

THE AKOYA

Volume 4, Issue 2



Fall/Winter 2025

Norfolk Pearls Foundation of Virginia, Incorporated Newsletter

Norfolk Pearls
Foundation of Virginia
P.O. Box 2734
Norfolk, VA 23501
npfv.org
Carla Perry, Chairman

Chairman's Message



Greetings!

We're glad to present this issue of *The Akoya*, where we highlight our accomplishments and recent news. Our collaboration with the Iota Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®, helps us to continue making meaningful contributions to individuals and families throughout Norfolk. Our goal is to uplift our community by offering resources and events that support education, financial stability, culture, charity, and health.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, we depend on grant funding and charitable donations to deliver educational workshops, host community fairs, and offer scholarships. Additionally, fundraising serves as an important method for securing financial resources to support our philanthropic initiatives.

On November 8, our 2025 fundraising event, **The Harlem Renaissance Masquerade Gala**, took place at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott in Norfolk, Virginia. At the gala, we honored our scholarship recipients and presented awards for outstanding community service. This edition of *The Akoya* features photo highlights from the evening.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our sponsors and donors. By partnering with NPFV, you contribute to meaningful change within our community and help secure our future success. For further information regarding our activities or to donate, please visit www.npfv.org. You are also invited to follow us on Facebook.

Cheers!

Carla

Carla Perry, Chairman



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

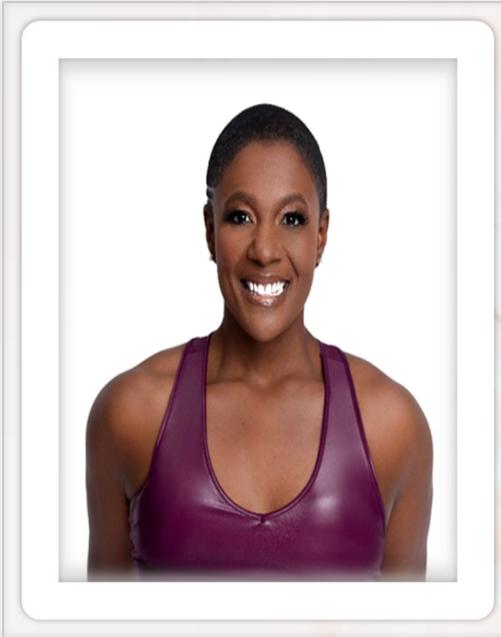
} Chairman's Message	1
} Community Service Awards	2-6
} Scholarships	6
} Community Pearls Of Service	7-9
} In the Know	10-11
} Gala Gallery	12-17
} 2025 Directors	18



2025 Outstanding Community Service Honorees

Constance Ferebee Jones Award *Women's Healthcare & Wellness*

Ms. Tasha Turnbull



Tasha Turnbull is a dedicated and inspiring wellness advocate who has transformed her personal journey into a powerful platform for community impact. After achieving a remarkable 100-pound weight loss, Tasha channeled her experience into a career focused on health, fitness, and empowerment.

Tasha has played a vital role in introducing and expanding health and wellness programs throughout the Tidewater area. Among her most impactful initiatives is the T2 Fresh Start Initiative—a comprehensive 12-week wellness program designed to support individuals managing diabetes and hypertension. This program equips participants with the tools and support needed to take control of their health and make sustainable lifestyle changes.

Another signature program, *The Movement Experience*, is presented through her nonprofit, the *T2 Fitness Foundation*. *T2 Fitness Foundation* engages in educational and charitable activities in the community to enhance the health, fitness level, wellness, and quality of life of its citizens. *T2 Fitness*

is designed to reignite physical energy, restore mental clarity, and reconnect individuals with the joy of movement.



2025 Outstanding Community Service Honorees

Carla Perry Award *Economic Legacy*

Ms. Danica Royster



Ms. Danica Royster is a distinguished Financial Services Representative and Wealth Consultant with First Genesis of Virginia. She is a visionary leader and dedicated public servant. Her ability to think outside the box and develop creative solutions has set her apart as a leader in the financial sector.

She has not only guided individuals and businesses toward financial success but has also empowered them with the knowledge and tools to build lasting wealth. Her innovative thinking and problem-solving skills have transformed the lives of many, proving that financial empowerment is a powerful tool for change.

Ms. Royster's impact extends far beyond her official roles. She is a dedicated community advocate, always striving to make a difference through mentorship, outreach, and service. Her resilience in overcoming challenges, both personal and professional, serves as an inspiration to those around her, proving that obstacles are merely stepping-

stones on the path of success. She is a true pioneer, and her legacy and leadership will continue to inspire future generations.



2025 Outstanding Community Service Honorees

HBCU Award *A Call to Action*

Dr. Melody Webb



Dr. Melody Webb holds the distinguished honor of being appointed the first African American female Director of Athletics at Norfolk State University on July 1, 2020.

Dr. Webb joined the NSU staff in April of 2014. In that role as Associate AD, she oversaw the business office, facilities, game operations and external relations, which included media relations, ticketing, marketing, promotions, fundraising, and corporate partnerships. In addition, she was the departmental Title IX coordinator and worked strategically with the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure Title IX compliance.

Beyond the significant changes already realized, Dr. Webb's strategic hiring of Michael Vick is set to introduce transformations previously unseen on the campus. Under her direction, not only has NSU won MEAC championships in multiple sports, and NCAA qualifications in 2021, 2022, and 2025, the school also posted the highest semester GPA in school history, making NSU a student's dream for both athletics and academics.



2025 Outstanding Community Service Honorees

Joyce Gilliam Brown Award *Cultural Educational Enrichment*

Mrs. Sia Alexander



Mrs. Alexander is a 1992 graduate of Howard University, with a B.A. degree in Human Psychology, graduating Magna Cum Laude. She attended Stanford and Princeton Universities. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, she has written a spiritual guide and an automythography. She has curated global and local contemporary art, winning an Emmy award for *Pure Lagos African Art Gallery* in Norfolk. She has also curated collections at The Smithsonian African American Museum and other artistic outlets.

Pure Lagos African Art Gallery, hosts community events, workshops and residencies for artists in an innovative effort to transform Hampton Roads' most marginalized citizens. She sponsors spaces of healing through beauty, writing and art, to usher in holistic health, creativity and spirituality with countless people around the globe.

Sia is a connoisseur of Afropolitan cuisine, yoga, meditation, cycling and art in all its myriad forms. She curates global and local art, which has been featured in a plethora of venues such as Disney+ The Crossover Series,

The Smithsonian African American Museum (The Blacksonian), The Slover Library, and Chesapeake Public Library.



2025 Outstanding Community Service Honorees

Lillian Brinkley Award Global Educational Impact

Mrs. Barbara Hamm Lee

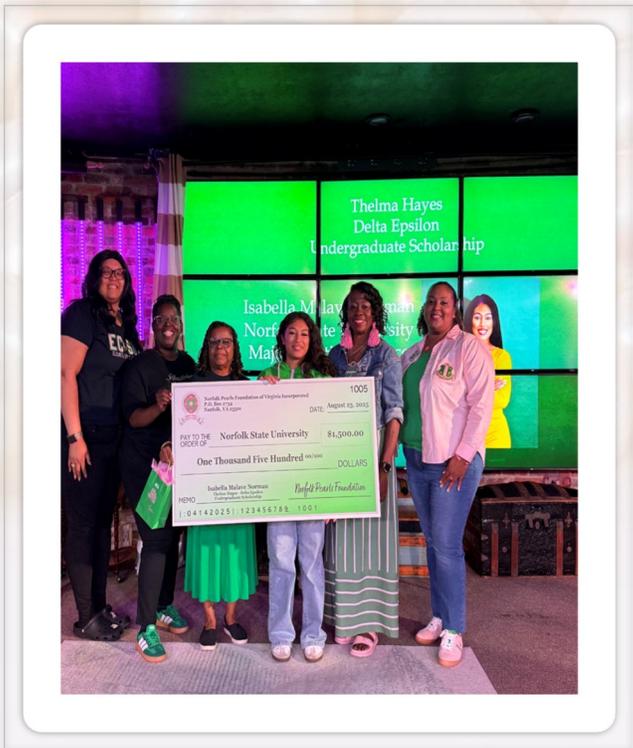


For over 27 years, Mrs. Barbara Hamm Lee has made a difference in the city of Norfolk and Hampton Roads as a veteran journalist and adjunct journalism professor at Norfolk State University and Old Dominion University. She has served as WHRO's Chief Community Engagement Officer since January, 2008, responsible for local television productions and programming. She is executive producer and host of *Another View*, a weekly talk show that examines issues of particular interest to the African-American community in Hampton Roads.

She is also the owner of Sharing Info, LLC, a media/communications consulting company that specializes in diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) training, located in Norfolk, Virginia.

Her immense efforts to use her skills as a journalist to educate and bring awareness to issues impacting the African American community in the city of Norfolk is evident as she uses her platform, *Another View*, to foster dialogue, educate the public about issues and solutions to impact policy changes in a variety of areas as an educational activist.

2025 Undergraduate Scholarship Winners



Community Pearls of Service with Iota Omega Chapter

Directors and
volunteer at
Celebration on



Members of NPFV
the Back to School
August 9th.



Community Pearls of Service with Iota Omega Chapter Youth Leadership Institute (AKA YLI) at Lake Taylor School



**Community Pearls of Service with Iota Omega Chapter
Youth Leadership Institute (AKA YLI)
Childhood Hunger Initiative Power Pack (AKA CHIPP™)
at Lake Taylor School**



In the Know...



Black Friday is now recognized as one of the year's most hectic shopping days. Everyone enjoys the massive discounts and special offers, but have you ever wondered when Black Friday began, how its date is chosen, or where the name comes from?

When is Black Friday?

Black Friday falls on November 28, 2025, the day after Thanksgiving.

How Is the Date for Black Friday Set?

In the United States, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November. The following day is known as Black Friday, which has grown into one of the year's most popular days for shopping.

What Is Black Friday?

Black Friday is a shopping holiday in the United States. It is characterized by widespread discounts and sales offered by a wide range of retailers, many of whom operate for extended hours and offer limited-time deals to attract customers.

Why Is It Called “Black Friday”?

The term "Black Friday" originated in 1950s Philadelphia, where police used it to describe the chaos caused by large crowds of shoppers after Thanksgiving. The nickname reflected the challenges faced with overcrowding, traffic, and accidents.

Other “Origins” of Black Friday

Although the Philadelphia origin is well-documented, other sources have been suggested.

The term "Black Friday" was first used to describe the collapse of the U.S. gold market on September 24, 1869. This event occurred when some dishonest Wall Street financiers tried to manipulate gold prices by accumulating much of the nation's reserves, which led to the market crash. However, aside from sharing a name, this incident isn't related to the modern shopping holiday.

One common myth is that the day after Thanksgiving was named Black Friday because it signified when most retailers started to make a profit. In accounting terms, businesses making money are said to be “in the black,” while those losing money are “in the red.” Although some stores may indeed have moved from losses to profits on this day thanks to increased holiday sales, this explanation didn’t become popular until the 1980s—long after the term “Black Friday” was already widely used.

A widely circulated theory on social media claims that Black Friday originated from the practice of selling enslaved individuals at reduced prices following Thanksgiving in early American history. This narrative has been repeatedly proven false and has no historical basis.

What Year Did Black Friday Begin?

The widely accepted story traces the current use of "Black Friday" back to Philadelphia in the mid-1950s. By the early 1960s, local merchants and newspapers commonly used the term for sales events. Although there was an unsuccessful attempt in 1961 to rename it “Big Friday” for a friendlier tone, "Black Friday" had already taken hold. Over the next few years, the term mostly stayed unique to Philadelphia, occasionally surfacing elsewhere. It wasn’t until the late 1980s that "Black Friday" became recognized across the United States as a major sales and marketing event.

Although the term "Black Friday" wasn't coined until the 1950s, the tradition of post-Thanksgiving shopping dates back much earlier. When President Ulysses S. Grant made Christmas an official U.S. holiday in 1870, it helped establish the holiday shopping season. Thanksgiving became a recognized holiday in 1863, and by the late 1800s, stores were already holding sales and promotions on the day after Thanksgiving.

<https://www.almanac.com/why-do-we-call-it-black-friday> Joe Bills, Associate Editor

So now you are *IN THE KNOW!!*

How do you feel about Black Friday?

Do you enjoy shopping the sales or do you prefer to avoid them?

Did the historical background of **Black Friday** come as a surprise to you?



The Harlem Renaissance Masquerade Gala



The Harlem Renaissance Masquerade Gala

Subtitle Text



The Harlem Renaissance Masquerade Gala



The Harlem Renaissance Masquerade Gala



The Harlem Renaissance Masquerade Gala



The Harlem Renaissance Masquerade Gala





Board of Directors

Mrs. Carla Perry, Chairman

Dr. JaNaé, Vice-Chairman

Dr. Melanie Patterson, Secretary

Ms. Allison Davis, Treasurer

Dr. Chenequa Hayden, Assistant Treasurer

Ms. Ashley Yelity, At-Large Director

Mrs. Lisa Bishop, Ex-Officio Director

Dr. Tamara Cornick, Ex-Officio Director

Ms. Demetrius Fowlkes, Ex-Officio Director