DJ DAWG. HIS FIRST LINE OF CLOTHING BEGAN WITH A CUSTOMIZED HOODIE, WITH PLANS TO EXPAND TO HATS, SHIRTS, TANK TOPS, AND "JUST ABOUT ANYTHING PEOPLE WEAR." HE ALREADY HAD HIS SIGHTS SET ON HAVING HIS OWN BRICK AND MORTAR PLACE, THAT WILL BE AFFECTIONATELY NAMED STACY.



**WHAT IS YOUR ROMAN EMPIRE? SOMETHING RANDOM THAT YOU THINK ABOUT ALL OF THE TIME?**

I would have to say it has evolved over time. It used to be my next trip, as I love to travel. When my oldest brother passed away, I always said to myself, “when the opportunity to travel presents itself, take advantage of it.” However, now, more often than not, I’m thinking about work. We recently ventured out and took over some new properties, and also started managing properties that we don’t own. I certainly still like to travel, but I find myself often thinking about the next business venture.”

**WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU OVERCAME ONE OF YOUR FEARS AND HOW DID YOU DO IT?**

A few years ago a lawsuit was filed against our company by an employee of some of our properties in Virginia. We had the opportunity to settle out of court but I never wanted the integrity of the company to be questioned. My biggest fear was that we might lose in court, even though we knew the allegations were false. I was able to overcome my fears by consulting with one of my brothers and a good friend. They told me I had made it through the last few years dealing with it, so just see it though. Sometimes you just need that good counsel. As it turned out, facing my fears and telling the truth was the right choice. Imagine a Black owned management company on trial in front of an all white jury in Virginia. Talk about being scared! But they saw the truth and ruled in our favor.

**DO YOU THINK BEAUFORT COUNTYS’ FUTURE IS HEADED IN A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE DIRECTION AND WHY?**

I believe Beaufort County has the potential to do some great things. I like seeing the diversity of the new business owners and the new businesses that are coming in. From a political standpoint it has been good to see the new minority representation on city council. My hope is with all of this happening, that everyone has the mind to work together and continue to build on the progress we have made and not digress. My father was a strong advocate of diverse

representation and was instrumental in a lot of the changes within the government that we see today.

**HOW WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE, SUCH AS YOURSELF, TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN CITY OR COUNTY LEADERSHIP?**

First, our young people need to be present. It is very easy, and I take ownership of this, as well, of focusing too much on your own work, and not taking the time to become involved. It’s all about prioritizing and finding the time to go to meetings and getting more involved. It is important for us all to hold our elected officials accountable and make sure that they are fulfilling their end of the bargains, and not just telling us what they want us to hear to get their votes. There are some young folks who don’t see the need to vote because they are conflicted by the words of some of those who are running. I say, “exercise your right to vote, as we worked hard to get it.” Time is one thing we can’t get back. If we value the community in which we live, we have to take the time.

**IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH THREE PEOPLE, LIVING OR DEAD, WHO WOULD THEY BE AND WHAT WOULD YOU SERVE FOR DINNER?**

I would love to have a conversation with Jesus, as it would be life changing and allow me to get the full concept of what he went through. I think Dr. Martin Luther King would make for a very interesting conversation. I would love his take on where we are as a nation and everything that he was fighting for. And there is a tie for third. It would either be President Obama or Denzel Washington. President Obama, just for what it all meant for him being the first Black President. And Denzel Washington, because he is my favorite actor and has served as inspiration to me. As for dinner it would have to be my favorite, ribeye steak.

**JUST FOR FUN: WHAT IS THE BEST SERIES OR MOVIE THAT YOU HAVE EVER STREAMED AND WHY DO YOU LIKE IT?**

“My favorite movie of all times is Bad Boys! It has a great mixture of action, comedy and drama, and checks all of the boxes for me. To me it is very authentic in how it is presented and remains my all time favorite.”



# JOSEPH MOORE

AGE: 36

BY CLARK CURTIS

**F**OLLOWING HIS GRADUATION FROM WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL IN 2005, JOSEPH MOORE RECEIVED A FULL SCHOLARSHIP TO ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE EARNED A DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, WITH CONCENTRATIONS IN BANKING AND FINANCING, AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT. HE WENT ON TO RECEIVE HIS MBA AT NC CENTRAL UNIVERSITY IN 2011 FOLLOWING GRADUATION HE WENT TO WORK WITH HIS FATHER, REVEREND DAVID L. MOORE AND OLDEST BROTHER, JONATHAN J. L. MOORE, AT THE FAMILY RUN BUSINESS, METROPOLITAN PROPERTY MANAGEMENT. FOLLOWING THE PASSING OF HIS FATHER IN 2019, MOORE BECAME THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COMPANY. HE IS ALSO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LEON RANDOLPH FUNERAL HOME.



### WHO WOULD YOU SAY IN BEAUFORT COUNTY HAS INFLUENCED YOUR LIFE THE MOST?

That is a tough one, as I have always gone by the beat of my own drum and tend to be a bit hard headed. With that said, I would say my employees have been a big influence, as it is an opportunity to spitball ideas with others and learn new things. But, if I had to name one, I would have to say Braughnson Gray. I first met him while still working in my garage as he was interested in my work and wanted me to build a table for him. As it eventually played out, he decided to get out of the real estate business and come to work for me. We have been working together now for four years. He has been a big influence in terms of how to grow and change as a business.

### WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CONSIDER WORKING, LIVING, AND PLAYING IN WASHINGTON?

There are lots of reasons, but if I advertise them too well, I'm afraid some of them will go away. I would tell folks that the traffic is not a problem, there is plenty to do if you like the outdoors and the water, and the people are great. I know it is a small town but it never feels like there is something I can't find if I need it. And the community is very open to supporting small businesses.

### DO YOU THINK BEAUFORT COUNTY IS HEADED IN A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE DIRECTION?

I would say positive. I'm an optimistic person by nature to start with, as you have to be as an entrepreneur. I believe that Washington is headed in the right direction. One of the things that first endeared me to Washington was the people. I'm seeing a lot of new faces in town these days and they seem to be just as friendly, so I'm guessing that is part of what is bringing them here. There is a lot to like here and I feel things are moving in the right direction.

### WHO INFLUENCED YOU WHEN YOU WERE FIRST GETTING STARTED?

As far as woodworking, it would have to be my dad. I was lucky that my dad invested the time to teach me how to do the basic things like turn a screwdriver, swing a hammer, hang doors, and quarter round. Just some of the basic skills that have enabled me to be creative and to start making things. He was always very supportive of me and instilled a work ethic in me to always strive to do something the best that I can.

### DO YOU THINK THE CURRENT CITY/COUNTY LEADERSHIP LISTENS TO THE NEEDS AND/OR WANTS OF THE YOUNG RESIDENTS?

I don't know, to be perfectly honest as I have never voiced any personal concerns. But with that said, it is a small town and I feel that I have a better chance of having a conversation with someone if the need arises. And because it is a small town, I sense there isn't as big of a gap between the leadership and individuals as there would be in a larger city. My experience with city officials who have stopped by the shop to introduce themselves, has been very positive.

### JUST FOR FUN: WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE SUPERHERO AND WHY?

"Batman! He really isn't a superhero but a man who has a lot of tools at his disposal. I definitely would go with him as he is more relatable to me. I'm not knocking the others, as the controversy between Batman and Superman has raged on. But I would definitely go with Batman."

# LELAND GALT

AGE: 34

BY CLARK CURTIS

**L**ELAND GALT STARTED HIS OWN BUSINESS, WASHINGTON WOODWORKING COMPANY, IN 2018. WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER, GALT ALWAYS FOUND HIMSELF MAKING THINGS FROM OLD BROKEN SKATEBOARDS AND WORKING WITH FRIENDS WHO REALLY SPARKED HIS INTEREST AND APPRECIATION OF WOOD. SO MUCH SO THAT ONE DAY HE WANTED TO START HIS OWN SAWMILL. IT ALL BEGAN IN THE GARAGE OF HIS HOME, WHERE HE GOT LOGS FROM NUMEROUS SOURCES, SAWED THEM INTO SLABS, LET THEM DRY, AND STARTED MAKING TABLES. AND FROM THERE, THINGS HAVE JUST BLOSSOMED FOR ONE YOUNG BEAUFORT COUNTY ENTREPRENEUR.







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