



Entrepreneurship | Growth | Empowerment

Self-Love | Evolution

RCP MUSE

PLUS MORE EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS!

WINTER 2021-22

EXCLUSIVE

NGOZI OLIVIA OSUOHA

POETRY

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

HYMNS OF THE SOUL

ANTHOLOGIES

BEGINNINGS IN

WRITING

DREAMS

GOALS

DANTE SANDS

KEISHA "COCO" MOLBY-BAEZ

**AUTHORESS "J.R." JASMINE
TILMAN**

YASMIN BROWN

EXCLUSIVE

DAVID L. HENRY

HATTRESS BARBOUR

RGP MUSE TEAM

To create, is to go beyond your imagination. Make no limits on what you can do. Your artistic craft is a gift.~Wynter Aiken

RASHONDA AIKEN

Rashonda Aiken is a an award winning self published author who founded and created along with her two daughters, publishing company Rahway Girlz Publishing.

Rashonda is Co-Editor and Assistant Artistic Director of RGP Muse Magazine.

HANNAH ABIONA

Hannah Abiona is a self-published author with a degree in English from Kean University. Her works stems into poetry and content creating. She is a freelance editor.

Hannah is Co-Editor of RGP Muse Magazine's 3rd Issue, Winter 2021-22.



KNOW ABOUT WYNTER AIKEN

Here we are into RGP Muse Magazine's 3rd issue! I am so excited to introduce these new features to you, the readers. These stories center around various themes from poetry, self-growth and establishment to of course- entrepreneurship.

I am proud of the progress RGP Muse Magazine has made thus far and it's all because of you! I thank you. Thank you for the support, the shares, the likes and love.

It means a lot to me for you to read these stories and come away with inspiration and hopefully some encouragement to do what you truly love.



Editor In Chief and Content Creator

If you ever wish to create something, go for it. Don't ever doubt yourself. RGP Muse Magazine will soar and reach across thousands. I'm sure of it. All you have to do is believe and it will happen!

Wynter Aiken

A B O U T R G P M U S E

RGP Muse Magazine started as a fleeting idea before I took the plunge and started my first issue. This magazine is not only my first written publication ever, but it's my greatest accomplishment to date. No matter what anyone says, I'm proud to have done it, created it, cried over it, and I'm so blessed to share my hard work with others.

RGP Muse Magazine welcomes all artists and creatives from writers, authors, poets, and entrepreneurs to musicians, rappers, singers and more!

I want to personally thank all of the features that have been and will be a part of RGP Muse Magazine! Without your interest and participation, RGP Muse Magazine would not continue to get noticed. I thank you.

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W W W . R A H W A Y G I R L Z P U B L I S H I N G . C O M / W Y N T E R

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"Achieve and Keep Going!"~

RGP MUSE MAGAZINE

– @WynterAiken



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"Go for your dreams. They're waiting."~

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"Go for your dreams. They're waiting."~

In The Now With JASMINE Tilman

The interview

Jasmine Tilman aka
Authoress J.R. Tilman is a
woman with a bundle of goals
and aspirations. She is the
ultimate writing queen!

The question

Who exactly is Jasmine
Tilman aka Authoress J.R.
Tilman?

"I
have
become
the
woman
I
always
wanted
to be"



All Photo Credit Belongs to Jasmine Tilman

**"THE WOMAN WHO HELPS OTHERS
CONQUER THEIR DREAMS WHILE
COMPLETING HERS."**

*From a small town in Ohio to
achieving big dreams, Jasmine
Tilman proves everyday that with
courage and motivation, dreams can
come true. Just make it happen!*

"Jasmine Tilman, a.k.a. J.R. Tilman
is a small town girl with huge
dreams that always lead her to
writing books. I want them to be
shifted into movies. I'm from
Toledo, Ohio. From a small family
with a single mother and a from
time to time father, I pushed
through the many obstacles to
transpire my dreams."

*You've achieved a lot when it comes
to helping others, what do you think
about what you've done thus far?*

"I have become the woman I
always wanted to be. The woman
who helps others conquer their
dreams while completing her own;
creating major content for
entertainment and life lessons all at
the same time."



"I TRULY BELIEVE I WAS BORN WITH THE GIFT OF WRITING AND HELPING OTHERS."

TILMAN EXPLAINS HOW EVEN IN CHILDHOOD, WRITING WAS HER CALLING AND WHY SHE BECAME A LIFE COACH!

Tilman has always known she was meant to be a writer. At a young age, writing has been apart of her journey into adulthood. Tilman shares with readers just what made writing become her partner in life.

You are clearly an avid reader and writer, how did you start? Was it a childhood past time? How did reading and writing become a passion and now life's work for you?

"I've been a writer since I was a child. Always hoping to have my work hit the big screens. I indulged in my gift from God. I never looked up to someone as a child and said "I want to be a writer like them," I truly believe I was born with the gift of writing."

Tilman has also branched her way into life coaching- giving others a way to become better and brighter than what they already are!

If new readers were to go to you for your coaching services, how would people be able to sign up?

"Right now, I am in the making of my Life Coaching courses. But I have a website-www.jrtilman.com/bookrelease for anyone that wants to keep up with my upcoming novels, journals, life coaching courses, interviews, and Facebook community."

Why become a life coach? Did something occur in your life where you felt you had to take on this path?

"I always knew I wanted to help others. In high school, I would always sit in the counselor's office for advice. And to my surprise, other students waiting for assistance would vent to me and ask for my advice."

How do you think your coaching abilities have helped people, especially teens and young adults so far?

"Even with my everyday life, everyone shares their view on my great intelligence and old soul spirit. I am very positive to talk to."



BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!

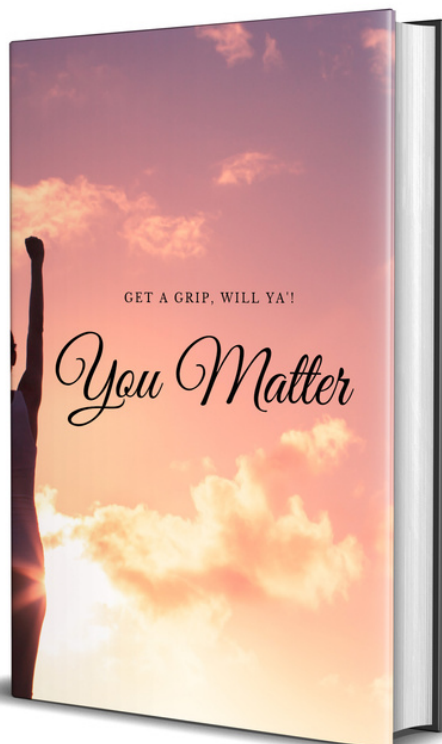
Tilman shares with readers the message behind her self-created journals. A helping hand to all women!

What do you want your audience to know as they use this journal for their own paths, goals and dreams?

"I wanted to dedicate this one of three journals, to both women and upcoming women. I wanted to reach my audience by sharing my story to show that they're not alone. To share the significance that we need to stick together to get far within our community."

What about this journal series expresses your personal experiences?

"I went through plenty of obstacles in my life wanting to give up, shifting my mindset to get where I needed to be. It is no walk in the park, but it is worth your time, to work on yourself and who you are as a person. Everyone always speaks on "finding oneself" but not many share "how" to do so. I wanted to give a front seat view of my journey and explain how I became who I am in detail."



Authoress Jasmine Tilman has been a writer ever since she can remember. She has spread her story across thousands and inspires many.

While Tilman gives motivation to achieve success to others, she carries a message of strength and admires those who guide her on the right path.

You've inspired many and changed teens and young adults lives with your inspiring journey and coaching services, but who have you had as an inspiration on your journey?

"Even though our relationship wasn't together when I was coming up, my father gave me tons of great advice. As well as my mother, she's always been in my ear even with me running the streets for a long while. I always took her advice into great consideration."

As an ever growing brand and person, what does self-establishment mean to you?

"Self-establishment means to live true and free in the skin you're in. Which defines the meaning of my coaching business, "Know YourSELF LLC." My main goal is to not only break generational curses, but to eliminate them all. To create a more positive and self-acceptance generation."

What is it about the brand Jasmine Tilman aka Authoress J.R Tilman that you believe makes you different?

"I believe that I am extremely open minded. My mother told me 'I have the best of both worlds', meaning I have both middle class and lower class environment experience. I know what it's like to live in a 'good' scaled neighborhood, and the 'ghettos' as well."

What have you set your mind on now?

"I've been thinking heavily on disturbing content of Supernatural fiction novels, motivational, and black history journals, along with urban fiction novels. There's no limit to the work I want to bring to life over the next 8-10 years. I will not stop inspiring, entertaining, and helping the world until I am gone. And maybe not even then."

Thinking back to your beginnings up until now, how would you describe your growth and self-evolution? How would you say your own journey has empowered you to be a better writer and author?

"First I want to thank God for the life he has granted me. I am extremely grateful for the growth I have experienced coming up. A lot of people saw a future of destruction and failure for me which pushed me to go harder each day. I am more wise, more knowledgeable, and most importantly, I know who I am and who I'm going to be."

You ever feel discouraged? That there's a massive weight set on your shoulders through your journey?

"Sometimes I do get discouraged, but I make sure to get back up and keep going because what I feel I didn't accomplish today may transpire tomorrow."



"LOVE YOURSELF BEFORE ANYTHING OR ANYONE. GO AFTER THOSE THINGS THAT MAKE YOUR STOMACH CRINGE AT THE THOUGHT OF DOING THEM. YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO!"

ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE N' WAR.



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**"INCURSION: THIN LINES BETWEEN
LOVE & WAR"
TILMAN'S
SUPERNATURAL DEBUT NOVEL!**

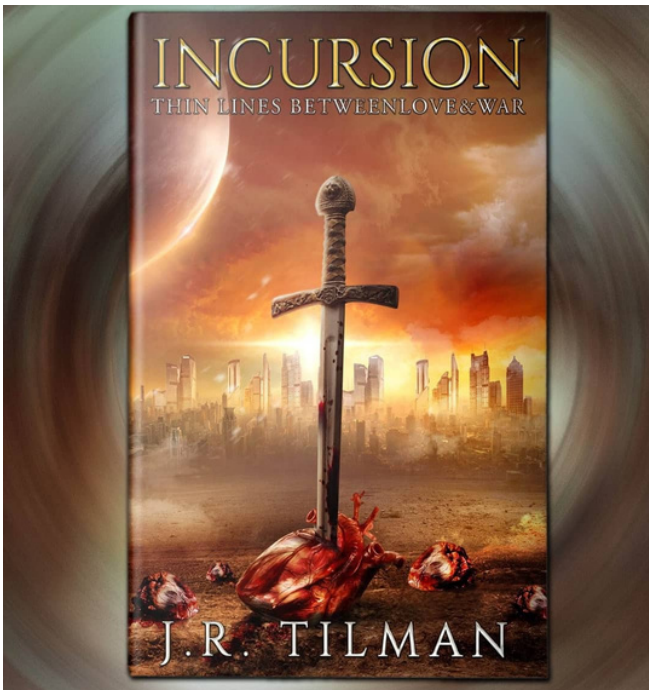
While Tilman has written expanded her written gift into journals, she has also soared into the supernatural realm in her book "Incursion: Thin Lines Between Love & War". Tilman gives readers an inside look!

What made you write your Supernatural debut novel "INCURSION; THIN LINES BETWEEN LOVE and WAR"?

"Other than me being a die hard Supernatural fiction fan, I wanted to tell my story in an entertaining way. When I was a child, after my grandfather passed and my cousin got incarcerated, I went down the wrong path. Reasons were because these two were the closest male figures I had at the time."

What is the story and message behind this first book?

"I turned to supernatural fiction taking a huge liking to the shows/ movies. Seeing that I saw these characters as brothers, bestfriends, father figures, etc. They attained great loyalty, love, and passion to each other. All I wish I had growing up."





All Photo Credit Belongs to Yasmin Brown

Yasmin S. Brown has not only been a pioneer in the writing industry, but she has cemented her talent and knowledge into various areas of expertise. Her work stems from not only writing and entrepreneurship, but mental health work and also social advocacy into sexual assault, domestic violence and inequality. Brown's works is stellar, inspiring, and motivating for those who wish to do the same.

For readers everywhere, who is Yasmin Brown?

"Yasmin S. Brown is a paralegal on a mission to help women go from trauma to leadership. After surviving a past trauma, I decided to make lemonade out the lemons. Publishing my first book series in 2018, but I didn't stop there. With a passion to help other people succeed I started Yiry-Elements."

What is Yiry-Elements? What is your organization about?

"Yiry-Elements is an organization based on faith, hope, love and support to create leaders through personal growth and self-expression. We utilize creativity and innovation to unyoke future leaders in community, business and self."

You are clearly an avid reader and writer, how did you start reading and writing? Was it a childhood past time? How did reading and writing become a passion and now life's work for you?

"I started writing poetry as a young child building off of "Rose are Red, Violets are Blue." I did not become an avid reader until later in my years during college, when I realized communication and literacy classes would grow into a mindset of knowledge and skills. I still love to write poetry beyond my childhood stepping stone."

Yiry-Elements is an organization based on faith, hope, love and support to create leaders through personal growth and self-expression. We utilize creativity and innovation to unyoke future leaders in community, business and self.

Fully In Tune With Yasmin Brown

"Trust yourself. You can do this."
– @YasmineBrown

A Childhood

WORTH REMEMBERING

Writing has been apart of Yasmin Brown's world since a young age. She embarked into the writing scene with a heart filled with passion for the craft and a goal to succeed beyond her limits.

What was the first piece of writing that you did as a child?

"My first poem I ever wrote as an adult is called "Rain." As a child my parents had me sit down after school to do homework in order to receive the reward of going outside to hang with my friends. In a sense, there was some reading involved, but never a specific book. The passion of reading and writing started at Point Park University, where I started my criminal justice journey."

How did reading and writing become a passion and now life's work for you?

"My passion switched to my life's work when I discovered a lot of unhealed trauma. Seeking a therapist and journaling created a stronger passion for education through literacy and personal growth. Combining the two boiled over to a desire to assist others with overcoming and restoration."

After succeeding beyond childhood ambitions, Brown proceeded to put her knowledge more into the black and brown community. She put even more work into the Mental Health Community.



TO BE NORMAL, IS TO BE FREE.

Yasmin Brown's life journey soars through the words and characters of novels. She embodies her life's experiences into her work where readers can connect and see inside Yasmin's world. "I Just Want To Be Normal", a story of hope and strength when battling childhood kidney disease, shows readers that life has obstacles, but you can overcome.

"I Just Want To Be Normal" is one of your best sellers- what is the backstory to this story? How has your story on fighting childhood kidney disease inspired others to fight?

"I Just Want To Be Normal" is a story about my daughter being diagnosed with a rare kidney disease at eight years old. Sharing my daughter's story has been an inspiration for my daughter to regain confidence to be able to talk about her disease. I can now share my daughter's journey without crying. I have given speeches on Nephrotic Syndrome, parent education, and financial burdens during Covid-19. My daughter's story has inspired others not to give up, though research is still being done to find a cure for this disease."

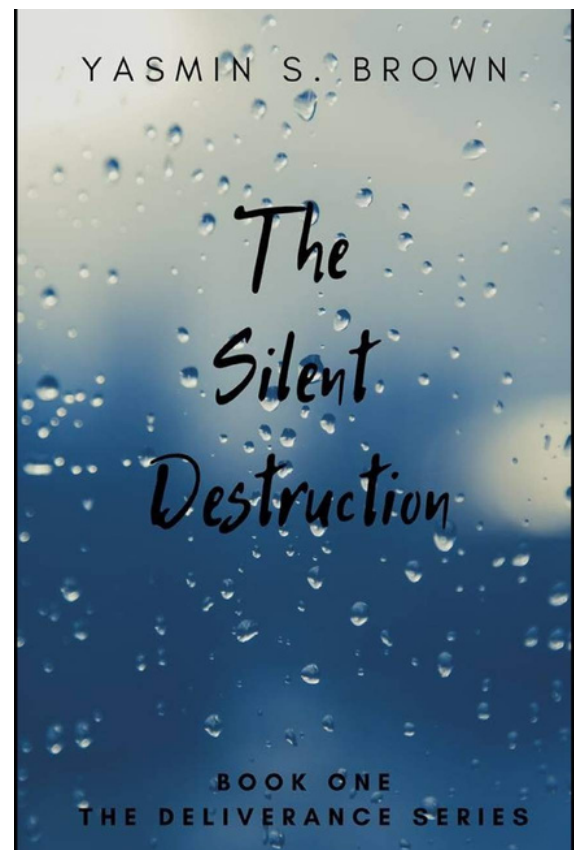


TO BE SILENT, IS TO BE COMPLICENT.

To be silent, is to be unheard, in the shadows. To live through any form of trauma takes courage and support. Best seller "The Silent Destruction", part one of Brown's best selling series, tells the story of not only survival of sexual abuse, but it tells readers that they are strong and not alone.

What is the story and message behind your first book "The Silent Destruction" part of a series called "Deliverance?"

"The Silent Destruction" is a story about being sexually assaulted as a child and being in a domestic violence relationship prior to the age of eighteen. The story provides the psychological effects and fall out from suppressed feelings. The book also provides interactive journaling and education letting you know you are not alone. In addition to helping young women who are struggling with their identity, self-respect, self-worth and self-love."



AN IMPORTANT CONVERSATION: MENTAL HEALTH

"I BELIEVE IF YOU ARE MORE SELF-AWARE, YOU WILL BECOME MORE AWARE OF YOUR ACTIONS AND HOW THEY AFFECT OTHERS."



One of your passions is to give help concerning Mental Health, why this particular field?

"I have a saying, "Mental Health is the Best Health." I recognize a disturbance in one's mental well-being does not only affect the person and their home, but the community surrounding them. Everyone goes to the doctor for a checkup, but not everyone takes the same approach for their psychological well-being. The brain takes continuous hits emotionally and physically. The importance of the brain and the knowledge it holds was instilled in me from my father."

What about mental health triggers behaviors that you are aware of personally?

"The uniqueness and out of the box behavior gives me the drive to want to know more. The advocacy work I do starts conversations, builds relationships and breaks the barrier of suppression."

What about coaching services? How have they helped your clients live for the better? How has it changed your life's perspective -like a doctor looking within?

"I have a coaching session I call "Face it, Speak it, Heal from it." Whatever your "it" may be there are steps someone utilizes to assist others to locate the problem, gain the confidence and find the solution. My strong advocacy work and passion comes from my own experience as a domestic violence and sexual assault survivor. "

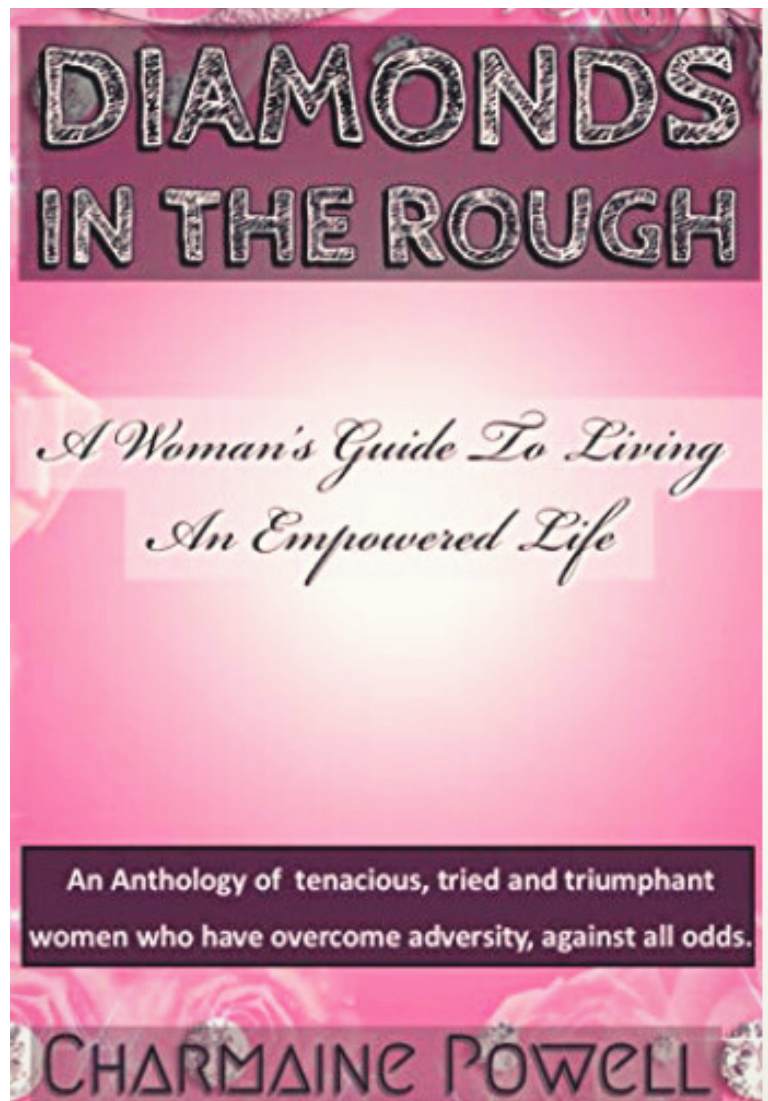
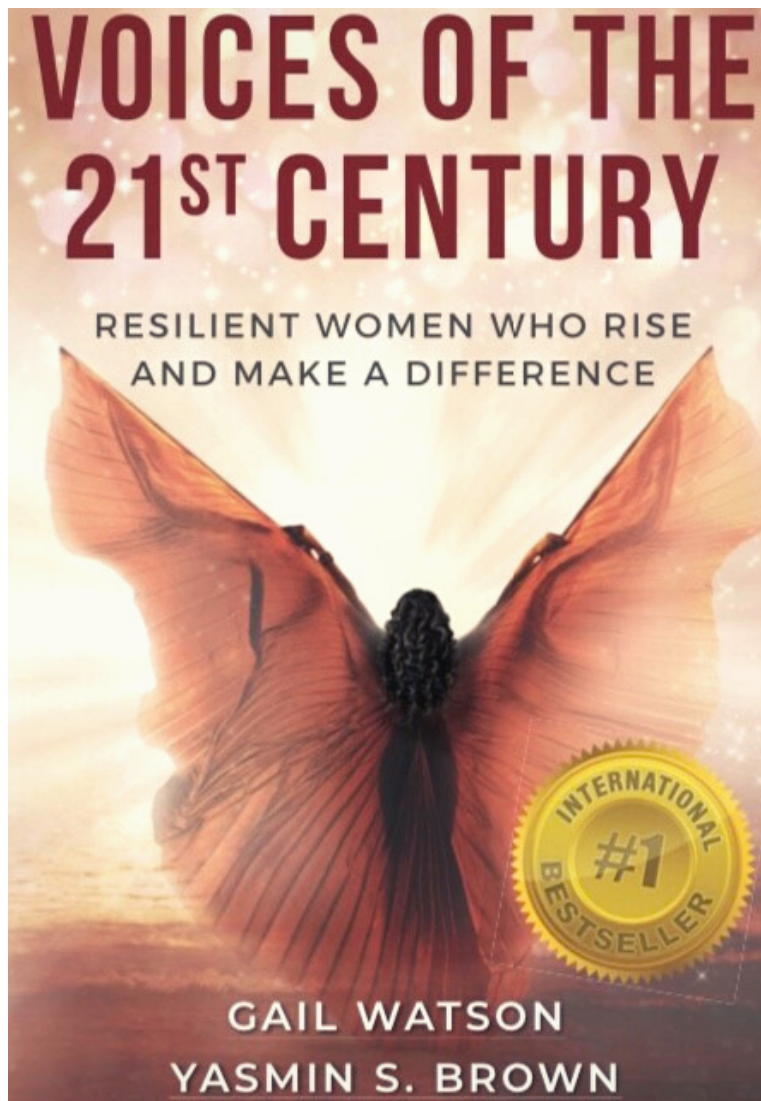
How has your personal experiences shaped what is not your advocacy?

"Not realizing the past betrayals and emotional distress from my past traumas manifested its way in other forms in the future of my life until I addressed the problem.

Addressing the problem helped me find peace and freedom within myself. My work on myself helped me to become more self-aware. I believe if you are more self-aware, you will become more aware of your actions and how they affect others."

What other causes have you advocated for? What do these causes mean to you personally?

"I advocate for domestic violence, sexual assault and inequality. These causes each have a personal place in my heart, from being a survivor to being a Black woman in America that sees the country from an analytical and spiritual relationship perspective. By understanding the foundation of violence and inequality, I realize without the healing of one's mental state and willingness to listen and understand, the cycle will continue as it always has been, loud and aggressive or silent but deadly."



Empowering Women Better and Stronger Together

Empowering women of all backgrounds is the one thing Yasmin Brown dedicates her time to. Building women up through her advocacy and literary collaborations, Brown has helped change many lives. She truly believes by empowering each other, it can make all the difference.

What does Women Empowerment mean to you as a whole?

"Women Empowerment means I know my self-worth, stand strong in my truth and love my authentic self (good, bad, ugly). By owning who I was and knowing who I am now, I'm able to collaborate with so many beautiful strong supportive women who not only own their truth, but accept who they are in it. Self-love is the best love and if you don't love yourself as a whole, you cannot truly love someone else."

Has the term and movement impacted not only your career as a writer and author, but also your novels such as the collaborative novel and anthology "Diamonds In The Rough," and also your collaboration with author Gail Watson in "Voices of the 21st Century"?

"“Diamonds In The Rough” and “Voices of the 21st Century” helped me see strong women of faith and elevation not just for self but for others. Women Empowerment is an influence and understanding that women are the pillars of our community. When one grows weary and starts to break, we stand in unity to rebuild and restore each other as a whole."



Going Beyond Limits! Achieve N' Succeed.

**YASMIN BROWN DETAILS HER
SUCCESS AS AN AUTHOR AND HOW
SHE CONTINUES TO GROW AND
EVOLVE AS A WRITER, AUTHOR,
ADVOCATE AND ENTREPRENEUR!**

How would you describe your growth as not only a writer/author, but as a person?

"My growth as a person has been phenomenal. I learned so much about myself and how to be my best-self during my journey. My career as a writer/author has been influenced by working with top celebrity writers to working with some influential women who truly care about your success mentally and physically."

Your writing has inspired and has made a huge impact on others lives, but what about your life in particular?

"My writing has made an impact of healing in my life. It has also brought me to a place where being uncomfortable in good situations is normal."

How has your written journey evolved over the years?

"My writing has given me eternal growth in knowledge to be sought out as my work continues to grow. Over the years the elevation of my journey allowed me to travel, which I love. It has allowed me to meet so many new people and learn from them. In addition to enabling me to make friendships and collaborations around the world."

A close-up, low-angle portrait of a woman with dark, curly hair. She is looking down and slightly to the left with a gentle smile. She is wearing a dark blue or black blazer and a large pearl earring with a gold-colored ring. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

“

I've always been told I was different my entire life. I do not like being put in a box, so I strive to always stay out of the box and get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

My special message in everything I bring to fruition is "Overcoming the wall within you is the hardest victory to achieve."

-Yasmin S. Brown

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Whole Within

**WHEN YOU ARE
COMFORTABLE
WITHIN YOURSELF,
ANYTHING YOU DO COMES
EASY.**

Yasmin Brown's spiritual beliefs have not only helped guide her life's obstacles, but it's also helped strengthen her relationship within writing and creating. She has created a safe space for readers and community, to not only share within her values but also connect on much deeper levels through the written word of Yasmin S. Brown.

How has your spiritual journey helped your writing?

"My spiritual journey is a big part of what I do, because without it I feel I would still not be whole within myself. My spiritual journey gave me the continuous drive in overcoming and restoration. You cannot find complete healing without it."

How has it helped you overcome any personal challenges when deciding to take on new projects?

"Personally, my spiritual journey has been a roller coaster of tears, prayer, divine interventions, faith and willingness of acceptance. When deciding my new projects, I go through three questions-what, how, why. Once I answer them, my solution comes through prayer and faith for impact."

While you are an outstanding inspiration to others, who has been your inspiration throughout your journey, especially in the beginning? How have they guided you on this path of success?

"In the beginning of my journey, I'd seen the fight in my mother. Overtime I learned the stories of both my grandmothers (Mary Theresa Phelps and Ruth Knight Brown) journeys in life. They shared stories of how they stayed grounded in faith, love of family and while being of service to others.

These women are the core of who I am and I thrive to utter their legacy. Their guidance brought me to a place of success through guidance, counsel, friendship, discipline and prayer."

How have they guided you on this path of success?

"All though they are both now deceased, they have shown me how to seek guidance and counsel in life through prayer and fellowship, show and receive support through friendship and family, and show discipline in what you want to accomplish out of life."





YIRY- ELEMENTS THE BRAND

All Photo Credit Belongs to Yasmin Brown

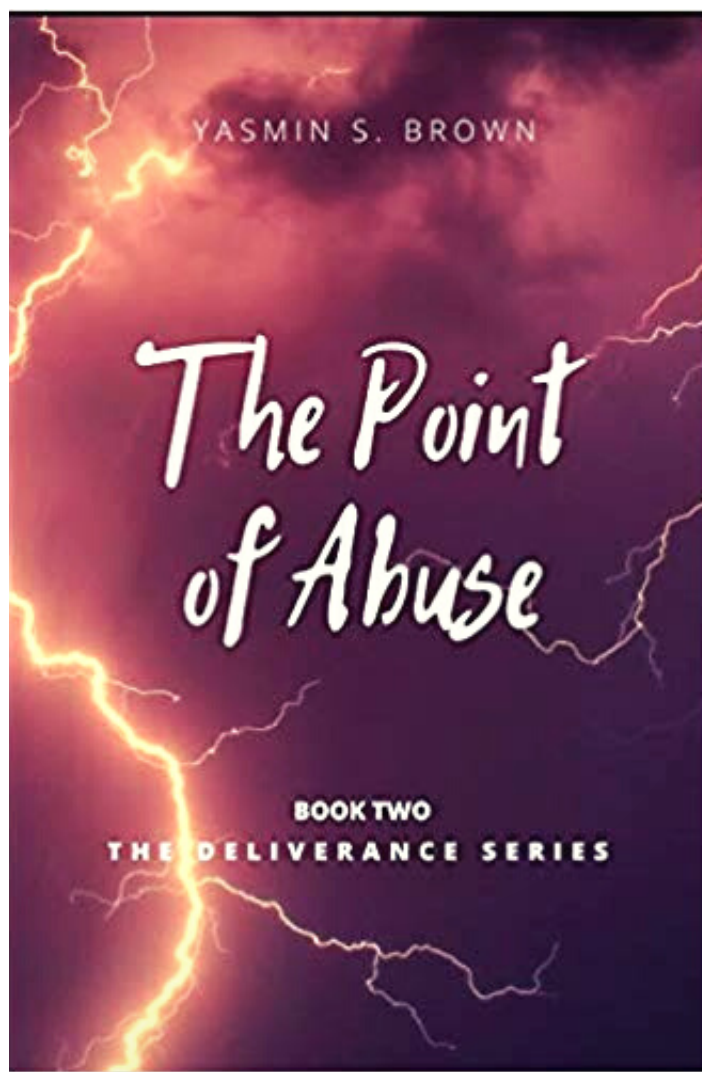
Yiry-Elements is the brand and business of growth and continuous success! Built from the ground up, Yasmin Brown has made Yiry-Elements into a helping hand for people to become their better selves.

You've built a powerful brand of Yasmin Brown and Yiry-Elements, where do you see it in say 5 to 10 years?

"In five to ten years, I dream of growing my business to a LLC with a store front called Inside Outside Beauty. Continuing my growth and success of helping others achieve beauty further than skin deep."

How do you continue to make it as successful as it is? What's next for your brand?

"My success is driven by the feedback on my products and the great reward of helping someone else become there best-self. My next step for my brand is to release two more books and games in the near future. My ultimate goal is to release a book and movie within the next 10 years."

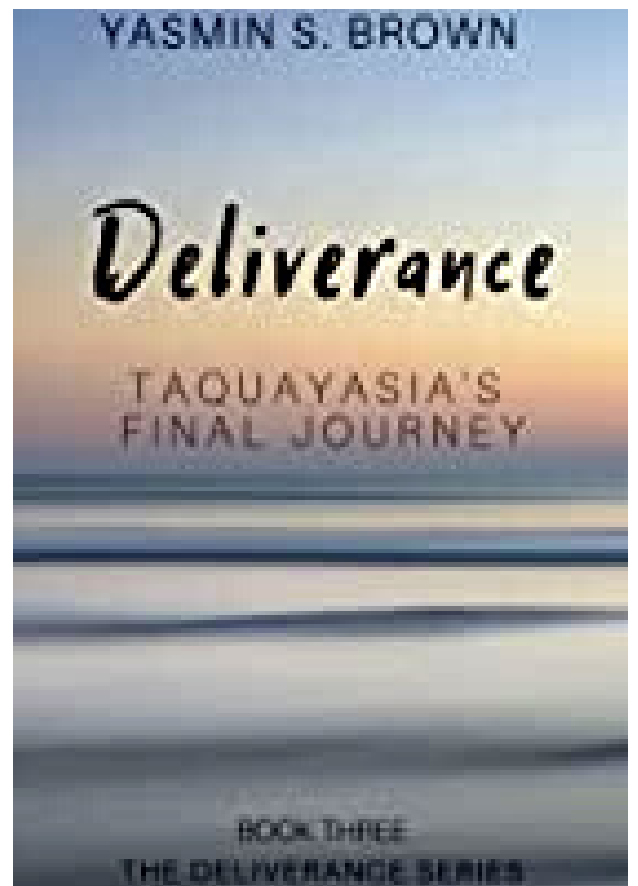


The Deliverance Series

Yasmin Brown's "The Deliverance Series" is a powerhouse of real-life strength, courage and a spirit that continues to glow and evolve despite tragic hardships. This series shows readers that no matter what you face, you come out of it stronger, wiser and beautiful no matter what.

Tell readers more about your 3-part series "The Silent Destruction," "Red Flags, and Deliverance" what is the message from each novel that you personally live by? How has all three of these books made you the writer who you are today?

"The Deliverance Series "The Silent Destruction," "Red Flags," and "Deliverance" takes the reader on the unraveling mindset of a young woman who was molested as a child, entered into a physically abusive relationship search for love and found herself as a broken adult that needed to deal with her childhood trauma to become her best self. These books have made her the writer she became today by helping her heal from her past, speak her whole truth and face the past betrayal while learning forgiveness is not for the other person it is for yourself. Before these books, she was a published angry depressed young woman who did not love herself, but through counseling and this series, she became her authentic loving self who owned her truth."





EXCLUSIVE FEATURE

SPOKEN DREAMS COME TRUE

Hattress Barbour III is a man of spoken excellence with his poems not just being words on paper. His poetry transcends beyond a crowd in a bar or lounge, it speaks to the soul and hopes you'll listen.

A male poet with many quirks and talents from poetry and social justice advocacy to fatherhood and entrepreneurship, who exactly is Hattress Barbour III?

"Ahh where do I begin. My name is Hattress Barbour III and I am a creative from Harlem, New York. I say creative because the constant need to create is prevalent in all areas of my life, but it's safe to say that writing has been the medium that I call home."

How do you set the tone to people that your poetry is more than just words? Would you consider yourself a professional?

"I'm not sure if I can consider myself a professional writer just yet, but the goal is to make writing my career while still maintaining my own integrity and never forgetting that I started this journey as a means to unearth and understand my own trauma while hopefully touching people in a positive way."

A poets journey seems endless just like the words they put together, to form a beautiful piece of art.

What have you done outside of poetry thus far?

"Outside of writing professionally, I have worked for ten plus years in human services from case management to education and landing in recruitment for companies to ensure I am supporting my people and allowing access to opportunity."

Has poetry always been apart of you in terms of writing in your childhood all the way to adulthood?

"Poetry has always been my first love. I fell in love with rap at an early age and would memorize songs just to write them word for word in class when I had extra time. I know now that that was me studying the work of the people I admired and trying to understand this relationship that occurs with language and emotion."

**"POETRY HAS
ALWAYS BEEN MY
FIRST LOVE."**

All Photo Credit Belongs to
Hattress Barbour III



**A VOICE
LIFTS &
INSPIRES.**

WORDS FROM THE YOUNG

Poetry from A Young Hattress

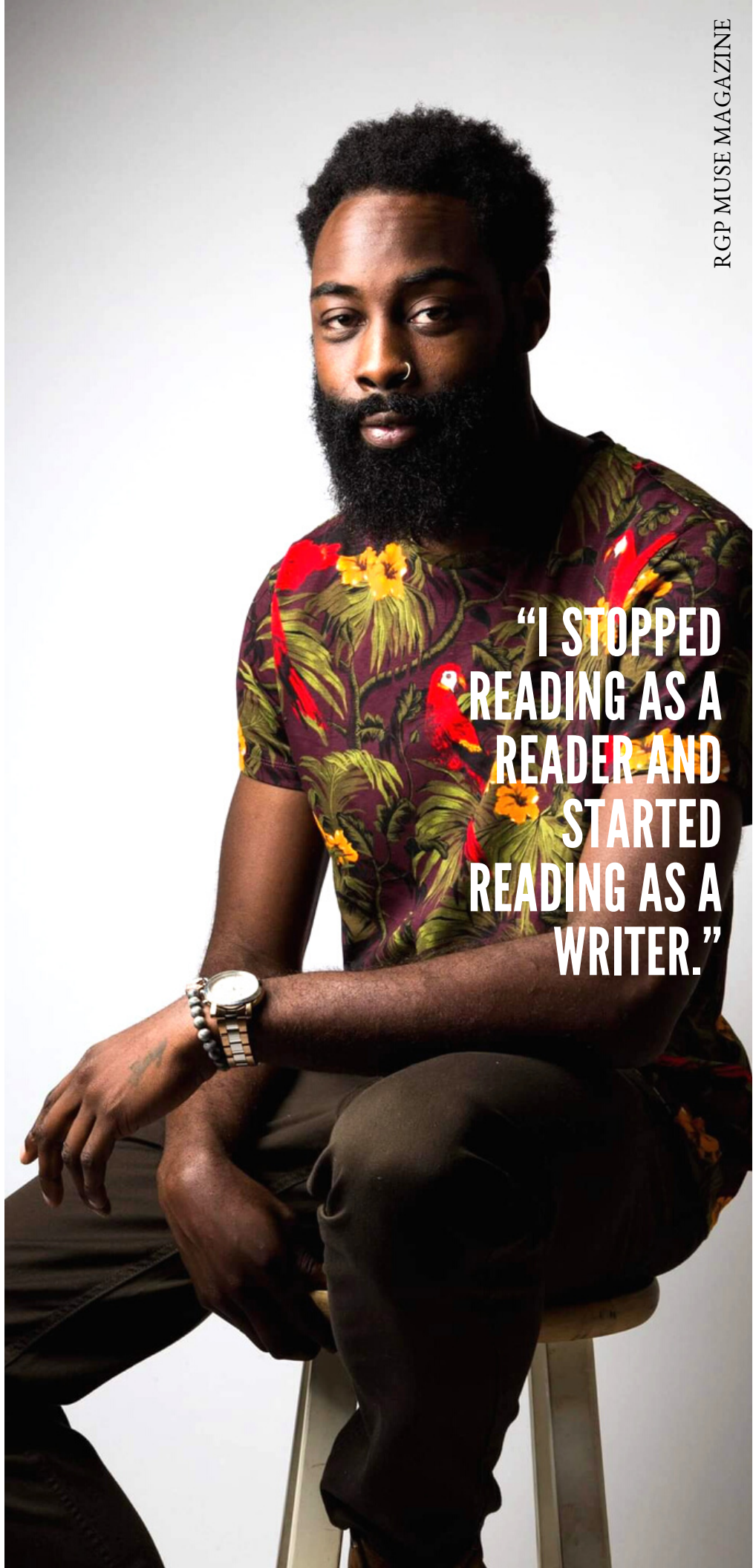
Hattress Barbour III's poetry has been apart of him since he can remember. Words of a younger Hattress has set the foundation for the kind of creativity he shares today.

At what age did you start writing poetry?

"I started writing poetry at about the age of 12 after watching def poetry jam. I can look back now and say that I was in awe at not only the lyrical ability and techniques, but also the vulnerability being shared. It was such a contrast from where I was from and what was expected of me as a black man. That was the first time I got to experience what representation does to the impressionable youth. I was always a reader, but watching that show made me read differently. I stopped reading as a reader and started reading as a writer."

Since writing became a new discovery of talent for you, whom did you admire as your own writing blossomed?

"Studying the works of all the great black writers before me such as James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, and especially Maya Angelou. I wanted to understand what was happening in my brain and heart when I'm touched by their work and how to recreate this feeling in my own authentic way. Maya's work definitely helped me the most because of her funky rhythm in her stanzas that sometimes rhymed and sometimes didn't but always felt perfectly placed. I kept writing, everyday, in some way, from that young age but I didn't start performing poetry until my late 20s."





It's Lit: The Drive to Succeed

BARBOUR III EXPLAINS
HOW HE KEEPS HIS ENERGY
ALIVE AMID EXPLOSIVE
PUBLIC RECOGNITION!

Rising high in the poetry scene and attending events to make your voice heard can become overwhelming, especially when your art becomes recognized and loved at a high degree. Barbour III, being the seasoned writer that he is, handles it the best he can, with a purpose, immense support, and a drive to succeed beyond any obstacle formed against him.

"It begins with purpose. It took me some time to understand that everything in my being wants to help. To help myself, to help others, from my personal relationships to my profession, I just want to be of service to people and make an impact whether small or grand. Upon realizing that all of this is way bigger than me as an individual, now it has become a duty of servitude that if I'm being honest I don't always live up to. I battle my own depression and fears daily and write about these challenges because Maya's work taught me that no one escapes the human experience. What I'm feeling, someone else is feeling or have felt or will feel and me putting this intangible thing in words makes it more real."



Setting the goal to establish not only your creativity into high places is what Barbour III does in his love and life's work of poetry. The love of his partner, family and most of all his son aka "Lil Hat", is what keeps his creativity soaring!

What does self-establishment mean to you?

"Honestly I didn't think about self establishment until my son. I have an almost 2 year old prince who is the most charming, smartest, sweetest, rambunctious little thing I have ever had the pleasure of being around. My broke best friend deserves the world and I want to ensure he gets it and then some. I realized I can't allow him the luxury to dive deep into himself and cultivate his life as he sees fit if I don't myself."



"My broke best friend deserves the world and I want to ensure he gets it and then some."

How do you wish to not only succeed in your passion/craft but make sure your son sees all your highs and lows as an example?

"He might listen to my words, but the way I live my life will always be more impactful. He was born July 2020 and by October of that same year, I released my first book. Mind you, I had been sitting on this manuscript for about four years and was fearful. When he was born my fear stopped being about me solely and now I was fearful I wouldn't be able to leave him the tools he needs in this world and fear can be a hell of a motivation."



"IF EVER WE WERE"

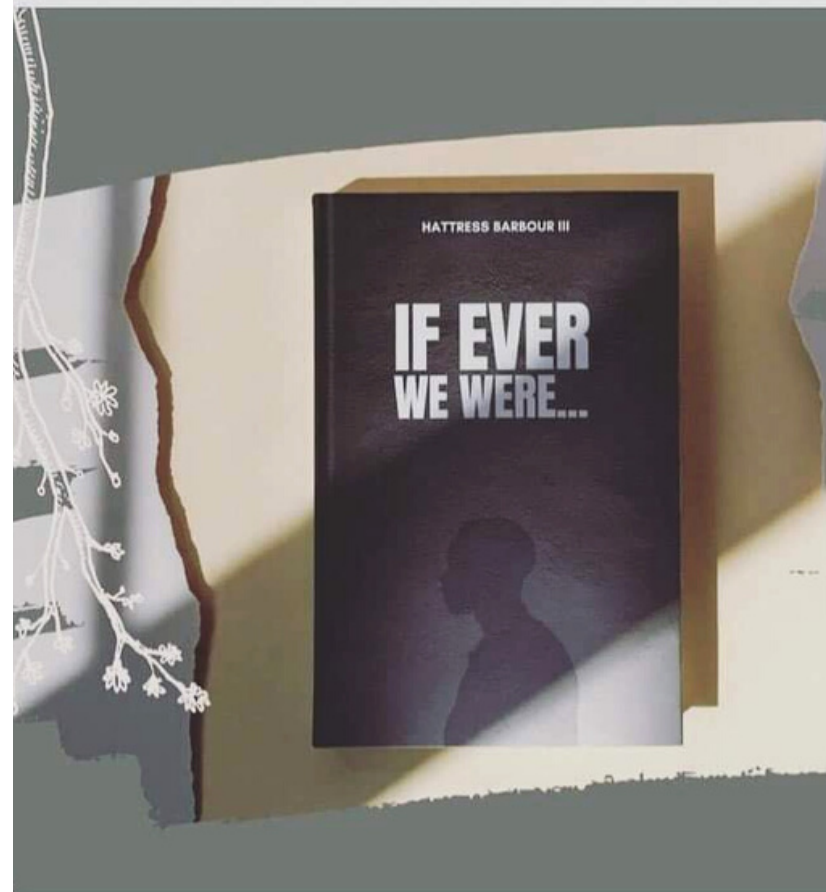
A BOOK OF LOVE, GROWTH AND YOUR INSPIRATION

THE MESSAGE BEHIND BARBOUR III'S FIRST PUBLISHED POETRY NOVEL!

Barbour's dreams to inspire stems from a book made out of love, sacrifice, and growth into not only a new person whose strived through obstacles of heartbreak in young adulthood but also new self-worth after losing oneself. 'If Ever We Were' is a book of revelations and realization, a book one can connect and see themselves in through poetry and prose.

What is the overall take away from your Poetry book "IF EVER WE WERE"?

"If Ever We Were" is a guide to black people specifically black boys from adolescence into young adulthood. I made it my intent to tackle concepts like grief, love, lust, family dynamics, social economics, social justice, patriarchy, mental health in the black community, and pretty much every ism I could recall that not only affected myself, but also affected the people around me. As I embarked on the journey of writing this book I realized that what had started out as a personal project for me and me only could actually make people feel seen. I shift gears after this realization and wanted to tell a broader story of experience throughout my poems."



FAMILY IS THE SAFE HAVEN FOR INSPIRATION

Anyone you call family can be your biggest supporters. They are your home and peace in times of creative turmoil and rising recognition. Family support keeps you grounded and the people behind Hattress Barbour III are the ones who keep him sane and loved.

As a poet, your words reach across many people, touching on souls, emotions, and even experiences. You've drawn inspiration from your life into your poetry, but who has given you inspiration as a whole?

"It's so many people to count and mention that I would be feeling like I'm leaving someone out. Honestly, I am inspired by all of my peers who are out here creating and manifesting their life in real and authentic ways. I'm inspired by my friend circle who uplift me and keep my head up in my lowest moments. My family members who offer more than support, but a place where I don't have to be this "profound poet" and I can just be Hattress or "Lil Hat" as they call me even though my son is Lil Hat now lol. I'm inspired by the family I was blessed to create, my girlfriend who lowkey is a genius and checks me on all my bs so I can't scapegoat out of becoming a better person. I'm inspired by my son because everyday he is learning more and more and it makes me understand that's what life is about. I try to live a life full of inspiration and be present in moments so I can pull the lesson from every conversation and interaction."



HATTRESS BARBOUR III

IF EVER WE WERE...

OCTOBER 8TH

Out of all the poems in your novel, which one hits close to home for you? Do you have a favorite?

"I'm not sure if I have a favorite poem in the book because they all are a part of me. Some I enjoyed writing more than others of course, but the second poem in the book "October 8th" is probably the closest to my heart and all the things I needed to say when I wrote it. "October 8th", entitled after the date my mother passed away, is me catching my mother up on all the things that has happened with myself and our family since her passing. That was one of the toughest for me to write honestly."

LOVE & SUPPORT IS THE EPITOME OF SUCCESS!

Love is what creates safe spaces and in Barbour's opinion it is "the core of every relationship in my opinion".

Black love in safe spaces is rare, especially in poetic, artistic spaces, what does it mean to you?

"The moment we understand we aren't perfect and start the process of trying to practice love correctly or in a healthy manner we can heal and therefore heal others. Even as a black writer, which at times, it is challenging to navigate majority white spaces, I have found that the humanity in us is the connection. With that being said, I think if we all show up as ourselves... the works in progress that we are... with an intent to do good and be better then we are operating out of love. "

How has black love impacted you as a poetic artist?

"I know learning to love is difficult for most including myself. Truthfully, I wasn't sure if I could love my son the way he needed to be loved. I was so fearful because I never received that type of fatherly love and wasn't sure if I even knew where to start with my son. Those feelings have since dissipated because obviously lil Hat is my broke best friend and the smartest lil munchkin ever lol. But I'm not unique in that fear. I think as black men who might of lacked certain love spaces as children will contemplate if they are adequate. I think when you love anything you take it seriously enough to dive deep into yourself and analyze your own deficits. That's how you know you love something. When you want to show up as your best self for it."

BLACK LOVE



Start Your Day With

Hattress's Poetry!

CHECK OUT
HATTRESS BARBOUR III
LIVE!

What locations have you performed your poetry at so far? How was the experience especially if it was your first time there?



"I've performed in a number of spaces. I started out at an open mic circuit in Harlem with my mentor Brother Earl and I would go there every Monday to work on my poems and stage presence. I would definitely say I developed as a performer and a person in that space. I then moved on to do shows downtown in a more white circuit and while I was learning, I was also understanding who I was writing for and to who. I realized I write for and to black people and that is and always will be my intended audience. So after making my money in that circuit I moved on to curate my own open mic space in Harlem to showcase all of my talented peers in a way that is fresh. I've been running The Poet Tree open mic for about two years now."



Collab & Create

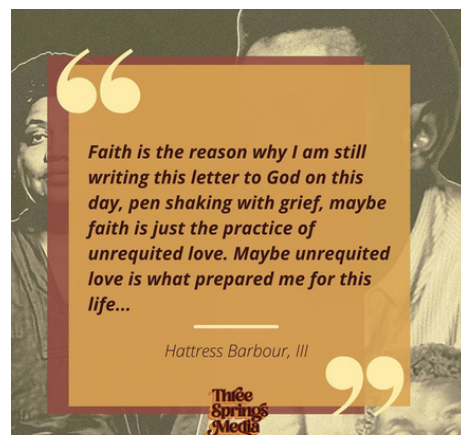
Making and celebrating artistic talent is what keeps creativity alive! Hattress knows the ups and downs of getting your name recognized and even though he pushes for his own, he has no problem putting someone else on the map as well. When you work together, magic does happen!

Have you ever collaborated with other poets for an event or even a poem? If so, how was the experience, who are they?

***"Collaboration is so important that I think people forget"-
Hattress Barbour III***

"Issa Ray said network laterally and she is very right. A lot of times we want to connect with people who we think are more established, but we already have all the resources we need within our network to create something lasting and real. I've collaborated with Yulissa of the transparent radio show on dash network to throw a huge 30th birthday poetry showcase. That was amazing and she is amazing so please check her out. I collab with my brother and awesome poet Smoove Babii who cohosts the Poet Tree open mic with me. I constantly do poems and music with my friends and I think that's the way to get better and elevate."





The Poet Tree Podcast

*And Much More
Coming Soon!*

Hattress Barbour III's name has become a household, poetic powerhouse in his own right. With his first poetry novel "If Ever We Were" already out into the world for people to relate and firmly digest, Hattress is simply just getting started!

What new projects are you working on? When can your supporters and RGP Muse readers expect new material from Hattress Barbour III?

"Well my first book "If Ever We Were" is on Amazon and can be purchased there or through me. I am currently working on a book of poetry called "My Fathers Son" about all the lessons I've learned in fatherhood so far while diving into my own relationship with my father. It's scheduled to release first quarter of 2022."

You recently started a podcast! What's it called and when can supporters and readers expect new episodes?

"I'm doing a podcast now called The Poet Tree Podcast (gotta keep the brand consistent lol) with one of the dopest artists I know, Stony Tony. New episodes drop every Monday on all podcast streaming services. We break down lines of our poems and have discussions around mental health, fatherhood, black love, spirituality, and joke all day while we do it. I also have a host of other projects I have my hands in that I can't talk about yet but definitely stay tuned."

"I am currently working on a book of poetry called "My Fathers Son" about all the lessons I've learned in fatherhood so far while diving into my own relationship with my father."

HATTRESS BARBOUR III



Poetry is it's own message. A poet's spoken word harmonizes with one's thoughts and emotions, an endless feeling of what comes to mind and heart. Hattress Barbour III has become a household name in his own right, with his poetry touching hearts across the board. He has shared his story and finally, he shares his personal message with readers and gives advice to those who don't know how to get their words loud and known.

What keeps you grounded as more people take more notice to your talent?

"I think more than anything I want others to feel like they have a community. I speak about the things that are taboo to speak about. No one wants to talk in a room full of people about how they almost lost themselves. We like to give off the aura that we have it all together, but that mask is a dangerous one. I want to make people feel comfortable acknowledging their demons so they don't feel isolated. Or as if something is wrong with them. This thing we call life is hard as hell to figure out and we will fall on our face thousands of times and that's ok."

What message do you carry with you as you travel to perform, write and create your poetry and go about your days?

"My advice to anyone looking to embark on whatever journey, is that dedication to the end goal will make or break you. Some people quit when they don't see instant results not knowing that life changing moment is a day away. That's how I live. I believe my life changing moment can be today so I have to show up in every space, in every way, and give it all I have."

"My message is it's out BUT GET UP!! Because the world depends on us. What keeps me grounded is doing shows and touching people in real life. There's no better feeling then doing a poem about a difficult time in my life and then having someone come up to me and share their story with me. That keeps me going."

A POETIC MESSAGE

Hattress shares his personal message on not giving up and advice on how to proceed in the literary and spoken word world of poets!

A photograph of Latoya Washington, a Black woman with long, curly brown hair, sitting on a swing. She is wearing a white t-shirt with the text "REBEL IN BABYLON" and a black skirt. She is holding the swing chain with her right hand. The background is a lush green weeping willow tree with long, thin leaves hanging down. The scene is outdoors, with a body of water visible in the background.

LATOYA WASHINGTON

Latoya Washington has dedicated her life to Christ, her writing, mentorship and brand RhemaCreationz along with her husband David, they are a powerful couple who dedicates their lives to helping and guiding other while being an example of love and leadership.

Latoya is an ultimate show-stopper, creating her own legacy and path to bettering others.

Who is the Latoya Washington that you want readers to know?

"Latoya is a poet, playwright, and songwriter that uses the pen to therapeutically release the pressures of life to help others see, there is life after this."

What is it about your career that makes you who you are today?

"I enjoy spending time with my husband and traveling to various parts of the world seeing God's beautiful creations and as a woman that is passionate about being a voice to the voiceless, it's by letting the light of Christ shine wherever he leads me to go."



RhemaCreationz

Creative Expressions of Faith through apparel, books, accessories and much more!

Visit

www.rhemacreationz.com



Faith and Creative Expression

LATOYA AND DAVID WASHINGTON

Faith and Creative Expression is what has brought RhemaCreationz to life. Latoya and David Washington both bring people a safe haven of creative energy, healing memories, and much more! RhemaCreationz is a powerhouse brand that is taking on all creative spaces.

How was RhemaCreationz created?

"RhemaCreationz is a brand designed to equip, motivate, encourage, and exalt others with the Word of God. We creatively express the Word of God through apparel, books, jewelry and much more!"

What is the vision of RhemaCreationz?

"The vision for the brand was given in 2012. A simple t-shirt design that focused on motivating and encouraging today's youth and their families. But after our official launch in September of 2018, God began to add more pieces to the puzzle. What started as a simple t-shirt has grown into a YouTube Channel, podcast, book and much more!"

"We creatively express the Word of God..."



BEING OF SERVICE

Washington's involvement in her community is truly a gift!

Washington's dedication to community, giving back, and mentorship has changed lives—both young and old. Latoya and husband David base their life's work in the field of helping children and young adults pursue a better life path and overcome difficult obstacles; this is celebratory and needed in the black community.

You've been serving the community for over 25 years by working with the local youth, how did it become a passion for you?

"It naturally flowed when working with kids because I love children. I believe the more time I spent helping serve Sunday School and Youth Bible Study, the more I began to find my passion with children. It was the overwhelming joy that came with teaching and showing the local youth how to overcome challenges. For example, teaching them how to overcome bullying, low self-esteem, fear, identity issues, etc."



"INSTEAD OF CHOOSING TO SIT BACK AND NOT HELP, I CHOSE TO STAND UP AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE"

How did you get involved in your community in such a huge way?

"I became involved because there was a void missing in the community of believers willing to address these topics that our children faced. Quite honestly, I faced these challenges as well and there were few people available to help address the issues. Instead of choosing to sit back and not help, I chose to stand up and make a difference."

BROKEN VESSELS

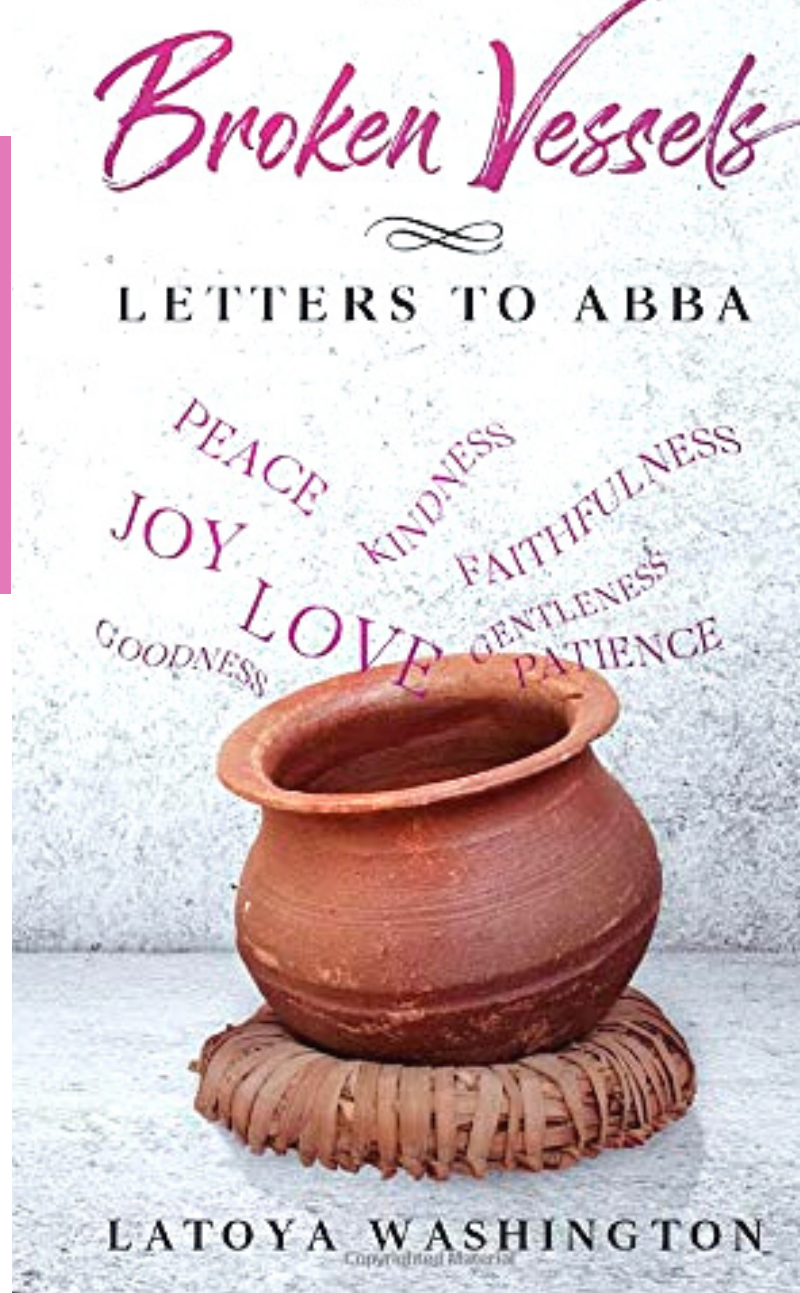
LETTERS TO ABBA

Latoya Washington's poetry novel "Broken Vessels, Letters to Abba" is a book of life's good and bad moments.

Latoya Washington's poetry novel tells readers that no matter what you've been through, as long as you have God by your side, life will bounce back and you can overcome and succeed!

What is the story/message behind your novel "Broken Vessels, Letters To Abba"?

"Broken Vessels is a ten-year compilation of poems written during the best and worst moments of my life. In the time when I lost my car, home, and personal possessions. Poems and songs were written in a time to help heal from the emotional wounds of my past. The book allows readers to hear an intimate conversation between me and God. All my questions, concerns, frustrations, and moments of vulnerability are written with each page."



"THE BOOK IS CALLED BROKEN VESSELS BECAUSE OF THE BROKEN PIECES OF MY LIFE. IT IS IN THOSE MOMENTS."

Is there a specific quote or part of the story that you personally carry with you, after everything you've been through up until now?

*"My favorite piece in the book is "The Process" because it was written several years ago, but I am still in the process. The process of God removing the impurities of my heart and molding me into a beautiful masterpiece. The book is called *Broken Vessels* because of the broken pieces of my life. It is in those moments Abba showed me that he is the potter, and I am the clay. Even when life was quick to throw away my broken pieces into the trash, God patiently and intricately placed each piece back together again!"*



Seminars of Hope

HOW LATOYA AND DAVID'S WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS HAVE HELPED AND HEALED

To be dedicated to helping others is not an easy task. Life hits everyone in different ways, sometimes more bad than good. Latoya and David, through their brand of RhemaCreationz, have created workshops and seminars that give the young and old a space to feel safe and secured in their life's journeys.

How have your workshops and seminars helped young children, teens and young adults grow and evolve for the better?

"The information provided to the youth and their families help people to release the stress and burdens of life. It helps them to see life from a different perspective and let go of burdens that weigh us down. We provide tools and solutions to reduce and eliminate stressful situations in their lives. But most importantly our workshops are focused on pointing people to the ultimate solution, Jesus Christ! We know he is the only solution to our problems and answer to our questions."

If people want to sign up for them, how can they do so?

"They can visit our website www.rhemacreationz.com and view our courses currently available. We offer a free 15-minute consultation to discuss any other areas that we can help assist."

Please share the story about your workshops/seminars and how people can get involved.

"The workshops first began while serving at my grandmother's church and our first topic was "Stand Out". This workshop focused on embracing the uniqueness and genuineness of who God created us to be. We discussed low self-esteem and how it affects our inability to stand out of the crowd, out of fear of being rejected. We currently have been focused on helping youth and their families build and maintain Interpersonal Communication Skills. This new workshop "No More Text's, Let's Talk" is available online and can be hosted nationally and internationally. The course focuses on teaching our community essential tips to communicate effectively. If people wish to be involved or host "No More Text's, Let's Talk" in a city near you, email thewashingtons@rhemacreationz.com."





Self- Established

LATOYA AND DAVID'S
SELF-MADE EMPIRE

All Photo Credit Belongs to
Latoya and David Washington

Latoya and David Washington's brand has reached new heights of establishment. With the word of God, love and support from family and friends, and most of all the partnership between the two of them has made what RhemaCreationz is today!

What does self-establishment mean to you?

"Honestly, I needed God's knowledge and wisdom with establishing the brand. My husband and I were new to the business world and lacked the knowledge of logistics with business. It was and is through prayer, sacrifice, and countless mistakes that we are established and still growing."

You've established your brand for years, where do you personally see the growth of your brand?

"The growth brings me to tears because many things we had no idea would happen. God continues to blow our minds with the opportunities presented since our official launching. We have grown in the area of technology and had to shift with the times to be flexible with customers that preferred shopping online. Also, when the pandemic hit many of our workshops were not able to hold in person. So, we had to ask for help and assist with streaming apps and services to hold virtual workshops and courses. RhemaCreationz has collaborated with a local church to feed the community every week and share the gospel. Also, we have been blessed to partner with a local food pantry to provide food for needy families."

Broken Vessels Podcast

Hosted by Latoya Washington

www.brokenvesselspodcast.com



Social issues such as depression, suicide, low self-esteem, etc. are just a few of the topics that Latoya and David touch on in their seminars. Their seminars not only give children, teens, young adults and beyond a chance to evolve for the better, but offer a guidance that they may not be able to get from others.

You've held seminars and helped local youth/ the community involving mental health, depression, suicide, bullying and much more. Is there a personal mission that you and your husband have when holding these seminars?

"Yes, our mental health services were as a result of suffering through depression. It was in those dark moments in my life that I wanted to call it quits. For months I felt no one could see past my smile and cheerful disposition to know I was crying out for help. After seeking God and speaking to my spouse, we began hosting "Juniper Tree" Live with Chou Hallegra. Chou Hallegra is a Certified Christian Counselor that volunteers to assist the community."

What is the personal significance to being involved in these social issues?

"The reason behind our involvement is the burden and pain it brings to our hearts to see a community oppressed or impoverished. We don't have all the money and resources to help save the world. But we believe even if it is one person or one family that it will make a difference."

Where do you see RhemaCreationz in 5 to 10 years?

"RhemaCreationz will be a business that provides jobs for individuals and their families. We will have a facility to provide food, clothing, and services for those in need. The workshops and seminars will grow into conferences that will teach on the foundational truths of our faith. RhemaCreationz will travel locally and internationally teaching our workshops and courses."

How do you see it growing beyond what you've already built and established?

"We see RhemaCreationz growing in the Podcast arena and creating new products for families to enjoy. The RhemaKids collection will continue to grow, books and a new curriculum will be available for current and new customers."

We provide tools and solutions to reduce and eliminate stressful situations in their lives. But most importantly our workshops are focused on pointing people to the ultimate solution, Jesus Christ!

Latoya

WRITER AND ENTREPRENEUR

God has held Latoya's hand through all her obstacles, helping her overcome in order to be of great service to her community and those in need of her mentorship. She gives through the word of God and is rewarded every time for her strong and nurturing efforts.

How has the word of God helped you in your journey of entrepreneurship, writing, and community service?

"The word of God has helped us overcome the pressures of business. It can be difficult being the forerunner to a movement, idea or thought that has never been done. But the word of God teaches me to stay focused and gives us the strength to endure. Our faith helps us to trust in the vision even beyond our bank account. God has given us a vision that far exceeds our finite minds and moments of doubt, we hold on to his word. God has never failed us, and he keeps his promises. We have faced many challenges in all aspects of what we have been called to do. We faced rejection, betrayal, deception, and only a few dollars to make ends meet. But the word of God is living and brings life to impossible situations."

How has your spiritual knowledge and guidance helped others as well?

"It has pointed others to the source of our strength. Every place we go and all we do is fueled by our passion for the Kingdom of God. We show people in the scriptures how God's great love towards us is all we need to face the day. Each day we want to show the love of God through our ministry, and we won't be able to do that without knowing his word. We focus on being doers of the word and not just hearers of the word (James 1:22-25)"

***"We focus on being
doers of the word and
not just hearers of the
word (James 1:22-25)"***



DAVID L. THE WRITER

The man behind the best selling novel "A Recipe For Revenge", shares his beginnings into his passion, the startup of his publishing company Total Package Publications, LLC and more!

David L. Builds His Own Legacy!

David L., a native to the fast paced Brooklyn, NY, has been on the literary scene for a long time, cementing his creative juices into a cut-throat world. Bringing his characters to life and creating a space where topics are wide in range, David L. is in a lane all on his own!

Who is David L. Henry-the writer, author, publisher, entrepreneur and soon to be podcast creator and host?

"David L. the writer, author, publisher, etc... etc... is pretty much one and the same person: an individual who strives for nothing but greatness and a lasting legacy in the literary fiction universe."

How has being born in the jungle of Brooklyn, NY made you the writer you are today?

"I was born and raised in "planet Brooklyn" (Brooklyn, NY). I enjoy crafting stories that leave my readers both educated and entertained and additionally, creating formidable characters that are both authentic, ever-changing and leave the reader wanting more from me to read. Current passions include watching the formation of my novel-soon-to-be-movie, *Represent*."

How did you get started in the writing industry? Was it a pastime hobby before it became your life's work?

"I got started in the writing industry by releasing my debut novel, *It's Like Butter, Baby* under a Canadian publishing imprint. Once I quickly realized that they owned pretty much everything and were pocketing most of the revenue, I decided to make a go at self-publishing - hence the creation of my publishing company, Total Package Publications, LLC."

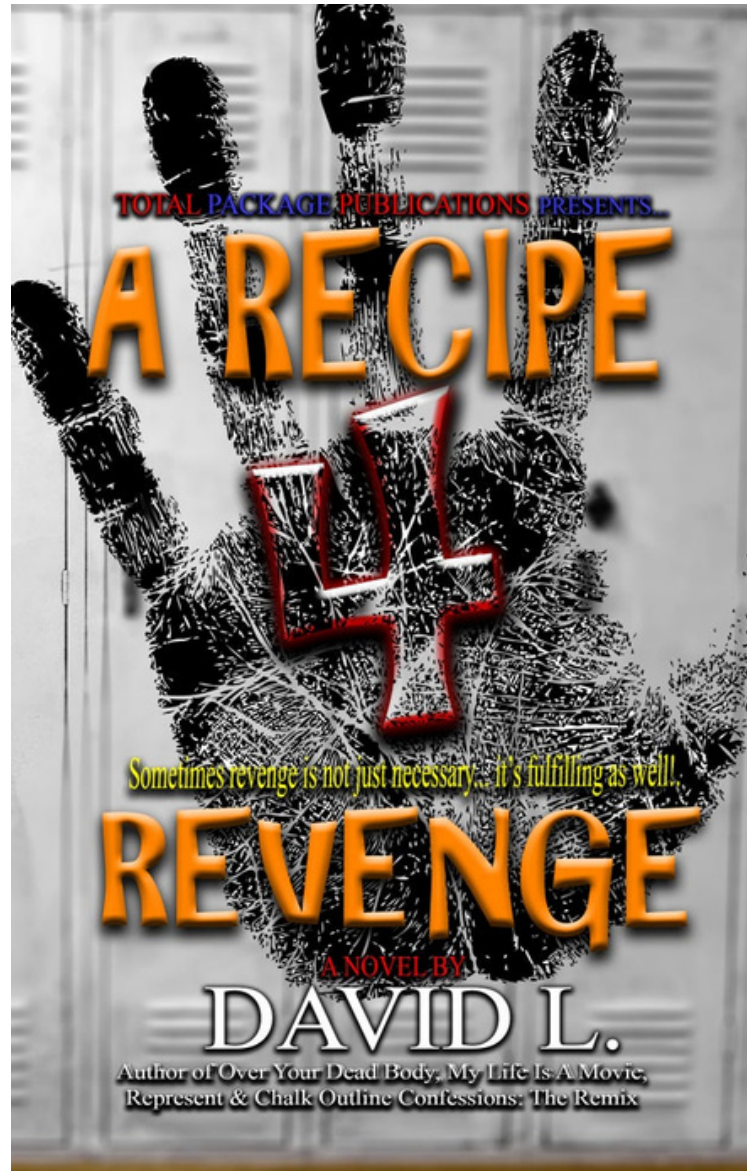
The best selling novel "A Recipe 4 Revenge" under David L.'s self-made publishing company Total Package Publications, LLC., is a storm filled with female characters that take you on a tail spin, a wild ride that you don't want to miss!

What is the story behind your best seller "A Recipe 4 Revenge"

"The story behind "A Recipe 4 Revenge" is a cautionary tale of what can happen when you drive someone to the pinnacle of despair, anger and/or frustration. I intertwined the current lives of four young ladies leading very different lifestyles and upon the return to their 10th year HS reunion, mysteriously finds out that they have something in common and want to exact revenge on the individual that changed their lives for the worse."

Do you have a favorite scene of the novel?

"There is no particular scene in the novel that comes across as a personal "favorite" of mine, however I am truly proud of how I was able to create this journey of four vastly different female characters and through the course of the book, create various opportunities for them to experience growth and to take control of themselves and break through personal barriers."



"...I am truly proud of how I was able to create this journey of four vastly different female characters..."

"...I could not have others hampering my writing process or battling me on my creative control over a book title, book cover and/or characters in my novels..."

-DAVID L.

TOTAL PACKAGE PUBLICATIONS, LLC.

David L. discusses his self-made publishing company-now and the future!

Total Packages Publications, LLC is an established treasure that David L. has put his entire dedication into. His six novels have been written under his name alone. David L. is now a powerhouse, continuing to put his name in the writing hat while also adding new gems under his name.

How and why did you start your own publishing company Total Package Publications?

"I started my company, Total Package Publications, LLC in order to provide an opportunity for other writers to realize their dream and give "birth" to books that they wanted to share with the world. Secondly, I started my company because I was always a believer in the mastery of your own destiny and for me to truly experience that, I could not have others hampering my writing process or battling me on my creative control over a book title, book cover and/or characters in my novels."



"The process itself was not easy or immediate."

What was your process to starting the company?

"I utilized extensive hours of research, followed by investing my time and earnings into making it a reality. To date, my company has published six novels (written by me) and next year two authors will be dropping their debut novels under my publishing imprint."



“

**"DO NOT GIVE UP OR
LOWER YOUR STANDARDS
TO FIT SOME TYPE OF
"MOLD" OR CURRENT
TREND."**

”

DAVID L. GIVES ADVICE TO READERS
WHO WISH TO START THEIR OWN
PUBLISHING COMPANY.

"My advice to someone wanting to start their own publishing company (or any company for that matter) would be to first ask yourself: "Why do you want to do it?" Followed by devising various action plans to actually making it happen. Do your research, speak to individuals who are already successful in your area of interest and most importantly, DO NOT GIVE UP or lower your standards to fit some type of "mold" or current trend."

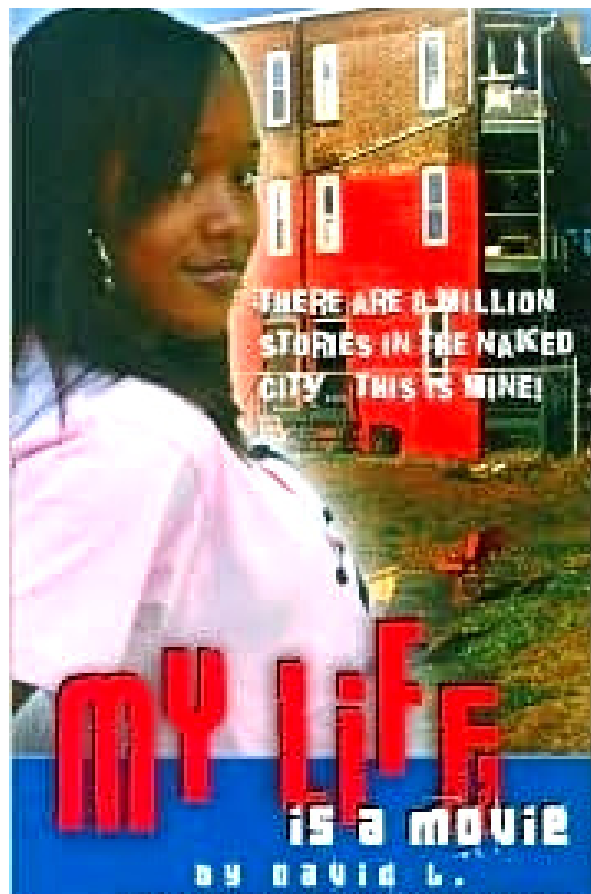
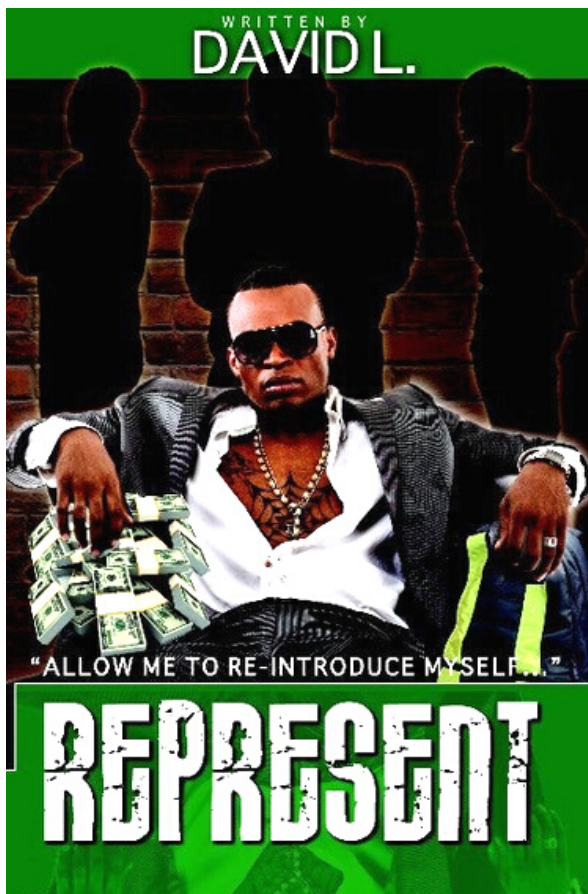
CHARACTERS COME ALIVE!

David L.'s best selling novels "My Life Is A Movie" and "Represent" are whirlwinds of drama, adulthood woes, family values, and the life of crime.

David L. delivers books that need to be put on your shelf!

What is it about these two books in particular that has made you evolve as a writer and author?

"There is no one character in either *My Life Is A Movie* or *Represent* (two of my five currently-published novels) in which there is one character that fits who I am as an individual. However, there are various characters throughout both books in which I was able to formulate a composite of myself and my attributes, personality traits, etc. In regards to both of the aforementioned novels, I was able to grow as a writer by taking past experiences and allow each of the main characters to evolve throughout the book, allowing the reader to appreciate my ability to evoke the realism of a character from the beginning pages until the end of the book."



All Photo Credit Belongs to David L.



ASK DAVID L.

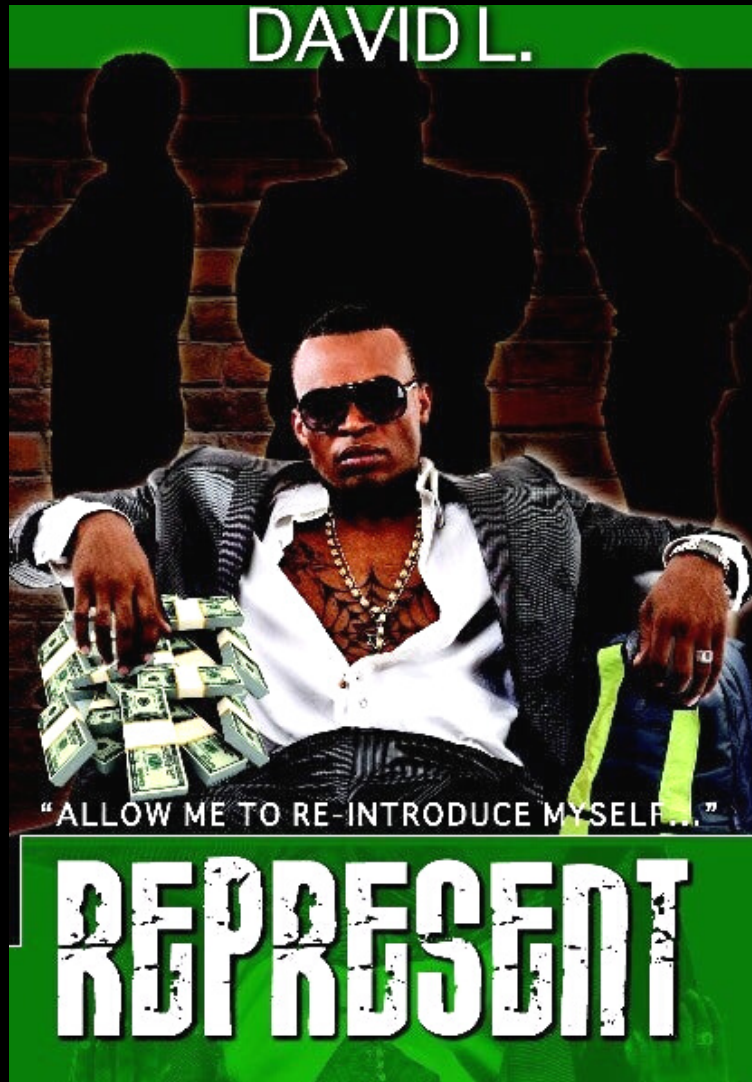
David L. shares with readers what "self-establishment" means to him.

How anyone, as long as you put yourself out there and reach for the stars, can make anything happen!

Self-establishment isn't an extravagant goal or mission like most would associate the term with. It means that you've put yourself out there, into your craft and made it your own. Made it your passion, made it your goal to achieve all that you can achieve because you believe in yourself. David L. who has made his own literary world with best selling novels, a self-publishing company, a blog and an Instagram interview series, a coming soon podcast, and various endorsements, still has a lot to accomplish and a lot to self-achieve!

What does self-establishment mean to you?

"Self-establishment" to me means not being scared or anxious about doing what your heart tells you to do. This goes back to my point of not giving in to the demands of the current climate by following a certain "recipe" for success. My literary trip although filled with literal missteps has caused me to grow as a writer and publisher and just as importantly, show my readers that I am humbled by my success and would not have gotten this far without them."



SEQUEL COMING SOON!

*David L. has a sequel coming out
for his hit novel "Represent"!*

"My next tentative release is aptly titled:
"Represent: The Big Payback" which is a
sequel to the underground classic, Represent.
I've never had the passion to create a sequel
before now, so the writing journey for this
novel is truly a unique experience.

Unfortunately, I am unable to share a
promotional snippet at this time because it is
in the drafting stages and nothing has been
edited."

REPRESENT

"Clearly a page-turner and a storyline that will keep the
reader's eyes wide with anticipation, *REPRESENT*, is not
only about two brothers and the choices they make. It is
about family honor, the inner strength to avoid peer
pressure and the repercussions of ill-fated choices."-David L.

DAVID L. PRESENTS:

YEAH, I SAID IT!

EXCLUSIVE

YEAH: DAVID SAID IT!

David L. gives readers a snippet on his new, upcoming podcast "David L. Presents: Yeah, I Said It"

"My very 1st podcast which I am excited about is cleverly titled: "David L. Presents: Yeah, I Said It". My podcast theme is to allow other self-made business people the opportunity to promote their brand on my show and give their audience a lasting impression on what they can offer to them. It's my way of giving back to an industry that unfortunately never put forth as much energy towards me and making my brand an everyday conversation piece so I hope to take from my experiences and give some "shine" to others."



David L.

Jack Of All Trades

ADVICE FROM DAVID L.

SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A BOOK!?

Writing a book isn't an easy venture, David L. knows firsthand! Don't let your fears and doubts stop you from achieving your dreams!

"My advice to those that say "I don't have the time to write a book" is very simple and straightforward: If you have time to lay up on your couch and watch your favorite reality tv show, **YOU HAVE TIME!** If you have time to read this message from me... **YOU HAVE TIME!** Don't let time get in the way of realizing your dreams. **MAKE IT HAPPEN... TODAY!** Life is about multi-tasking and nothing worth having is going to happen easily. The struggle in itself is what will keep you both humbled and filled with humility as you proceed with your journey."

**"Don't let time get in the way
of realizing your dreams.
MAKE IT HAPPEN... TODAY!"**

A HIGHER RISE WITH JASON JOHNSON

JASON JOHNSON'S LIFE
AFTER BALL
A 2002-2004 CHAMPION

Jason Johnson is known as the all-round, friendly, and suave guy of Rahway. He is a town man, all who walks in this path is blessed to know his character and spirit. Jason has accomplished many things in his youth, but most of all, he's grounded.

Who is Jason Johnson? You are known in your hometown as a great basketball player, but who are you exactly?

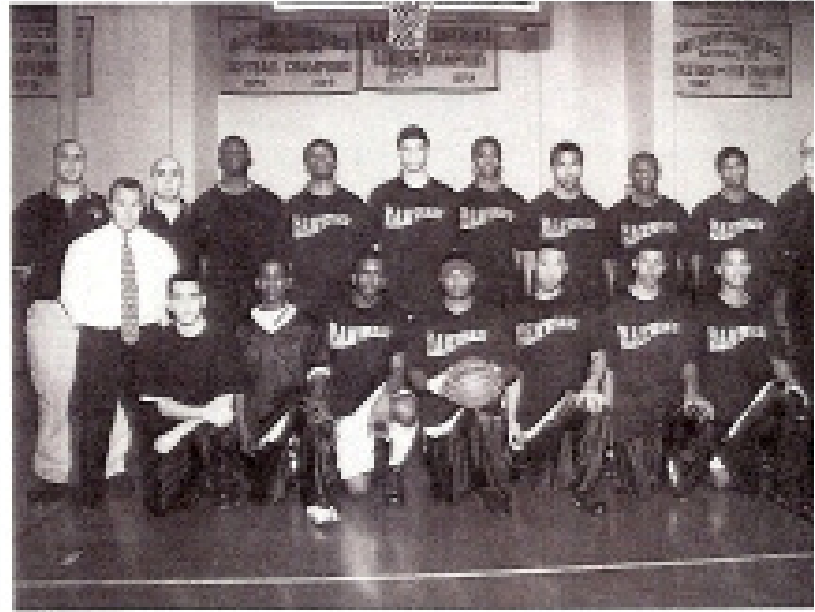
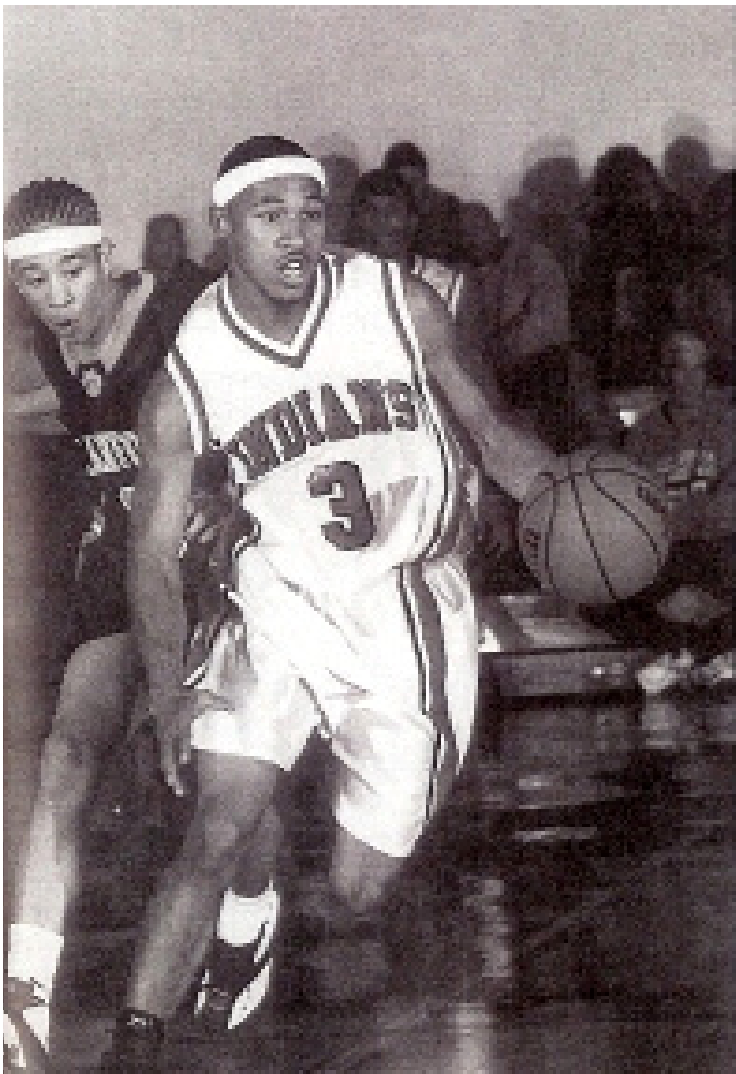
"Jason Johnson is 100% genuine at all times, but overall very down to earth, very positive and easy to talk to. My passion is being around family comfortable and being around real love effortlessly. The best feeling in the world."

Years have passed since your high school days, but if you could go back, is there anything you would have changed in regards to sports like basketball and other extracurricular activities that you may have been involved in? What would you have done differently?

"Honestly, I wouldn't go back and change anything, cause I wouldn't be the person I am today if I did. It's Gods plan and I never question that. I regret some decisions and choices I made, but I wouldn't change a thing."



**"MY PASSION IS
BEING AROUND
FAMILY
COMFORTABLE &
BEING AROUND
REAL LOVE
EFFORTLESSLY."**



Moving Forward

JASON'S BEGININGS IN
BASKETBALL.
WHY HIS DREAM CAME
TO AN END.

All Photo Credit Belongs to Jason Johnson

Many basketball champs have come out of Rahway, making the dream of becoming pro a reality. For Johnson, that dream was too a reality, but unfortunately that dream was cut short. However with Allah, friends and family by his side, moving forward was easy and life-changing.

Sports used to be apart of you, how did basketball become not only a hobby, but a great skill that you advanced on going into high school?

"It became a great skill at a very young age after my parents had passed away. Basketball became more than a hobby, when it brought me so much happiness and a positive distraction. It gave me something else to think about besides the things that were going on and what I was going through at that time in my life.."

Did you ever think about going pro? If so, why didn't you?

"Yes, I wanted to go pro and the reason why I didn't is because I quit my the basketball team in college, when the coach didn't play me the entire game. The worse mistake of my life. That's the decision that kept me away from going pro.."

You made history by achieving Most Points In A Career (1,000 point scorers only) in the year 2002-2004, your point average being 1,032. What was that feeling like, making such an achievement? What was your family and friends response to this achievement?

"The achievement felt amazing, blessed, an overwhelming joy, knowing, I was less than ten individuals with such a great accomplishment. Overall I know if my mother was here with me, she'll be proud. Now that I think of it maybe it's no words that even could describe at the present time how I felt. Any word will be an understatement."

"ALLAH BRINGS THE BEST OUT OF ME"

Jason Johnson on his positivity and how family and most of all-love is everything to him.



Through tragedy and hard self-assessment, Jason Johnson is still able to push through his days and keep the positivity flowing despite hard days. He shares with readers who kept him afloat amid dark times.

You've been through obstacles and tragedy in your life, but you've made it through all of them. Is there anyone that's been by your side that's gotten you this far?

"God- family-friends. In that order. Nothing more, nothing less. Exactly that!"

What does self-establishment mean to you? You've made a life outside of the popularity of high school, what does it mean for you?

"Being at a point in life, to where your job occupation is consistent. You have what you need to live and be successful in your own world. To where you don't want or need anything from anyone. Life is consistent on all levels and comfortable at all times."

How has your spiritual journey involving God/Allah helped you become a better you?

"Allah brings the best out of me, made me see things, I couldn't or maybe never seen if it wasn't for my journey with him. Allah keeps me with great morals, values, positive mindset and a blessed heart at all times. My journey is far from over, I'm looking forward to continuing this journey forever."

WAVY GOONZ MAFIA

A LIFESTYLE BRAND. COMPANY & LABEL

Jarez Baron, a business mogul of various creative departments in his own right, has self-established his blueprint of expression, value and quality. He's turned up the spotlight on his own stage, and with Wavy Goonz Mafia growing into an audience grabbing company, its only up and beyond limits for Jarez Baron.

Explain the start-up of the Wavy Goonz Mafia brand? How has it been expanded thus far outside of clothing and music?

"Wavy Goonz Mafia is the overall company, label, and lifestyle. It has many amenities under it such as the rap group and merchandise with multiple designs. It's expanding throughout our growth. Within the last two to three years I've been active, we have dropped multiple albums, and EP's including dozens of videos. Along with selling merchandise."

What do you think of not only your artistry, but as a business man's work ethic as a whole? You've been successful thus far, how do you think you can evolve and grow as a brand even more?

"I think I'm a hard worker. I'm a doer now lol, I never completed anything up until recently and it's like I can't stop running through and knocking down goals. People want to work with me, support me, purchase merch. All my blessings are due to the positive energy I put out, my work ethic, mixed with some talent and charm. I think acting and filming our own films will take our music and merchandise to a higher level as well as a bigger audience."



All Photo Credit Belongs to
Asapwiththecanonmedia and Jarez Baron



ACTING THE PART A NEW TRANSITION

A new transition into the acting world has put Baron on a whole new path of opportunity. He has expanded his talent of work ethic and business into another cut-throat industry-film production.

Why have you progressed into acting? Have you always wanted to venture into the film industry or is it merely a new opportunity come your way?

"I progressed into acting because I felt unstoppable, I was at my peak and needed a new challenge. From a joke turned into two seasons in an unreleased project/series called *Spoken 3rd* written and directed by Marz MTB. Ever since I have seen progress with my music and merchandise, I figured the film industry was another outlet I wanted to tap into for creativity. I saw it as promotion for my music and merchandise. If I have my own film, music, and merchandise all independently that's a success, whether financially or just accomplishing a goal of getting it done. I manifested and put it out there, and many opportunities came my way."



JAREZ BARON: IN HIS OWN LANE

Baron on why he decided to really dive into the acting scene, his current film release and the challenge of being behind the camera!



Behind the camera is always a vibe when it comes to Jarez Baron-entrepreneur and now actor! The camera catches every movement and feeling and if you have Jarez behind the lense, every pic or clip is bound to come alive.

You've always been in-front of the camera-from music videos to your brand clothing, how is the overall experience for you? What are the challenges of being on camera for you?

"Way different! In videos it's a lot of roles and you're doing what you usually do or what you speak about in the music. When you're acting, it's a lot of preparation and studying. I'm still learning as I go. I just used my confidence to jump out there. The only challenge is the lack of experience for me."

What is your latest film that is going to be released? What is it called? What's the story behind it?

"So, I started with a short film turned web series called "Spoken 3rd" with a small role turned into a reoccurring role that will be released probably at the same time as the magazine. I have also been given the role as Dhamir, a twin separated from his sister in a film that's pending shooting called "My Brothers Keeper".

"The only challenge is lack of experience for me."





JAREZ BARON IS THE TOPIC

ALL THE WAY UP!

Baron shares with readers his expansion on Wavy Goonz Mafia in the coming years, his view on self-establishment, and he continues to give and give with no expectations.

Where do you see the Wavy Goonz Mafia brand in say 5 to 10 years? Will you add your own film company? Add more elements to the clothing part? What's coming next for the company as a whole?

"In five to ten years, Wavy Goonz will still be providing music and merchandise on a bigger scale; such as modeling, acting, writing, directing, and producing our own films. Clothing will expand from street wear into high fashion, and books will be coming soon."

Do you plan to expand your brand further into the black community? If so, how do you plan to do it? Do you plan to collaborate with anyone to get word out?

"My brand is black owned and is sold and worn in many of the urban communities throughout the state. I'm one of those "feet on the ground" kind of guys. I give a lot back to my community and others. I pride myself on being charitable. In the future, I plan to be more organized most definitely. That would be another attribute added to the company. I also support all black owned businesses. I wear black owned, use black owned, it keeps the money circulating ya know. Yes, I'm open to collab. Feel free to hit me up to work, or for promotion."

You've been through a lot of personal trials and obstacles, but you've made it through and established yourself amongst major peers and supporters. What does self-establishment mean to you, having faced all that you have and still trying to make a difference among others?

"Self establishment is important. As a man you want to conquer, rise to the top, and be considered the best. And to do this independently on your own doesn't make you a better man, but it makes you a stronger, more disciplined one. It means a lot to turn my story around these past couple years, going from negative to positive. To face what I have faced and come out looking this good is nothing but a blessing. I have many comrades who have succumbed to the same trials and tribulations that I overcame."

As you've grown, you've inspired and motivated many to change their lives around for the better, but who do you have in your life that inspires you?

"I try to at least, I do that because no one was uplifting to me, I wasn't inspired by anything I saw. When I was removed from society I was able to disconnect; unlearn and relearn. I was inspired by the bible, the tora, the quran. I was inspired by the books I read and the authors who wrote them. I'm inspired by people who follow their dreams, I'm inspired by others reaching their goals. You inspire me."



""IT MEANS A LOT TO TURN MY STORY AROUND THESE PAST COUPLE YEARS, GOING FROM NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE. TO FACE WHAT I HAVE FACED AND COME OUT LOOKING THIS GOOD IS NOTHING BUT A BLESSING..."

You've been working on a book, can you share with readers what it's going to be about? Please give a sneak peek into your future release!

"Yeah I'm constantly being pushed to finish my book, but I'm learning everyday while still living. It will be called *Love Yourself Sincerely*. Describing my experiences, my mental state at different points of my life up until now. I feel a lot of people from my community will relate, and I feel people who aren't from my community will have a better understanding. Self-help, showing yourself self love, from me, someone that maybe you can or can't relate to."

Ngozi Olivia Osuoha

**THE SPOKEN WORD, DEDICATION, AND
ENDLESS POWER OF SELF-GROWTH AND
ESTABLISHMENT.**

**OSUOHA HAS PLANTED HER POETRY INTO THE
COMPETITIVE SOIL OF THE LITERARY WORLD.**

From Nigeria, Ngozi Olivia Osuoha has written many novels of poetry, planting her blooming career of writing into thousands of bookstores and has featured in various online publications. She is a powerhouse of stories that literally reaches across the world, touching different walks of life. She's been in the business for a long time and has no intentions of slowing down.

Who exactly is Ngozi Olivia Osuoha, writer, scholar, entrepreneur, poet, hymnist, and anthologist?

"Ngozi Olivia Osuoha is a native of Nkwerre, in Nkwerre L.G.A. of Imo State, Nigeria. I am the fourth child out the six children, and the second daughter of my parents, Mr. and Mrs. B.A. Osuoha (retired teachers). I was born and bred in Nkwerre, my hometown. I am a village girl. I am a poet, a writer, a hymnist, a tailor, an anthologist, and more, as life happens and unfolds."

You are a known, world-renowned, award-winning poet. What was your first piece of poetry you ever published?

"I don't know how known I am, and how renowned I may be. I know I have won awards, including some dollars, no matter how small. My first piece of poetry that was published was entitled 'KINSMEN' A long piece, but published first in half by KWEE MAGAZINE, LIBERIA. It is a piece about kinsmen, brotherhood, clanship, kingdom, communal relationship, and different forms of human relationship in Africa and outside Africa."





All Around The World

Osuoha's Poetry has been featured all across the world. Her words hold no bounds no matter where you are.

Osuoha's writing is set in stone, being placed on a pedestal that is unique and all her. Her words, her stories in stanza's are universal and when you read Osuoha's poetry, you are carried to places you didn't know existed.

Many countries have published your work, have they been translated into other languages?

"Some of my poems have been translated and published into different foreign languages like Arabic, Spanish, Polish, Macedonian, Scots, Hindi, Serbian, Russian, Romanian, Chinese, Farsi, Khloe, Assamese, among others."

What countries have you been published in thus far?

"My poetry has been published in over forty countries and they include:

Liberia, Ghana, India, Canada, USA, UK, Germany, Trinidad and Tobago, Bangladesh, Macedonia, Spain, Poland, Australia, Scotland, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Egypt, Russia, Romania, Belgium, Mauritius, London, England, Philippines, Kenya, Peru, El-Salvador, Serbia, China, Italy, Argentina, Mexico, South Africa, France, Cameroon, Dubai, Nigeria, and many others."

What country that published has become a favorite thus far?

"I love all the countries I have been published in and I hope to be read, heard, and published in more countries and languages. But I think it is good to say Liberia, because I was first published there."



EMPOWERING WOMEN: NGOZI'S INFLUENCE

Black women being able to come together and celebrate each other's achievements and success is rewarding when being a writer in this competitive industry. We as black writers are here to empower others, to chase their dreams and achieve their goals. Osuoha does just that with the power and influence of her written works!

"...allowing the black woman to rise, to thrive in a favorable environment.."

- Ngozi Olivia Osuoha

You have empowered many women across the world with your poetry, but what does it mean to you as you travel and share your spoken word with others?

"Yes, I have imparted many through my poetry, but I am yet to start. Black women empowerment to me, is allowing the black woman to rise, to thrive in a favourable environment. Helping and supporting the girl, the lady, the woman and the female folk entirely to grow and better themselves as well as the society. Making sure women are not left out in education, good politics, discovery, lawmaking, society, and other facets that build the human race. Not intimidating women or keeping them in bondage culturally, religiously and or otherwise."



POETRY IS A STORY IN ITSELF

When Osuoha writes a piece of poetry, she does it with the intention to share deep emotions, a story and or message that touches souls.

What is the story/message behind your poetry piece "The Girl Child II"?

"The story/message behind my poetry piece "THE GIRL CHILD II" is very simple. Protect the girl child. Build her up and guide her. Cherish and make her feel secure. Support her vision, harness her talents, while making the environment conducive for her. Do not exploit, humiliate nor violate her because she is not a witch or a sex object. She has rights and her beauty deserves to be showcased. Give her justice, hope and peace. Let her thrive and change the world. She could be an angel if treated heavenly."

What is the story/message behind your poetry piece "The Stinging Scorpion"?

"The story/message behind my poetry piece "THE STINGING SCORPION" is nothing but wickedness in the high and low places, bad politics, bad governance, inhumane acts of power, quest for money, lust, humiliation of tongues and tribes, causing wars, selfishness, induced-poverty, hate, racism, terrorism, greed, injustice, war, high rate of crime, deceit, distrust, betrayal, suppression, oppression, and the likes."

**"I WRITE TO SEE A BETTER
WORLD, A GREEN FUTURE,
HOPEFUL ENVIRONMENT, FREE
AND FAIR HUMANITY."**

What do you think of your personal artistry? You have captivated readers and gained thousands of supporters, but what do you think of all of your achievements?

"I don't think I have achieved much. All the same, glory be to God for what I have achieved so far. My personal artistry is natural, it is real, raw, loud and divine. However, it is burdensome because you can't run away from it. There are times you want to rest, but the call would ring, loud and disturbing, so irresistible and irritating. Except you answer, no peace, no joy, no happiness.

I am not doing it to impress anybody, rather it is a forceful calling and order and instruction. Not doing it brings restlessness. It is a duty unto the author of life, the Creator, God, man, society and oneself. I write to see a better world, a green future, hopeful environment, free and fair humanity."



HOME IS WHERE THE SUPPORT FOR GROWTH IS

MORE ON OSUOHA'S GROWTH IN WRITING

To grow in your passion, most times that growth starts at home. For Osuoha, with the love and support from her parents Mr. and Mrs. B.A. Osuoha (retired teachers), and her siblings, Osuoha's passion and career of writing has no bounds.

What are your three favorite poetry pieces to date, ones that have stayed with you as you write and publish more books? Please name them and tell the story behind them.

"I love all my works. They all stay with me even when I am neither writing nor publishing, because they are the reality of life. But my three most favorite, I would say are, one old, and two new. As follows:

LETTER TO MY TEACHER

Especially to my parents, who are retired teachers and senior citizens. And to all my primary and secondary school teachers, wherever they are. May those who have died, find peaceful rest. I appreciate them all, and will forever cherish and adore them.

AFRICAN THE GIRL

One of my recent, typical of me and any other African girl.

BLACK CHILD

Recent. To every black child around the world. It criticizes racism, hate, prejudice, racial profiling, discrimination, segregation and colour-based violence and injustice. It tells the black child to subdue the ugliness of the world."



.....

"In writing, career, job, marriage, and other adventures, I can only pray and hope for the best. It is my wish, my utmost wish and prayer to succeed and fly higher especially with self-discovery in God's plan."

.....

Life gives you many obstacles and challenges, but as long as you push through and continue in your passions and goals, it makes life a bit sweeter. As her writing becomes more globally recognized, Osuoha will continue to inspire people to not give up on their dreams-because anything is possible.

Where do you see yourself in five to ten years? How do you think your growth and self-establishment will be by then as not only a writer but overall brand as well?

"Humanly, I see or hope for a pleasant tomorrow, a beautiful future, but I am not God. Man proposes, God disposes. In writing, career, job, marriage, and other adventures, I can only pray and hope for the best. It is my wish, my utmost wish and prayer to succeed and fly higher especially with self-discovery in God's plan. I can quote unthinkable plan, effort and zeal, for the next five to ten years, but it is only the Supreme Being, that can make them bear fruit. He can water our minds to fertilize even the seeds we haven't planted. Because he alone orders the universe."

You've ventured into other creative outlets besides writing-being a hymnist. Have your skills grown in that as well?

"Yes, it has been. I was born and bred in the Anglican Communion, and you know we are the hymning church of God. We sang hymns in school, mostly in my secondary school years. It's our prayer, our worship, our praise, our meditation, our communion, our lifestyle, our essence. We sleep with hymns on our lips, and we wake up with hymns, even strange and new ones. You can find out. Hymns awaken and reawaken everything in us, except you are not an Anglican."

features

Anthology Upon Anthology

"I have featured in so many anthologies, I can remember one hundred and ten as at the time of filing this interview. Over ninety five percent were outside Nigeria. I gave many pieces, from one to thirteen poems per anthology is what I can recall. "SAVE AFRICA" is the anthology that has my highest pieces so far, with thirteen poems from me. Poets and writers from South Africa, Uganda, Nigeria, and Kenya contributed their works. It was done by a US Poet, Dave Gretch. All the same, let me mention most of the anthologies I have featured in."

PUBLICATONS THAT HAVE FEATURED NGOZI OLIVIA OSUOHA'S LITERARY WORKS

Messages to the world
Things that go bump at night
Arabic anthology
Contemporary world English poets
The year of the poet VI (2019)
The year of the poet VIII (2021)
Harbinger asylum winter 2020 edition
(special JFK Issue)
Save Africa
Feminists voices 1
Feminists voices 2
The Literary Parrot 1
Zoo
Dreich Season 7, volume 2.
The Silk Road literature anthology (Ancient
Egyptians, Modern Poets)
River Willow
Poets Are Heroes
Litterateur June edition 11
Litterateur July edition 12
Reflectoum edition 14
GloMag February 2020
GloMag August 2020
GloMag February 2021
GloMag August 2021
Whispers of soflay vol 3
Metafora Wsplczesnosci (polish)
Raindrops of Love
Peace lover
Untamed Thrills and shrills
Marula
A woman of essence
Tenuous breaths of girls
Tribute to Kofi Annan
Campionatul Modial De Poezie (Romania)
Florets of fancy

The vase
Anthology of the world poetry
championship
World of women
Traumas of widows
Complexion based discrimination
Divine poetic thoughts for Jesus the
Christ
The Global Litterati Insights
Voices of humanity
Pieces of a broken heart
Ripples of peace
Women Poets 2 (within and beyond
shores)
Women poets 3 (within and beyond
shores)
Medley of melodies
Family, eternal treasures
Reminiscing earth
Persian sugar in English tea 1
Persian sugar in English tea 3
Love Postcards
The global literati insights vol 1, issue 1,
Tranquil muse
Symphony of peace
Burning desire
Only you
Dedicated to daddy
Versatile verse
Holistic healings of widows
Leaves of the poetree
The fragrance of love
Loops of hope
Briggete Porson Poetry contest
Rock pebbles journal 3 times

Rock pebbles anthology 2021
Tried, tested and true poets
The heart of Joey, Joey Manning and
friends
Satin silk You
Our poetry archive July, 2018
Our poetry archive
Why poetry matters
Inspired Magazine (vol six, 2021)
Better than Starbucks (March 2020)
Better than Starbucks
(September/October 2019)
Better than Starbucks (November 2019)
What lies on the other side (cc & d)
Coiled cobra
Among the debris
The Garden of Eden (cc & d)
We are Revolution
Best New African Poets Anthology 2019
Humanity
Cobpemehoct (Macedonian)
Stairways to heaven
Heart of lightness
Inked poetry
Poetic Christmas
I am a woman
Eternally
The poet in me
Dis-Grace Land
Imagery of place
Art house
The harmony
Summer rain
Giggling pen

And much more!



A Literary Impact

Ngozi Olivia Osuoha has made a significant impact on not only those who share, feature and read her literary works and poetry, but when at home in Nigeria, the impact she has on her community will transcend time, making her an ideal role model that young people can look up to.

What other literary works have you participated in besides anthologies and your own poetry?

"Aside from these anthologies, I have published more than three hundred pieces in more than forty countries and still counting. And I have authored and published twenty- three poetry books in Kenya, Philippines, Canada, US, UK, Zimbabwe, and more manuscripts with published. Some of my books are archived in the US Library of Congress, including some anthologies I featured in too, and some other foreign libraries and universities."

How have you personally impacted your Nigerian community?

"I have been doing my little bit. Individuals who come across my works get entertained, educated, inspired, relieved, and so on. My latest published book 'DEAR NKWERRE' was written for my hometown."

What can your poetry in particular bring to your community of Nigeria?

"A piece of prayer, plea, persuasion, reminder, summon, wish, warning, meditation, submission, on peace, unity, brotherhood, oneness, love, progress, and everything sound and unique especially when it was needed most. It melted hearts, still melts, and yet to melt. Same way my prayer for Nigeria, Africa and the world at large."

How do you think your story/journey has inspired other young girls and women to follow in your footsteps?

"I know some girls, ladies, and women who have approached me to enquire how they could become published. I encouraged them to carry on strong. Some even wanted to sell their manuscripts, but I discouraged them, using myself as an example. Today, they are doing well. We all are gradually growing together. We may not be rich, but riches aren't all about money. Some of these people also venture into other things and they grow. Me too."

What about young men and even older generations?

"I know some young men too, who I have linked up with some publishers and publications, and a bit of their dreams came to life. From there, they may advance in whatever they can, God willing. However, there are some who are far away, who can't reach me or those who pretend not to see me, but they have learned some things from me. My mission and essence have influenced them or some to learn, relearn, unlearn and so on. Some have been inspired by my works to dream anew, again, and activate and reactivate their dormant talents and gifts. There are also people who don't know me who read me or come across my works and feel proud, honoured, dignified, and uplifted no matter how small the hammer hits the nail."

When Dante Sands decided to become an entrepreneur and start his delivery service, he did it with the intention to give literally a helping hand to those who may not have the means to get things they would need on a daily basis. His service is a blessing in disguise and while it can be a challenge owning and operating your own business, the smiles of gratitude and huge thank yous from customers is what makes it all rewarding.

Who is Dante Sands? The businessman/entrepreneur, student, and content creator?

"Born and raised in a small town called Plainfield, New Jersey. "The Queen City," known for its incredible history and beautiful historic homes. I've lived in Plainfield all my life, a town full of minorities that share a common goal, to be successful. Sometimes, I ask myself, what kind of person would I be if I wasn't born in Plainfield? How would I think? Who would I know? Living in Plainfield has taught me a lot about what it is to be a minority but, most of all, to be an African American man living in America. As a 28-year-old African American man living here, I think now is just a big part of what I want to accomplish in the future. At first glance looking at Plainfield, you will see people fighting to survive, but then at second glance, you will see the beauty in the people who live here as well as their fight to overcome the many battles the world has. Plainfield is my happy place."

Dante Sands



The Man Behind Lean On Me Deliveries LLC

A FRESH START!



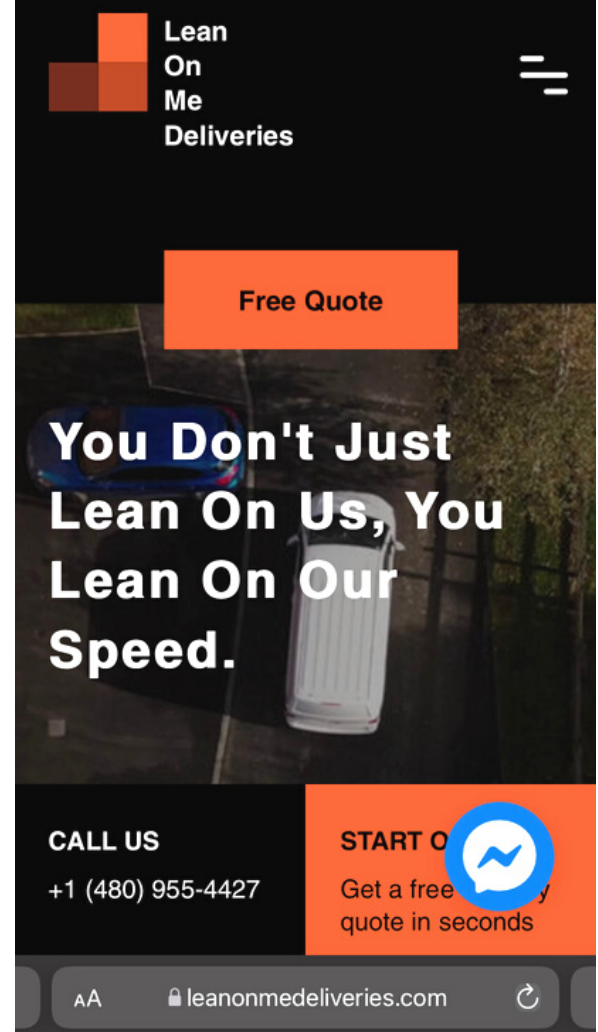
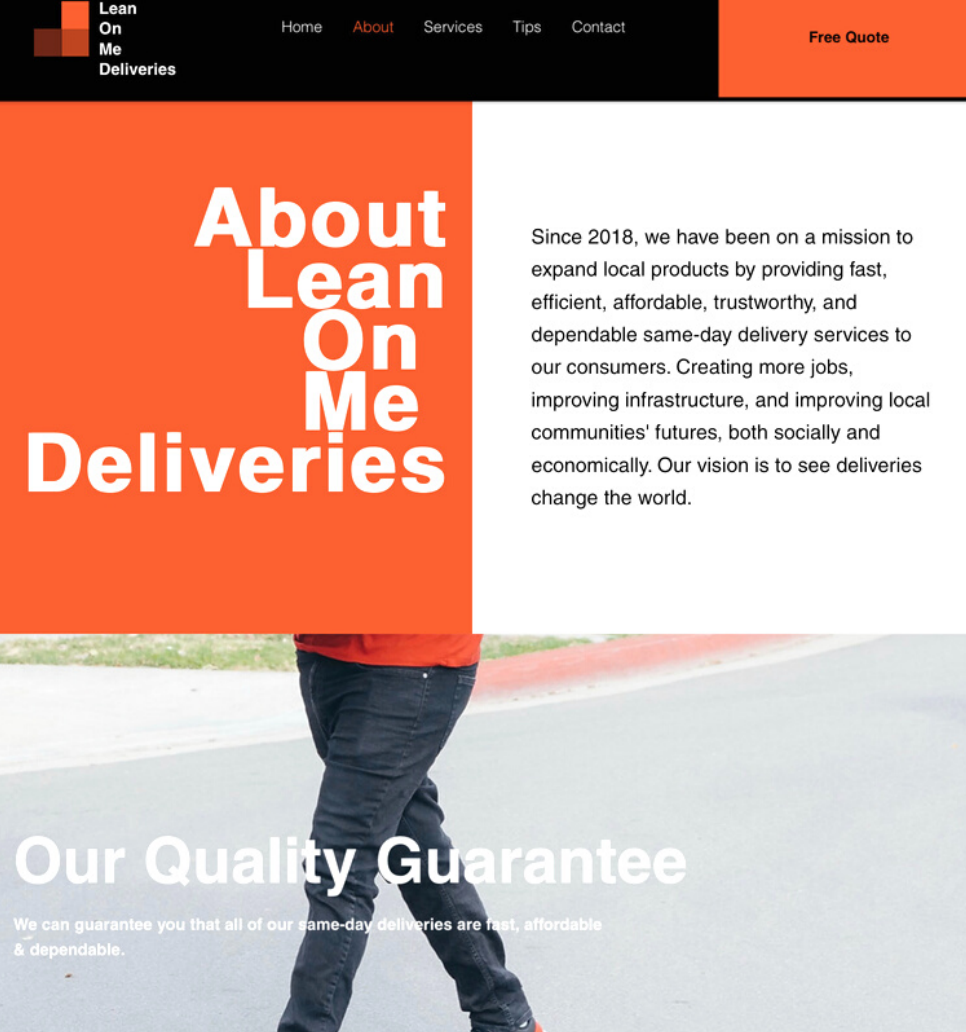
Sometimes in life you have to make hard decisions. Ones that may change the course of your life and path. For Sands, leaving Pfizer to start his entrepreneurial journey was a tough decision, but in the end, it was one that was not only rewarding but life-fulfilling, giving Sands the opportunity to make change in a unique way.

How did you become an entrepreneur? How did you know starting your own business was meant for you?

"When I turned 25 years old in 2017, I started working for Pfizer as an escalations specialist; Pfizer was my first pharmaceutical job, so I was excited to work there because I knew that Pfizer helped people stay healthy and live up to their full potential, so for me that was their way of creating change. One day one of the executives told me I was a very compassionate gifted person and that I could have a future at Pfizer. For me, a future at Pfizer meant working hard and breaking my back so that we could help others live. That's not what I wanted. I didn't want to break my back working under someone else; I wanted to break my back working for myself, creating change for minorities, homosexuals and for those in poverty."

What did you do to really get your dream rolling? How did the people around you react to you leaving Pfizer? How did you feel about it?

"I decided to leave Pfizer, and I called my siblings and told them I wanted to go into business for myself. I pitched to them that I wanted to create a safer way to second-hand shop because I knew so many people were being harmed from meeting up with strangers through online marketplaces like Craigslist. A year earlier, my cousin was killed meeting up with someone in a second-hand shop, and I wanted to stop that violence. I wanted to make sure that people were safe meeting up with strangers. So I came out with Lean On Me Deliveries, a same-day delivery service for second-hand items. I patented my name and service that same year in 2018, and I quit my job at Pfizer. I went back to school full-time, and I used all my savings to fund my business. I had been saving up since I was sixteen."



Entering entrepreneurship is a risky toss up especially when doing it alone. It takes dedication, time and a lot of patience. Sands, who has thus far done it alone, knows the struggles of building a business and brand from the ground up.

What are some of the challenges to running your own business?

"Starting, I had no idea what doors I could go through and get the guidance, so I went through any doorway, many of which were shut in my face. I thought I would have so much help because I was young. I thought people were going to help me. It didn't work out that way at all. We live in a world designed to go against you."

How has the marketing part of growing the business been like for you?

"So, you have to know that you're going to be alone most of the ride. I started marketing and advertising LOMD over multiple social media platforms. For some reason, I just knew customers were going to come running through, but it didn't go like that at all most of the time; people just viewed my website and left. Did I wonder why? But you don't get an answer when things happen; you have to make your assumptions and fix them. I changed my website layout at least ten times since I've been in business, and that's to catch potential customers."

How have you changed how you promote your business in order to gain a high customer following?

"Eventually, I learned to go harder at my advertisements, to give more information and to make my ads more simple to understand. I thought it would be easy to change the world, but it's trickier than I thought. When things are difficult, it fuels me to find a solution. So I started reaching out to local businesses in Plainfield who I knew of and asked them to let me provide same-day delivery on their products no matter what the outcome was."

Explain to readers your more indepth delivery service!

"I would charge them a \$0 service fee and give them an advertisement; you could imagine the reactions I got! But wait, that's not it... Every delivery would be \$7 for each customer, no matter the number of items they ordered or the location they were in, and it worked. Local businesses grabbed my delivery service and went along with it. Today, we have several local businesses that we deliver for around New Jersey; people are amazed that the delivery fee is only \$7. I created change within local companies by providing service-free deliveries to their customers while still focusing on second-hand deliveries through online marketplaces. The change that I brought was bringing expanding local products by providing fast, efficient, affordable, trustworthy, and dependable same day delivery services to consumers—creating more jobs, improving infrastructure, and improving local communities' futures both socially and economically with a vision to see deliveries change the world."

"I created change within local companies by providing service-free deliveries to their customers while still focusing on second-hand deliveries through online marketplaces."

Instant Delivery

Fast, Affordable Deliveries

THIS MONTH'S FEATURE



Instant Delivery

You don't just lean on us, you lean on our speed! Get fast, affordable, same-day deliveries on various locally owned products for only \$7.

Need a bigger item delivered? [Get a Quote.](#)

Lean On Me Deliveries isn't just a delivery service, it's a unique and resourceful helping hand to those that are afraid to leave their homes due to senseless violence or old age. Dante Sands, when starting this company wanted his customers to feel safe, and he makes sure they are at every opportunity.

Lean On Me Deliveries has been running for four plus years now, how did it become what it is now?

"Lean On Me Deliveries started with a mission to stop the violence. Nobody should have to die just because they want to earn extra money or because they want to get rid of a piece of furniture. So, LORD put a stop to that. Our first year, even though I came across so many challenges, my business was a success."

What about your company makes your customers feel safe when using your service?

"People wanted to feel protected. People wanted to feel like they could trust and rely on something, and that was LOMD; it gave protection, trust, and reliability to everyone. I didn't focus on anything but customer service, safety, trust, and dependability for a whole year. Those were important to me because LOMD was based on providing deliveries that were safe, convenient, reliable, trustworthy, but at the same time fast."

How quick and efficient is Lean On Me Deliveries? Especially in areas that aren't exactly "safe".

"People don't have the need to leave their homes in fear or have 911 on speed dial; instead, all they had to do was book a delivery that only took five minutes to complete. I didn't care about money; I just wanted to create better and safer online marketplaces and local communities in New Jersey."

"I JUST WANTED TO CREATE BETTER AND SAFER ONLINE MARKETPLACES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN NEW JERSEY."

Always Improving!

**Happy customers is make
business easier!**

Second-hand Delivery

Our weight fee varies by size. Items weighing 0lbs - 69lbs have no weight fee. Just a travel fee. Items weighing 70lbs- 89lbs weight fee is \$65. Items weighing 90lbs- 99lbs weight fee is \$75. Items weighing 100lbs- 150lbs weight fee is \$85. Every second-hand delivery as a \$12 delivery fee charged every 10 miles. Deliveries under 10 miles have a \$12 delivery fee.

Instant Delivery

We provide same-day deliveries on a wide range of products. All you have to have is an order number, pick-up and drop-off location, as well as \$7. No mileage calculations. No hassles. Just a flat delivery fee of \$7. Click here to find out what locally owned businesses use Instant Delivery.

Businesses flourish when you work hard, communicate and take in all feedback-good and bad! Sands is always improving when he receives feedback from his valued customers because with their help, Lean On Me Deliveries continues to blossom in an instant!

How do you think you can personally improve your business to reach more of a wider audience?

"I'm always thinking of new ways to gain more customers every day. My mind is a thinking machine; it never stops thinking of ways to expand and become better for our consumers. So we now have a delivery service called *Instant Delivery*. It's a delivery service that gets products, food, and beverages to you instantly. We just started this service in August 2021, and it has attracted a younger crowd of customers, which we wanted to reach to build a service that wasn't targeted for a specific group of people but everyone."

What is instant delivery? How has this feature helped Lean On Me Deliveries service customers?

"So, instant delivery is the twin brother of the business to the consumer part of our business. Consumers can request delivery for only \$7 on any product or food that has an order number, no matter the location or the number of items. We want our customers to not only lean on us for our services, but also lean on us for our speed. Since August, instant delivery has become one of our best delivery features for the young crowd because they can get one flat rate on their deliveries rather than a distance and a delivery fee."

Second-hand Delivery

We provide same-day delivery on a wide range of second-hand items weighing up to 100lbs.

[Read more](#)

"We now have a delivery service called "Instant Delivery..."

"I never sleep on development; change is a part of any entrepreneur we need to boost to accomplish our goals."

-DANTE SANDS

HIGH PERFORMANCE FOR CUSTOMER APPROVAL!

Dante Sands explains how customer feedback is essential to his business's growth!

How do you insure that customers give feedback everytime you finish a service?

"Anytime that we deliver, we always ask for feedback on our services. It's one way we're able to connect with our customers and build trust and loyalty with them as well. We listen to our customers and their feedback. Over the four years that we have been in business, feedback is one of the many reasons we are so successful. It provides word of mouth, and people like to see the experiences that other people have had with a service or a product. We want all of our customers to know that they mean a great deal to us. After all, without our customers, we wouldn't be able to create change in the world that we live in."

Our Happy Customers

I'm a single mother. It's a nightmare getting anything done. Thanks to you guys I am able to save so much time. Dante was early & friendly.

Whitney Artis



By gaining a new perspective on what customers need every time they leave feedback, how do you think you can use their feedback to grow and develop as a business owner?

"I never sleep on development; change is a part of any entrepreneur we need to boost to accomplish our goals. Growth gives us the confidence to say that we can do anything we put our minds to, and when you have that feeling, that's when you know there are endless possibilities to your success. We see this when we look at companies like Amazon who started so little, but they grew into the company they are today as time went by. Every day we continue to see their growth expand into more extraordinary things."

IN THE FAST LANE: SCHOOL AND BUSINESS

Life is about balance, and for Sands, being a full-time student and owning your own business can cause that balance to clash unless you know how to manage it!

Since you are a full-time student, how have you handled an intense class schedule on top of running your business full-time as well? What are some techniques that you do to stay calm and balanced day to day?

"When I decided to take school full-time, I knew it would be a lot of work, but I also knew it could be done if I just used time management and was organized. Time management is a big part of my being an entrepreneur, you are always on the run, and that run could take you in all kinds of directions. From staying up late into the morning and possibly messing up on an order or delivery. Going to school and being an entrepreneur is a big challenge, but it's also worth it because you get to learn how to manage your time, your day, and multitask, most importantly. I do a lot of multitasking."

What are some techniques that you do to stay calm and balanced day to day?

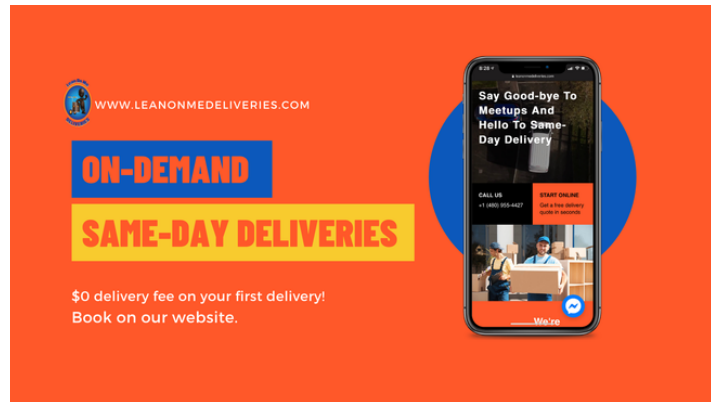
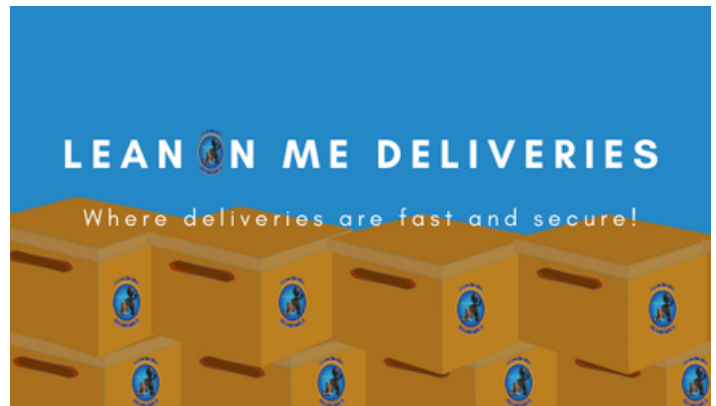
"Often, I find myself doing my homework or projects two weeks in advance so that it's already completed by the time the due date comes, giving me the free time to work on my business. I will admit most days are rough; we are open Mon-Fri from 9:00 am-10:00 pm, and Saturday - Sunday 8:00 am - 9:00 pm. I have to make sure I go to bed early, in order to get up at 6:00 am and do my morning work out so that my body is relaxed and prepared for the day. I'll cook an excellent breakfast when I get done, to start me on the right foot. Working out and eating breakfast helps me out a lot because now my mind is clear, and I can stay focused on providing excellent service to my customers. "

"I still want to make time to prepare for the delivery so that I can provide the best customer service ever to the customer."



PHILLIP .B

"I brought a king size bed from FB marketplace, they picked it up and delivered it to me quick."



LEAN ON ENTREPRENUERS!

MORE INSIGHT ON WHY DANTE SANDS BECAME AN ENTREPRENEUR AND WHO HAS INSPIRED HIM FOR THIS JOURNEY.

You've been on your entrepreneurship journey for a long time, what advice would you give to others that may want to become an entrepreneur, but are not sure where to start?

"As an entrepreneur you have to be strong and have a lot of patience. For me, those were the most important traits to have. If you aren't strong, then you're going to give up easy and you're not going to accomplish your goals. Being an entrepreneur and not having patience is bad. You can't come into the business world and expect that everything's going to come in the blink of an eye, it just doesn't work like that; you have to be patient with growth. There's always going to be times when you are going to try and enter a door and it will be shut in your face, but that isn't a sign to give up. It's a sign to try the back door or the windows; you have to keep yourself motivated to never give up no matter what you go through you can never give up."

"Who has inspired you throughout your journey? Is there anyone that has been by your side as you grow as a business man and brand?"

"My parents and my siblings are my motivation. Going to school, I learned quickly that I was the only person in my grade whose parents were still married and had a good size family. My parents worked hard all their lives with no breaks. They supported my two siblings and me. They struggled, but they made the most out of their struggles; they always put their family first no matter their differences. They always made sure that we had the best life. I think that's every parent's dream to give their kids a life they never had. Looking at my parents hard work ethic drives me to want to be a hard worker, stay focused on my goals, become a better person, and keep good energy even when things are rough."

LEAN ON ME DELIVERIES

Where deliveries are fast and secure!

JESSICA TOMKINS

"I like that they deliver black-owned products. It was convenient and only \$7. Great Service!"

THE ROAD AHEAD IS ENDLESS!

Owning a brand means endless potential and opportunity-big and small. For Lean On Me Deliveries, Dante Sands sees an endless road to success and growth. With the support of family and friends, and the support of loyal customers, Sands business will only achieve to the highest degree.

*Where do you see LeanOnMeDeliveries in a few years?
Do you plan on expanding your brand into other areas?*

"I've always had grand plans for my Lean On Me Deliveries before it was even patented, which is the funny part. We are currently only servicing New Jersey, but I want to expand to New York. New York is so big and filled with so many people; it's a place where a business can become the future. It can advance into something more than what it was. I have been looking for more small companies to provide delivery services for that want to expand. We want to help local and small businesses develop their products to reach more consumers, that's important to us."

Do you plan to extend beyond just you and a few others within the company?

"We want to create more jobs for minorities and boost brand awareness for local and small businesses and ourselves. When you look at delivery services like Doordash and Ubereats, you see that these two competitors are fighting against each other every day to gain something more, but is that more for the businesses or is it for them? When we move in directions that we weren't meant to go in, that tells a lot about a company. We have to keep in mind that everything's not about money; sometimes life is about giving and helping a hand, and most of the time, those are the most successful businesses. The exciting part about having a business is watching it expand and having the ability to help other companies do something great; we are all in this together."

KEISHA "COCO" MOLBY- BAEZ

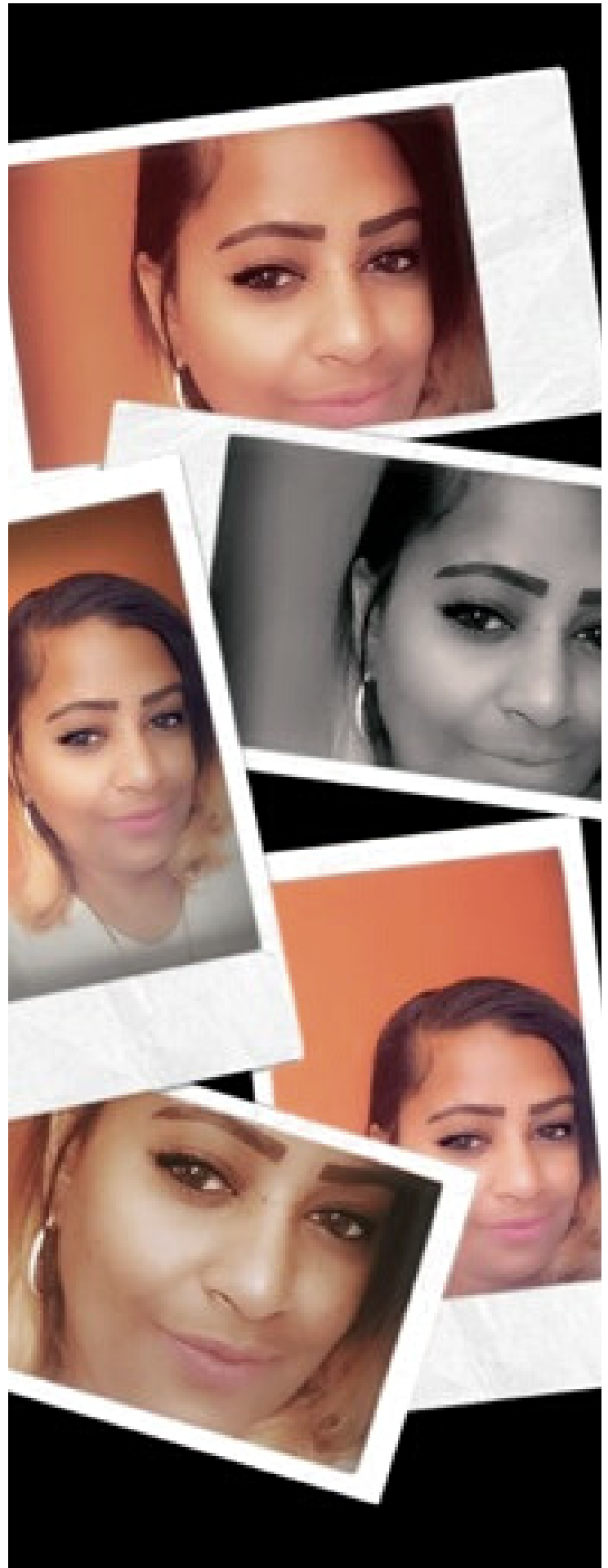
Keisha "Coco" Molby-Baez is a woman with a long list of accolades and titles-wife, mother, poet, entrepreneur, veteran being a few. She is the epitome of a woman with ambition, willing to help and share her talent and words of inspiration with others.

Who is Keisha "Coco" Molby-Baez? The woman who is known in this industry as a "true delight?"

"I am a humble, positive, strong, forgiving, ambitious, supportive, inspiring, kind, determined and diligent woman. I'm a daughter, mother, wife, aunt, friend, and veteran. The mother of three amazing and talented children; Jonathan, Krystle and Samantha. I was born in Jamaica, Kingston, raised in the Boogie Down Bronx and residing in Florida. I enjoy being a community activist, who pays it forward by collaborating events in the community with Rev. Reuben Diaz Sr., Assemblyman Marcos Crespo and Assemblyman Peter Rivera."

What have you done in the long years of your career?

"I've curated and hosted many fundraisers and raffles since high school. The most well-known raffle is "The Raffle of Gratitude" created by yours truly. It's a very unique raffle where everyone gets a ticket, not knowing all of them will actually get a gift. I'm dedicated to being the change I want to see. I also created the Coco's Delight Care Package Initiative when COVID started. I created this initiative to give back to the community and front liners. I donated over hundreds of items, including my poetry books and Coco's Delight products such as; tote bags, t-shirts, pens, journals, pillows, purses, sanitizers, masks, mugs, water bottles, hats and inspirational postcards."



POETRY FROM THE EMPOWERED

Coco The Poet

COCO'S POETRY HAS HIT THE SHELVES AND PEOPLE'S HEARTS! SHE SHARES WITH READERS WHO SHE HAS COCO THE POET.

Keisha Molby-Baez known in the writing scene as Coco, has established herself in ways unimaginable for most. With fundraisers, raffles, and showcases of poetry in hit New York cafes and sceneries, Coco has made her name shine in all aspects of creative life.

Coco is the name that everyone calls you but who is Coco as poet and writer?

"Keisha as a poet is known as Coco. I unconditionally support other poets, authors and writers. I am also known as an author, a woman who writes empowering poetry about her life. Each poem tells a story about survival and perseverance. They all provide a moral and life lesson. I am the author of "Tears laced with Fire" which is my first poetry book, that tells my story about why my tears were laced with fire and how the tears helped me to survive. Each poem is filled with pain I've overcome, my deep thoughts, inner feelings and perceptions. My poems express how I faced many life changing obstacles and health issues that would have broken me emotionally, physically, and spiritually. I explain how my passion for writing kept me motivated and filled with gratitude."

How have you excelled as a writer in your long career? How has it been beneficial to you as you seek out new paths-creative wise?

"Keisha as a writer is vulnerable, determined, straightforward, and deeply passionate. I write with conviction baring my soul, showing how I've continuously turned my pain into purpose. As a writer I started a new project last year titled "A Collection of Connections and Collaborations". This is a project that I started to make deep connections with fellow writers around the globe and in the community, showing how our works collaborate beautifully with each other. I create all the writing prompts and choose all the writers that will be in collaboration with each other. This collection I will be compiling into an Anthology."



More on Coco's Poetry

Step Into Her Spoken Word



COCO SHARES MORE ABOUT
HER POETRY-HER SECOND
POETRY BOOK

"A LITTLE BIT OF SUGAR"

"A little bit of Sugar" is my second poetry book and this collection speaks about my growth, both in myself and writing. It speaks about appreciation that leads to elevation and necessary growth. We all need to appreciate the simple things in life and all the bits of sugar too. This book speaks about all the bits of sugar in my life despite all the pain and trials. I show how I managed my emotional and physical pain, while still being filled with gratitude. A book about my self-care and self-love journey. This book helped me to grow as a person, causing me to reflect on a lot. It helped me change perspective, be more mindful, take nothing personal, take healthy breaks, promote as I see fit and not as I'm advised, and to be open to constructive criticism, but doing what makes me happy. Most of the challenges I've experienced and shared in this book are about my health and life changes. It really takes mastering mind over matter to cope. I learned how to turn my pain into purpose. I'm a true soldier and survivor!"





THE ULTIMATE WORK ETHIC OF

ENTREPRENEUR COCO



All Photo Credit Belongs to Keisha "Coco"
Molby-Baez

The entrepreneurship life isn't easy. Has it's highs and lows but Molby-Baez has made the best of it especially with her continuously thriving business and brand "Coco's Delight". An empowering brand that gives back to communities with packages that are given with love.

Where did the name of "Coco's Delight" come from?

"I created the brand Coco's Delight and the brand name came from both my poet name and people telling me I'm a true delight. My brand exemplifies who I am, my life's experiences and all the positivity I put out into the world. The quotes on each of my brand items are written by yours truly and published in my poetry books. Coco's Delight is a line of comforting and empowering products. My line consists of pillows, journals, pens, t-shirts, mugs, caps, tote bags, clutches, accessory bags, and sweaters. A few more items will be added to the collection for the New Year. My line is affordable and offers many discounted packages."

Why did you start "Coco's delight"? What's the story behind the brand?

"I started the Coco's Delight Care Package Initiative in April of 2018 and it was to give back to the community and those who needed a little pick me up, a little inspiration, some comfort, empowerment, love, care and assistance. When COVID started, I decided to add care packages of gratitude for the front liners. I donated hundreds of care packages to the community and hospitals. When I wasn't able to work due to COVID, I found it difficult to balance my bills and continue to send out care packages. This was all coming out of my pocket."

Did you have any help getting the brand up and running especially when not able?

"A dear friend, Elisabet Velasquez, advised I create a donation link because she appreciated what I did for the community and wanted me to continue it."



COCO'S DELIGHT BRAND N' BUSINESS

Keisha Molby-Baez shares with readers a more inside look into the workings of her brand "Coco's Delight".

When you were ill, how did you keep "Coco's Delight" flourishing, especially with the pandemic?

"I decided to create a paypal and cash app link for people to make donations. She also advised me to post and share about what I do, so people can be aware and hopefully support more. I decided to create a second instagram and Facebook for this purpose and to support my brand as well. My cash app is \$KeishaMolbyBaez and my PayPal is [Paypal.me/KeishaMolbyBaez](https://www.paypal.com/paytouser/KeishaMolbyBaez). People made videos, sent emails and posted their gratitude for my Care Package Initiatives."

How did you feel about your customers giving you that kind of support, helping you by helping others when in hard times?

"This is what makes me happy; seeing others happy. I give unconditionally because I know what it is to be without and how it feels to have to ask. It's always lovely to offer and give with a pure heart. The ultimate heart warming part of my initiative is knowing I am making a difference in someone's life every day. I have hope that more people will make more donations to support this great cause."

Do you ever feel discouraged when running the business, particularly since no one sees an ending soon for the pandemic?

"I've always seen things in life possible, as long as I remained filled with faith, determination and gratitude. My first step was to be patient, second was to pray about everything, third was to plan, fourth was to not expect, fifth was to promote, sixth was to follow up, and seventh was to thank God everyday I wake up to continue doing and being. Giving back is one of the most rewarding and amazing feelings."

How do you stay motivated and give encouragement during these hard times? What motivates you despite obstacles and unexpected events?

"As a young woman to veteran, veteran to mother, mother to wife, wife to writer, writer to author, author to community activist, community activist to coordinator, coordinator to motivational speaker, and motivational speaker to entrepreneur. I speak volumes of how the impossible is absolutely possible. Dreams and hopes do come true! I speak about a journey that is full of truth and survival, from heart aches, set backs, tribulations, betrayal, let downs, disappointments, excruciating pain and many struggles with health issues. I am a story that was waiting to be told, a miracle of God and proud to be who I am."

COCO'S DELIGHT EVENTS

"Coco's Delight" is more than just a brand, it's an umbrella of unity, of togetherness, empowerment, encouragement and appreciation of each other's arts and talents in order to gain exposure! Coco prides herself in helping other artists of various backgrounds collaborate in ways that may not be possible before. She welcomes all with open arms and pushes for artists to sell, promote and be proud of what they do.

What are the "Coco's Delight" events? What is the backstory on the expansion of this part of your brand?

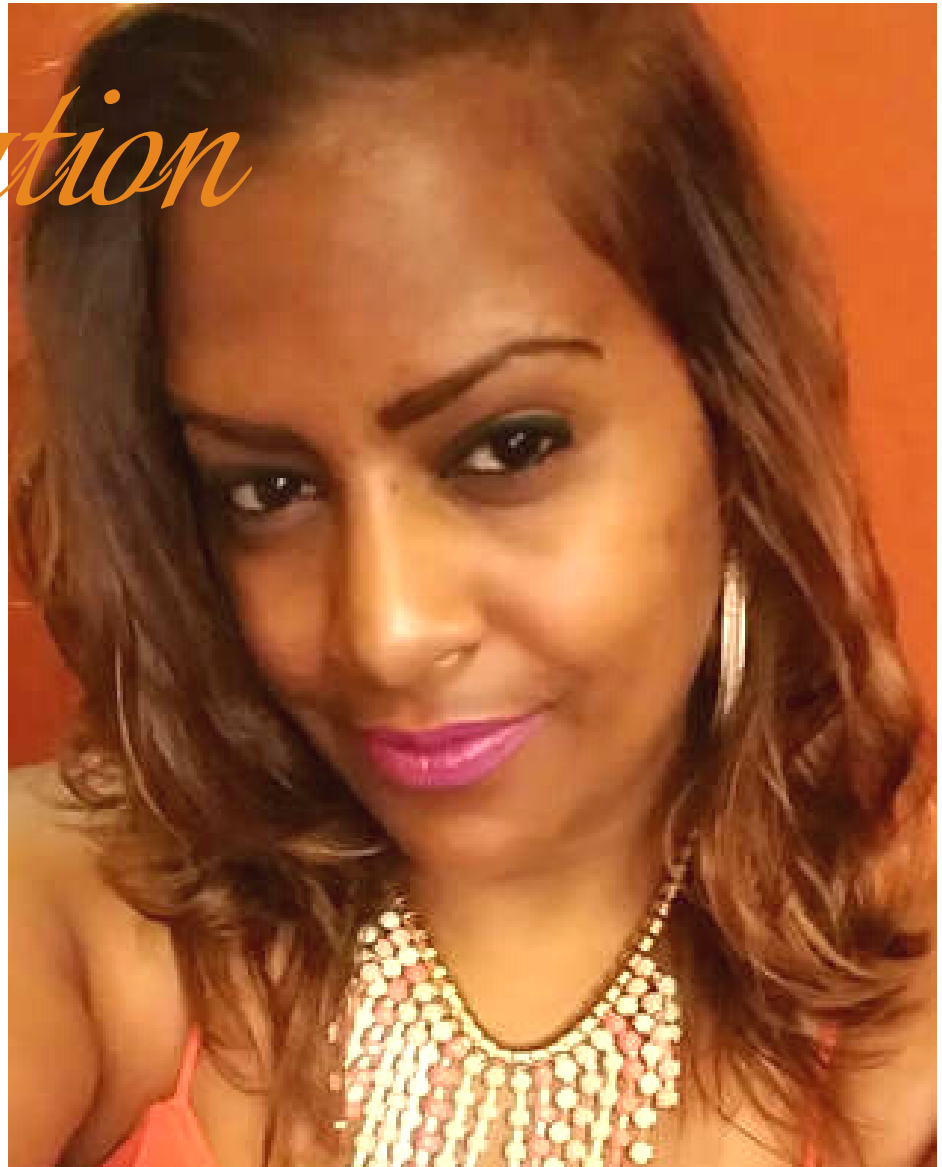
The Coco's Delight events are where I featured a collaboration of artists shining on one stage together. I would research, interview and then book the artists to perform. My events all had different topics of interest and importance. Some of them were cancer, suicide, love, mental illness, passed away loved ones and for appreciation.

Appreciation

Collab & Succeed

What do artists come away with when attending your events?

"All artists have the opportunity to promote their craft, sell their books and products. Most of all, artists were rewarded with a monetary and Coco's Delight gift. I also hosted a Raffle of Gratitude at each event, to give back to all who came out to support the artists and my events. I started this raffle when I was in high school and still continue it today. This also came out of my pocket and was a great way to pay it forward in the community. It was like early Xmas at each of my events and writing workshops. Another special thing about my events is that it was free and offered no limits in the amount of time to perform. Everyone was offered the opportunity to do up to three pieces depending on how many signed up or booked to perform. This also opened the door to more exposure of my brand, products and poetry books. I am filled with so much gratitude!"





IN BIG BUSINESS

To become a writer is to have confidence in not only your craft, but to have confidence in what you put out into the world. Keisha, being a veteran, writer and author herself, knows just how to not let her crown of confidence shift no matter what!

"VENUES AND CURATORS STARTED TO REACH OUT, OFFERING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO FEATURE AND PERFORM AT THEIR EVENTS AND OPEN MICS."

How did you get started in the writing industry? Was it always a passion for you such as being an avid writer during adolescent years, taking creative writing classes or perhaps personal experiences caused you to become a writer?

"I got started in the writing industry by attending workshops, open mics and poetry events. I met amazing people and supporters, who saw my inner and outer light. My spirit spoke to them and I pushed myself day and night to write and publish my poetry books, establishing a name in the writing community. A name that represented kindness and real support. I supported everyone, even the haters and negative ones! I believe the world has no bad people, only people who make some really bad choices that cause terrible consequences. Many made bad choices to betray me, take advantage of my kindness and try to block my blessings. As you can see, I'm achieving, establishing, supporting others and being blessed. At the end of the day, it's their loss and karma."



Tears Laced With Fire A Best Seller!

Shedding a tear when dealing with the challenges that life brings can be a comfort. Letting tears of pain and sorrow go can be a good way to heal. Molby-Baez's best seller "Tears Laced With Fire" is her own journey of shedding away pain and loss and moving forward with strength and support from loved ones. Coco shares the story of how her novel can help in the darkest of life's moments.

Your first collection of poems, "Tears Laced With Fire" is one of your best sellers, what is the story and message behind it?

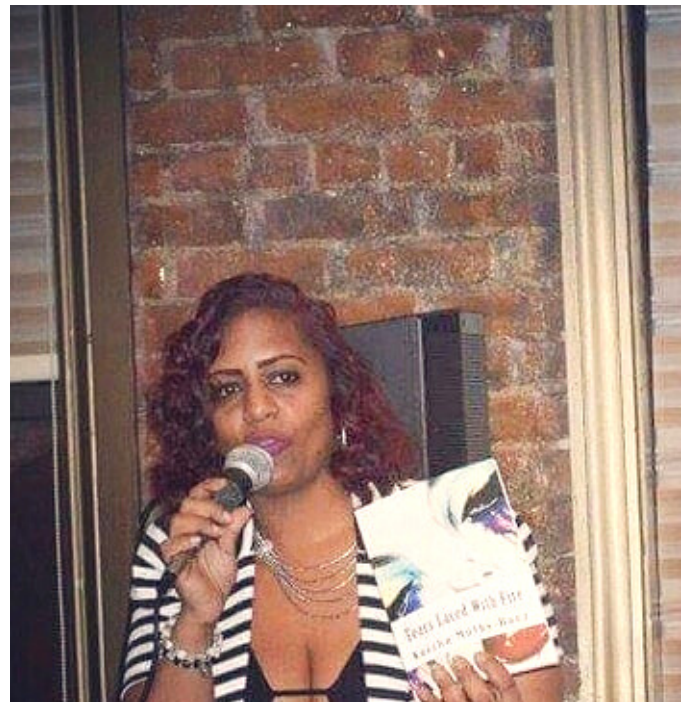
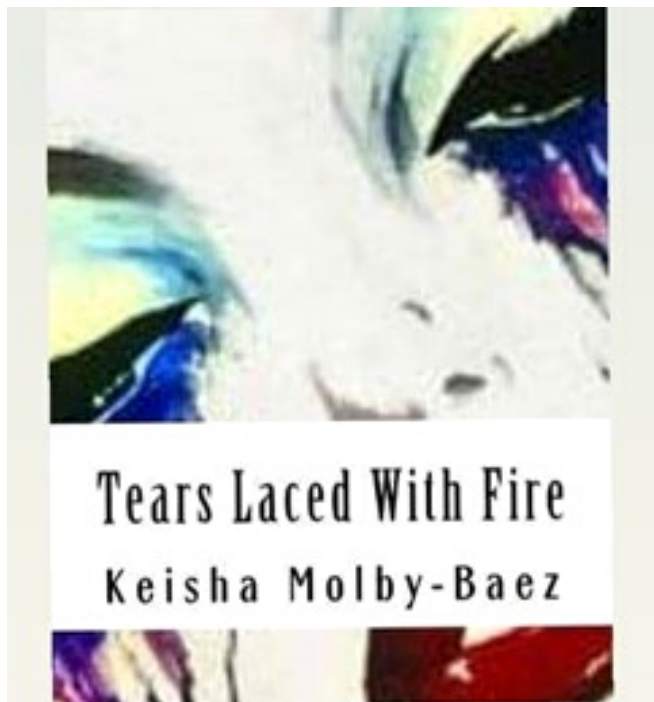
"The story behind my first poetry book "Tears laced with Fire" is truth, endurance, family, struggle, strength, relentlessness, passion, empowerment and survival. This book tells stories about how my tears were laced with fire and how they helped me in life. "

How has the message of the novel transcended to your audiences on a larger scale?

"The message behind this book is to be vulnerable while sharing the good and bad. It helps others through their own experiences and most of the time feel better knowing they aren't alone. I used poems to show my readers how I started to turn my pain into purpose. My message has transcended to my audience on a larger scale by people reaching out to tell me how my words, poems, stories, events and open mics helped them to admit and share their truth and pain. It has also helped others to do what many told them they couldn't. My message helps keep poetry alive in the community and around the globe. It offers hope, shows faith, and spreads love. My message is medicine for the body, mind and soul."

What is it about poetry that makes you who you are today?

"Poetry makes me who I am today because it's my lifeline, my rejuvenation, my peace, my religion and belief; that what you put out into the world will come back to you. Poetry is life, my way of survival and strength. "



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When poets hit the stage, they're opening their hearts to audiences, sharing their deepest thoughts, experiences, emotions and secrets in the form of spoken word. For Coco, open mics are about connecting with the people, letting them feel what she feels and gain inspiration.

Where have you performed your spoken word?

"I performed at many great venues and open mics such as The Nuyorican Poets Cafe, The Bronx Book Fair, The NYC Poetry Festival, The Smokin Word, South of France, Poetz Realm, The Inspired Word, Great Weather for Media, Parkside Lounge, The Stage Box, The Peace Cafe, West End, The Brooklyn Book Festival Bookends, LDM Show, Letras, Women Writer's Bloom Poetry Salon, La Esquina, Souletri, Woodhull Hospital, Barnes & Noble, Capicu, Green Earth Poets Cafe and Poets Unplugged. I'm filled with gratitude for being able to share my life's journey and craft at all these dope venues and open mics."

How did you get audiences to be more participative with your open mic performance?

"I've had my audience choose what I perform at times, as there are many favorites in my poetry books. People have inboxed requests and I've accepted because it makes them happy and feel connected on a larger scale."



"My audience was always positive and very supportive. They loved and appreciated my poems and thoughts."

How would you describe your overall experiences and how has it made you grow as a poet?

"My experiences with my audiences have been life changing and deeply rewarding. We cried together, we laughed, we remained silent, we had private conversations, sometimes we went out after for further discussions and shared our personal experiences in detail; making deeper connections. My audience was always positive and very supportive. They loved and appreciated my poems and thoughts. Connecting on a deeper level with my audiences helped me to grow and develop as a poet and writer. The connections and collaborations were so REAL and REWARDING!"

Dishing with Coco!

THE CHALLENGES OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CHEF! GRAB A HOT MEAL ON COCO!

*What are some of the challenges and achievements that you've had when it comes to being a chef?
What is special and unique about "Coco's Dishes"?*

"Some challenges I experienced being a chef was time with my family, learning all the ingredients for each dish, managing my pain and illnesses to perform and cater; while training others to do the same."

What about being a chef is rewarding, especially when customers love your dishes?

"I remember leaving an event in an ambulance and later that evening coming back to finish the wedding dinner and dessert after being injected with muscle relaxants to help ease the spasms, yet causing me to swell in my face. Thank goodness the cook is never on the main floor and behind the scenes. The bride, groom and their families were beyond filled with gratitude and loved the presentation and taste of my dish. The bride and groom became close family friends. They both said to me that night I was one of the strongest and most caring people they knew in their life. This was one of the most emotional and life changing moments for me. Some of my achievements as a chef were awarded while in the military and after having my second child. I was awarded and recognized by Senator Rev. Reuben Diaz Sr., Assemblyman Marcos Crespo and Assemblyman Peter Rivera. The most unique thing about my Coco's Delight dishes is that each dish is colorful, tasteful and made with all my love and a prayer."





Mind Over Matter

The Mind Over Matter workshops are a safe space that Coco created for people to come network, be artistically expressive and connect with those that enjoy her products and services!

For readers that would want to attend your Mind Over Matter Workshops, how would they be able to connect with you? What does the Mind Over Matter workshops entail? Please give readers info on the workshops!

"For people who want to connect, support my brand & products, make a donation or be a part of my upcoming events, workshops and projects feel free to follow me and send messages to me on Instagram @cocodelight_1111, on Facebook at Coco's Delight and on my website at www.cocodelight.com. I will be updating my website with a lot of information this upcoming year since I've recently moved for the betterment of my health and will be gradually getting back into many things I was previously doing. My near future plans are to start facilitating my writing workshops and curating my open mics once again, but on Zoom due to COVID risks. Information about the return of my writing collaboration for my upcoming Anthology will be announced on my social media pages this New Year. Please keep an eye out for this opportunity to connect, collaborate and share your work. This upcoming New Year is going to be amazing for Coco's Delight, as I elevate to the next level while starting back what you all once loved, appreciated and continue to inquire about."

*Workshops For
All To Enjoy!*





EMPOWERING WOMEN

Coco's Thoughts

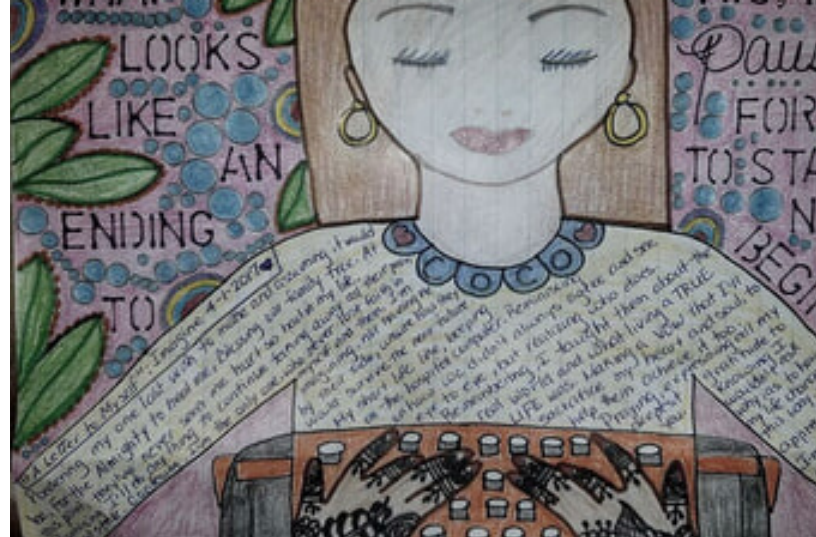
It's important, when being in this industry, to make long-lasting connections with people. Create unity and sister/brotherhoods. For Coco, having a sisterhood and empowering women from all walks of life is what has given her the power to inspire and influence others. She empowers to be better, greater and stronger than ever before. "Celebrate your craft and grow as you evolve as an artist."

What does Women Empowerment mean to you?

"Women Empowerment to me means if I make it, we all can make it! It means if I know a way, so will you! It means we are in this together! It means it's my duty to share all my difficult choices, experiences and journeys that lead to growth. It means sharing my lessons and accomplishments, showing anything is possible. Women's Empowerment is leaving no young girl behind and offering each one the same opportunity to aspire, grow and develop into who she desires to be. Women's Empowerment is showing fear is an illusion, failure is a stepping stone and all relationships need support and care. Women's Empowerment is teaching young women to invest in themselves and to put themselves at the top of their to do list every day. "

You are a motivational speaker and have even created "Coco's Thought's" where you share messages to your followers in encouragement and strength, what does it mean to you to share these kinds of messages?

"I created Coco's Thoughts to share with my readers inspirational words and messages filled with faith, hope and love. These thoughts are there to help people along their journey. It's meant to offer empowerment, guidance, inspiration, and strength to keep putting one foot in front of the other. Sharing Coco's Thoughts makes my heart smile seeing how many respond and reflect on them. It's so rewarding to see how sharing them does exactly what I hoped, to help and heal. I didn't have someone growing up to share these kinds of things with me and be able to connect with me in the physical form; only books of philosophers and inspirational writers who have passed away and their words remain a support system for me to balance my mental stability. I decided I wanted to be the same for others with hopes that one day I will too be another's favorite author and inspirational writer. I created an outlet to reflect, refresh and rejuvenate one's mind."



Coco's Delight: In the Years to Come!

Coco's Delight, a brand and company filled with multiple avenues of creativity, food, arts, crafts, poetry and much more.

All because of Coco, with the love and support of family, friends, customers and supporters, Coco's Delight will only to prosper, shine and delight, delight, delight!

Where do you see your overall brand in the next few years? You've built it from the ground up and have added many elements of yourself into the brand, how can you elevate it even more, to more success than it already has?

"I see Coco's Delight in a couple years established into a small store and community center. I see an upgraded website where all my products are available at the click of a link and available with affordable shipping. I also see my brand's products of comfort and empowerment expanding. I've built Coco's Delight from the ground up adding many elements of myself into my brand and finding ways to elevate it to the next level. Promoting more diligently, being a vendor at more events, updating my website frequently, starting a blog and twittering about my brand, books and life journey. It's been a dream of mine to meet Oprah. I have faith and know I'm getting closer and closer. I've met many famous artists throughout my life especially when I worked at The Apollo Theatre. I recently met Mikki Taylor at a vendor event for empowerment in New Jersey and it was absolutely life changing. Her words of encouragement in her book helped me to change perspective on things I was dealing with."

"FOR EVERY TEST AND
STRUGGLE, THERE IS A MIRACLE
WAITING TO HAPPEN"

- KEISHA MOLBY-BAEZ



What advice or message do you carry with you daily? Being a busy person can sometimes feel like a burden or overload, what message do you live by that helps you?

"My first message is the first quote I wrote "Wherever you go, whoever you meet, whatever you do, give support and have gratitude. The best imprint you can leave on someone's life is your love". My second message is another quote I wrote "Have courage in one another, to take a chance and share your voice to make a change". My third message is another quote I wrote "Revolution exists behind every leader and being passionate about everything is one's best point of entry treatment for success". My fourth message is a quote by my mother "Don't give up on those you love".

What about a message for those struggling in present time?

"A quote by my father "Have only one face in life and do good to all. This way you never have to keep looking over your shoulder and remember the different faces and people you showed them to." My sixth message is that "failure is the biggest stepping stone to achievements, leading to success." My seventh and last message is to manifest your thoughts, visions, goals and dream. Writing them down with a date, checking them off and adding a new one at the same time is setting yourself up for success."

"Wherever you go, whoever you meet, whatever you do, give support and have gratitude. The best imprint you can leave on someone's life is your love".



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THANK YOU TO ALL THE FEATURES!

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