



# OCWB INSIDER

*The Office of Community Wealth Building's Official Newsletter*

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OCWB raised over \$100,000  
in Needs through The Giving Wall

**JUNETEENTH**

**FREEDOM DAY**

**June 19**

## Feature

### The Power of Connection:

Former Professional Basketball Player Finds  
New Meaning in Life with the Help of Friends



Duke Heard on his wedding day in 2021.



Duke Heard in front of his Sysco truck.

Ex-professional basketball player, Roy Hurd, never expected to lose everything before serving a 36-month sentence. The 6'7 athlete was at the top of his game, playing international ball for European and Middle Eastern leagues. He was married with a young daughter and owned a beautiful estate.

"I went from making hundreds of thousands of dollars playing ball to earning \$9.00 an hour with Labor Ready doing odd jobs" says Roy. "I had all the money I wanted, but I struggled with my mental health," he says.

*cont'd on p. 2*

## Former Professional Basketball Player Finds New Meaning in Life, cont'd.

"After my release, my felony was a barrier to employment. I was an educated Black man with a college degree, [who speaks Italian] and could not get a job," says Mr. Hurd.

Although his journey toward employment was long, Roy certainly gained the support of an instant community.

"It was like a chain reaction," mentions Mr. Hurd.

A former inmate linked him to a group of church parishioners from East End Fellowship in the Church Hill section of Richmond City. It was there that he met adopted grandparents, Boyd and Leslie Moore. The Moores introduced him to fellow Mississippi native, Derrick Wadley, a Program Manager for the Office of Community Wealth Building. Mr. Wadley connected Roy with someone who made one of the biggest impacts in his life.

"Coming to OCWB was about so much more than the career services. My [Engagement Specialist], Keith Lewis, really helped to save me," says Mr. Hurd.

Duke struggled with a history of depression and mental illness; Mr. Lewis was able to lend a listening ear and encourage Roy in his journey. After a while, with the help of Mr. Lewis, he enrolled in Commercial Driver's License (CDL) school. Roy completed a 30-40 day program in nine short days and earn his credential.

Today, Roy has secured employment as a driver for Sysco Foods, earning \$1,800-\$2,000 a week. He moved to Harrisonburg with his new wife and has just sent his daughter to a college in New England. There she majors in Environmental Studies with a focus in justice work.

"Being a Dad is the most important job I have. I have a very close relationship with my daughter and we have open and honest conversations about my challenges. Where I am from, we don't talk about mental health, and I want to change that with my family," says Roy.

Today, Mr. Hurd makes weekend trips to Richmond to visit friends and to talk to groups of boys who play on neighborhood basketball courts throughout the city. His message is one of hope and encouragement.

"My next step is truck ownership," says Mr. Hurd. "I want to help other returning citizens the way someone helped me. There is a lot of freedom in owning a business," he says.



The Hurd Wedding Day in Richmond, Virginia. (left to right) Wife, Bridget, Roy and daughter, Laila engage in a unity ceremony.



## OCWB Participates in the City of Richmond's Multicultural Festival, 'Imagine 2022'

On June 4, 2022, OCWB participated in the Imagine Festival at the Broad Street Complex, which is the annual celebration of diversity and multiculturalism; RVA residents were able to experience performances, food, culturally inclusive games and more. This event is organized by the City of Richmond's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Engagement.



Salsa Guy Richmond Dance Team performs.



(left to right) Karla Almendarez-Ramos, Manager of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Engagement - OIRE, (formerly known as Office of Multicultural Affairs), Reggie Gordon, Deputy Chief Administrative Office of Human Services and OCWB Director Caprichia Smith Spellman.

## The Young Kings in Action at Martin Luther King Middle School has an Induction Ceremony



Young Kings in Action on Induction Day.



The Young Kings are receiving a word of encouragement as they experience their final commission.

OCWB staff participated in the Young Kings In Action Induction ceremony on May 19, 2022 at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School to celebrate the completion of their ten-month program.

These young men have participated in a weekly mentoring group since September 2021 where they meet with positive male role models from our community. The Young Kings attended sessions on life skills, entrepreneurship and Richmond's history.

## The Mayor's Youth Academy Hosts their Annual Partner Luncheon

On June 1, 2022, the Mayor's Youth Academy (MYA) hosted a partner luncheon at the Bon Secours Training Facility in Richmond, Virginia.

MYA Program Manager, Dr. Lerone Joseph, provided an update of MYA positive outcomes and activities, for 2021-2022. The DCAO of Human Services, Reggie Gordon, and OCWB Director, Caprichia Smith, Spellman gave remarks. Motivational Speaker Dwayne Bennett was the keynote guest.



MYA Staff (left to right): Program Manager, Dr. Lerone Joseph, Program Coordinator, Erika Love, and Engagement Specialist, Solomon Brown



Keynote Speaker, Dwayne Bennett



Audience of community partners and OCWB staff.

## The Foundation for Family and Community Healing Partners with MYA

The Foundation for Family and Community Healing (FFCH) is partnering with the Mayor's Youth Academy to deliver modules on healthy relationships for youth participants. FFCH is a 501C3 non-profit focused on empowering us all to create healthy, positive and rewarding relationships with self, others, Earth and the loving force that connects us. They do that through engaging, online educational modules, which are self-paced and self-facilitating. FFCH also provides facilitation for groups as requested.

These facilitations are ideal for community groups, schools, non-profits, families and as an employee engagement and support tool. Additionally, mentors and mentees, teachers and students, caregivers and children, etc. can benefit from completing FFCH modules in pairs. They operate on a gift economy as FFCH believes that relationship education is valuable and necessary for everyone.

FFCH also works with content creators and hosts their material on our platform, as a profit-sharing model. If you would like to learn more about their mission and their work, please reach out to Ally Fisher:

[ally@familyandcommunityhealing.org](mailto:ally@familyandcommunityhealing.org)  
508-404-0974.

Visit FFCH online:

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



Foundation for Family  
& Community Healing



## Meet Israel Velazquez III, Aspiring Electrician



Israel is working on a job site in Blackstone, Virginia.

Israel Velazquez III, is an aspiring Master Electrician and proactive OCWB workforce participant who embodies hard work and perseverance. He developed an interest in the electrical industry as a sophomore at Hermitage High School. Israel enrolled in his high school's technical program and completed two years of electricity and cabling and one year of telecommunications. During this time, he won numerous awards while competing in Virginia state electrical competitions.

Upon graduating high school, Israel enrolled in the Electronics Engineering Program at ECPI, where he completed his Bachelor's Degree in 2016. After college, he worked for two years doing control wiring but desired to advance his career. Therefore, Israel sought the advice of one of his mentors at Local Union IBEW 666 who informed Israel that he could receive training support through the OCWB's Workforce Program. After enrolling with OCWB in November 2018, his Engagement Specialist encouraged him to sit for the Electrical Apprenticeship entrance examination, which he successfully passed the following year. Israel is a conscientious student who has performed at the top of his training class while receiving several commendations from the Program Director.

Israel has secured employment as a private electrical contractor doing new construction in Blackstone, Virginia. He currently earns \$23.00 an hour, which allows him to better provide for his wife and two children.



Israel Velazquez III

## Meet OCWB's Integrated Support and Special Projects Team



**Kelvin Harris**  
*Project Development Manager,  
ISSP Manager*



**Lori Payne**  
*Management Analyst Associate*



**Calvin Headley**  
*Business Solutions Representative*



**Harvey Williams**  
*Network2Work  
Engagement Specialist*



**Travis Woods**  
*Community Outreach Representative*



**Quandra Holmes**  
*Administrative Technician, Sr.*

The Integrated Support and Special Projects Unit (ISSP) was formed in November 2021. The group provides cooperative support, ideas and solutions to ensure the success of our agency.

"We want to make community wealth building a performance management practice; we problem-solve, challenge and support each other to help us all be our best and achieve the greatest results for those we serve," says Kelvin Harris, ISSP Manager.

The unit covers a multitude of tasks and projects that may not easily be categorized in the traditional workforce model. Our work ranges from reporting, planning, hosting and implementing special projects. There are several exciting things to come including our continued work with Cyber Security, Network2Work RVA and significant employment events.

ISSP unit members include team lead, Kelvin Harris, Boyd Headley, Quandra Holmes, Lori Payne, and Travis Woods. "Each individual brings unique experience and expertise that enables our team to embrace our responsibilities," says Mr. Harris.

ISSP's charge states that unit members are expected to be authentic, reliable, and committed to our shared purpose as we respond to challenges, pursue new opportunities, support one another and elevate our work. In our actions and words, we will serve as models of leadership for OCWB. (Adapted from the work of Network2Work RVA- 2021).



## OCWB Virtual Workforce Session Calendar




[CLICK HERE](#) TO DOWNLOAD

## Mobile Career Stations in the Community Weekly Schedule

*Visit Us!*

**Career Stations**

**In the Community**




OFFICE OF  
COMMUNITY  
WEALTH BUILDING

The City of Richmond's Office of Community Wealth Building and Richmond Public Library brings career planning services and job training to your local neighborhood: resume and interview help, employment search, supportive services plus more!

**Meet with a Barrier Navigator at the Richmond Public Library- Start Your Journey Today**

Weekly Schedule

 <p><b>BROAD ROCK LIBRARY</b> 4820 Old Warwick Rd Richmond, VA 23224 <b>WEDNESDAYS</b> 2:00 - 4:30 PM</p>	<p><b>EAST END LIBRARY</b> 1200 N 25th St Richmond, VA 23223 <b>WEDNESDAYS</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM</p>
<p><b>MAIN LIBRARY</b> 101 E. Franklin Street Richmond, VA 23219 <b>WEDNESDAYS</b> 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM</p>	<p><b>NORTH AVENUE LIBRARY</b> 2901 North Avenue Richmond, VA 23222 <b>TUESDAYS</b> 1:30 - 4:30 PM <b>WEDNESDAYS</b> 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM</p>

For more Information, call

**804.646.6464**

[CLICK HERE](#) TO DOWNLOAD

## About our Career Stations

OCWB Career Stations provide a supportive environment to prepare individuals for their next job or career. We collaborate with agencies, employers, organizations, and schools to offer job skills training and supportive services, creating self-sustaining career pathways for our participants.

## Our Services

- Individualized career assessment
- Individualized action planning
- Career coaching and mentoring
- Job skills training
- Resume and interview help
- Supportive services (i.e. books, tools,

## Eligibility Criteria

The OCWB Career Stations are open to all individuals who are in need of employment services. Certain services may only be available based upon income, location and funding availability. Training stipends are available to serve individuals with children.

## Program Cost

There is no cost associated with enrolling in the workforce program at OCWB's Career Stations.

## Summer 2022 Hours

During the months of July and August 2022, OCWB's Career Stations will be open to residents by appointment only.

**For More Information, Call**  
**Call 804.646.6464**

# Ask Us about The Giving Wall

## We Have Reached a Huge Milestone...

### 472 NEEDS = \$100,148.50 in purchases!

In December 2018, OCWB co-launched The Giving Wall with Mindful Mornings. The Giving Wall is a website where stories of people who have needs are posted and purchased by members in our community. In just four short years, two of which were pandemic years, OCWB has fulfilled 472 needs for a total of \$100,148.50 through The Giving Wall.

Click the following link to support our participants: [bit.ly/TGWOCWB](https://bit.ly/TGWOCWB)

#thegivingwall  
#compassioninaction  
#wealthbuilder



#### OFFICE OF COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

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Website: [www.rva.gov/community-wealth-building](http://www.rva.gov/community-wealth-building)

##### CAREER STATION LOCATIONS

##### Career Station at East End

701 N. 25th Street, 2nd Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23223

##### Career Station at Marshall Street

900 Marshall Street, Suite 160  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

##### Southside Community Center

6225 Old Warwick Road  
Richmond, Virginia 23225

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL

# 804-646-6464