

## ST. PAUL'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

### **Angelia Williams Graves, Chair**

*City Council, Super Ward 7*



Angelia Williams Graves was elected to City Council on November 2, 2010 to represent the citizens of Super Ward 7. She was born and raised in Norfolk, attended St. Mary's Academy and is a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School. She received an A.S. in Business Administration from Tidewater Community College in 2004 and holds a Bachelor's degree in Marketing from Old Dominion University. She graduated from the University of Virginia's Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership in 2005, and the Alpha School of Real Estate in 2008.

Mrs. Graves is a Realtor with Rose & Womble Realty Company, and a member in good standing with the National Realtors Association, Virginia Association of Realtors, Hampton Roads Realtors Association and the Real Estate Information Network. She holds designations of Short Sale & Foreclosure Resource and Accredited Buyer's Representative. She is also a member of the Real Estate Buyer's Association Council, and a certified VHDA Home Ownership Education Trainer. Additionally, she teaches homeownership education classes monthly for the House of Hope Foundation.

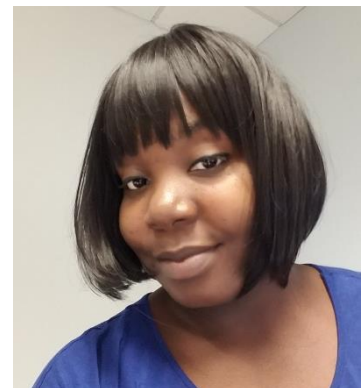
Mrs. Graves is Co-Chair of City Council's Communities and Public Safety Committee and a member of its Health, Education and Families Committee. She serves on the Lambert's Point/Park Place, Fairmont Park, Greater Norview, Southside and the Greater Wards Corner Task Forces. She is a member of the Ingleside Civic League and the Norfolk City Democratic Committee. Mrs. Graves served on the Norfolk Public Library Board of Trustees until being elected to City Council. Since 2004, she has been a member of the Young Leader Society of the Hampton Roads United Way. She is the youngest daughter of the late Bishop and Mrs. I. Joseph Williams, is married to Thomas E. Graves and has two step sons.

### **Kimberly Bray**

*TMC President, Calvert Square*

Kimberly Bray is the president of the Calvert Square Tenant Management Council. She is a five-year resident of Calvert Square, a Mom, and works as an administrative assistant.

Kimberly says she's involved in community leadership because of her son. "I have to be active in the community to know what's going on! I need to stay involved and aware so I can do my part to make this a better place for my son and all of the people he may have to interact with".



Kimberly sees her work on the St. Paul's Area Advisory Committee as fair, empowering and uplifting for people in her community. "Many people in our community do not have the same support systems as others outside of public housing, but I want to make sure everyone is included and benefits from the city restoration". She says she is looking forward to the creation of a new St. Paul's area.

## **Dr. Sharon Byrdsong**

*Interim Superintendent, Norfolk Public Schools*



Dr. Sharon I. Byrdsong was appointed as the Acting Superintendent of Schools by the School Board of the City of Norfolk on June 19, 2019, and she officially assumed the duties of the chief executive on July 6, 2019. Dr. Byrdsong's tenure with Norfolk Public Schools spans over a period of twenty years.

Dr. Byrdsong's career began in the classroom as a high school teacher in the Wake County Public School System upon graduating magna cum laude from North Carolina State University with a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree. Upon receiving a Master of School Administration (MSA) degree from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Dr. Byrdsong went on to serve as a high school assistant principal before moving with her family to the Hampton Roads area. She was then appointed as the assistant principal of Northside Middle School within Norfolk Public Schools; and one year later, she was promoted as the principal of Azalea Gardens Middle School (AGMS) within the school division. During Dr. Byrdsong's tenure as the principal of AGMS, she was able to successfully turnaround this school, which was once deemed as a low-performing school by the school division and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Dr. Byrdsong's turnaround efforts eventually resulted in Azalea Gardens Middle School being named a "Virginia School to Watch" by the Virginia Middle School Association.

Dr. Byrdsong's experiences as a central office administrator include serving in the role of: senior director of alternative options; executive director of secondary schools; executive director of human resources; assistant superintendent of human resources; chief of staff; and executive director of interagency collaboration and wraparound services. Dr. Byrdsong holds a Division Superintendent License and a Postgraduate Professional License from the Virginia Board of Education and a Doctor of Education from Regent University, where she was the recipient of the Outstanding Alumna of the First Decade of the 2000's Award.

## **Jim Curran**

*Pastor, Basilica of St. Mary's Catholic Church  
St. Paul's Development Coalition*

Father Jim Curran was born and raised in Central Islip, New York. It was his four-year service in the Navy that first brought him to Norfolk, Virginia. At the end of his military enlistment, he remained in the Hampton Roads area where he was employed as a flight dispatcher for a Lear Jet Operator at Patrick Henry Field, currently known as Newport News/Williamsburg Airport.

Fr. Jim answered the call to the priesthood by enrolling in St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, MD in 1993. Fr. Curran was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Richmond on May 27, 2000. Since then, Father Jim has served as a priest chaplain at the College of William and Mary, James Madison University; an associate pastor at St. Bede in Williamsburg and Pastor of St. Joan of Arc in Yorktown and is currently proud and honored to serve as Pastor of the Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Norfolk, the only African-American Basilica in the United States.

Father Jim first discovered the Basilica as a deacon, where he served for a year in 1999. It is his greatest honor and blessing to return for the second time to serve as Pastor. He is also the Chaplain for Saint Patrick's Catholic School and serves on the Board for the Diocese of Richmond Pastors Advisory Committee. Fr. Jim has also been a member

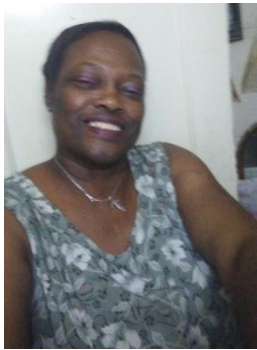


of the board of Habitat for Humanity, St. Paul's Quadrant Coalition, the City of Norfolk's Fair and Impartial Policing initiative, My Brother's Keeper, and the City Manager's Senior Pastors Roundtable.

### **Michelle Cook**

*Tidewater Gardens*

*St. Paul's Development Coalition*



Ms. Michelle Cook is a two-term President of the Tenant Management Council for the Tidewater Gardens public housing community. She also serves as the Vice President of the St. Paul's Development Coalition, Inc., a group consisting of concerned residents, business owners, church leaders and other stakeholders who are working to ensure responsible, equitable and community ownership of the re-development of the St. Paul's area of Norfolk.

Ms. Cook became a dedicated community volunteer after spending ten years on dialysis before receiving a kidney transplant. She is especially proud of her civic work with Empower Hampton Roads. In 2012 there was discussion of moving the voting precinct from the St. Paul's area. As a part of this group, she went before Norfolk City Council and successfully lobbied to keep the voting precinct in place at Ruffner Middle School. She has also worked with Bev Sell and the Mobile Market, bringing fresh fruits and vegetables to the St. Paul's area.

Ms. Cook attended Granby High School and is now working on her GED. She is the mother of 3 grown sons, grandmother of eight grandchildren, and attends St. Paul's Deliverance Christian Center.

A Norfolk native, Ms. Cook is the oldest of 8 siblings from a stable, loving and supportive family. She says it is her duty to "pay it forward".

### **Cazandra Ferguson**

*Real Estate and Property Manager, Miller Oil Company*

Ms. Ferguson is the Real Estate and Property Manager for Millers, more commonly known as Miller Oil. Prior to her current role, she was a recruiter for Headway Corporate Resources, and has served as an administrative professional at the executive level and customer service representative in the hospitality, insurance, and real estate industries. She has a passion for providing client-focused services and always works to exceed expectations.

Caz is a longtime resident of the Hampton Roads area. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Communications from Regent University. Service to others is the heart of her core values. She serves as a Board Member of the Miller Oil Foundation and co-chair of the Events Committee. She has been married for 16 years and is a mother of three – oldest just finished her third year at UVA, middle is incoming freshman at Radford University, and youngest is in 7th grade.



## **Earl Fraley**

*Chair, Norfolk Planning Commission*



Earl Fraley serves as the Chairman of the Norfolk Planning Commission and has been a member for more than 8 years. Fraley, a native of the city and graduate of Norfolk Catholic High, is now a real estate appraiser in Virginia Beach. During his career, he was also operations manager for the Norfolk Department of Utilities and worked for what is now Verizon.

Fraley is a graduate of Virginia State University and holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and an Appraisal certificate from Alpha College of Real Estate. He is a member of the Green Hill Farms Civic League; chairman of the Norfolk Community Development Block Grant Citizens' Advisory Group; and a member of Diocese of Richmond pastoral council.

## **Larry Hall**

*TMC President, Young Terrace*

Larry Hall is the president of the Young Terrace Tenant Management Council. Despite living in Young Terrance for only the past year and a half, Larry is passionate about ensuring that members of his community have the help they need to live productive lives. He wants to set up programs on restoration of rights for former felons, as well as financial literacy training including credit scores and budgeting.

Larry graduated from Tidewater Community College in 2018 and will receive his dual-major undergraduate degree in criminal justice and psychology from Old Dominion University in May of 2020. Serving as president of the TMC is not the first leadership position for Larry – while a student at TCC he was elected SGA president.

Not only is Larry a full-time student, he is also employed part time as the site director for the YMCA's before and after school program at Ghent Elementary. A native of Chesapeake, Larry says he's come a long way since his diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis in 2016. For the first 2 ½ years of his illness he had trouble walking and speaking. Today, thanks to medical insurance, good doctors and prayer Larry's MS is under control.

Larry believes education is the key to success for anyone and says now is the time for Young Terrace residents to prepare themselves for the future. He wants to be at the forefront of bringing meaningful programs to all the residents of St. Paul's area so they will be prepared for changes to come.





## **William Harrell**

*CEO and President, Hampton Roads Transit (HRT)*

Following his appointment in April 2012, Mr. Harrell established a vision to reshape HRT into the most efficient and customer-driven transit agency in Virginia. Mr. Harrell believes the foundation of a viable transit system that supports the regional economy and quality of life will require a dedicated funding stream. This will ensure frequent and reliable service to key destinations. In this regard, he has initiated a community conversation on this important topic called Connect Hampton Roads and is advocating for a high frequency core regional network to expand economic opportunity and diversification.



Prior to his role with GRT, Mr. Harrell served as city manager for the city of Chesapeake. Harrell is also a Credentialed Manager with the International City/County Management Association. With over 32 years in public service, Mr. Harrell has served in various leadership roles including chief administrative officer in Richmond, Virginia, assistant city manager in Greensboro, North Carolina and Suffolk, Virginia.

Mr. Harrell is a Board member of Rail-Volution, a national organization committed to building livable communities with transit. He is the Treasurer of the Virginia Transit Association, an active member of the American Public Transportation Association and a regional board member of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Harrell earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in urban and regional planning from the University of Virginia. Additionally, he earned a second Master's in public administration from the University.

## **Kirk T. Houston**

*Founder and Senior Pastor, Gethsemane Community Fellowship Baptist Church*



The Reverend Dr. Kirk T. Houston, Sr. is the founder and senior pastor of the Gethsemane Community Fellowship Baptist Church. His servant style of leadership has led what was a starting membership of 35 faithful believers to emerge today as one the fastest growing ministries in the Hampton Roads area.

Possessing a strong passion for issues of personal and spiritual development, Dr. Houston is a frequent lecturer in the area of "leadership development". A much sought-after speaker, teacher, and trainer, Dr. Houston has been distinguished as a preacher's preacher and is highly regarded within the community as a man of integrity, committed to the well-being of all. Having done extensive work and research in the fields of jail ministry, offender rehabilitation, and ex-offender reentry, Dr. Houston holds an earned Doctor of Ministry degree from the prestigious United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio as well as a Master of Divinity degree

from the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at the historical Virginia Union University in Richmond, VA. He is the author of *The Church's Return Policy: Equipping the Church to Minister to Ex-offenders* which deals with the churches vital role in the restoration and redemption of ex-offenders.

Among his many obligations as a Sr. Pastor, he also serves as the Chairman of the Garden of Hope, CDC, Chaplain to the City of Norfolk's Sheriff's Office, Chairman of the Norfolk Jail Ministry's Board of Directors, Director of the

Christian Student Fellowship at Norfolk State University, and as Chairman of the Board of the Norfolk School Board.

Dr. Houston is a Native of South Florida and now resides in the Hampton Roads area with his wife of many years Sharon M. Houston, who also serves as the church's Director of Ministries. Together they are the parents of one daughter, Sharonja Green and one son, Reverend Kirk T. Houston, Jr. both of Virginia. They are also the proud grandparents of three grandchildren, J'syiah, Kirk the third, and Max. Dr. Houston also serves as a spiritual father to many.

**Shamika Kirby**  
*Calvert Square*



Shamika Kirby is in her first year of a two-year term as President of the Calvert Square Tenant Management Council, the tenant governing body of the Calvert Square public housing community. In this role, Ms. Kirby and her team advise and assist the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA) in all aspects of public housing operations and encourage residents to participate in self-help initiatives that create a positive living environment in Calvert Square. She became a community leader after the closing of the Boys and Girls Club, determined to do whatever she could to help the children stay "off the streets".

Ms. Kirby is a personal care aide for WLB Home Healthcare. A native of Norfolk, she is the single mother of 4 sons. She received her GED and has attended classes at Tidewater Community College.

Ms. Kirby says she believes in quality family time and engages with her sons in basketball, football and movies. She also loves to read. She attends Gethsemane Baptist Church in Norfolk.

Ms. Kirby says, "our kids are our future" and she will stay involved to ensure they have a positive chance in life.

**Deirdre Love**  
*Executive Director, Teens with a Purpose*

Born Ms. Deirdre Allyson Smith to Ms. Wilhelmina and Mr. Roosevelt Smith, Ms. Love was born and raised in Harlem, New York. She attended St. Charles Borromeo Parochial School in Harlem, and St. Jean Baptist High School on the upper east side of Manhattan. She graduated from Manhattan Community College with an Associate's Degree in Business Administration. Ms. Love is a mother to three sons.

Ms. Love became an AIDS activist after the death of best friend and Cousin, Stephen, who lived with, and died from, AIDS related illness in 1995. She was invited to start a youth AIDS Ministry, later named Teens with a Purpose, as volunteer coordinator at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Norfolk in 1996. She also worked for Stihl Incorporated for 22 years, where she was promoted from Administrative Assistant to Export Coordinator, and finally to Export Specialist and Systems Analyst. Ms. Love resigned from Stihl Incorporated to start this organization that was her passion and her purpose in life.



In 2007, Ms. Love founded the community based organization now known as Teens with a Purpose – The Youth Movement, a 501(3)(c) not for profit entity. In the past few years alone, this group of committed and talented

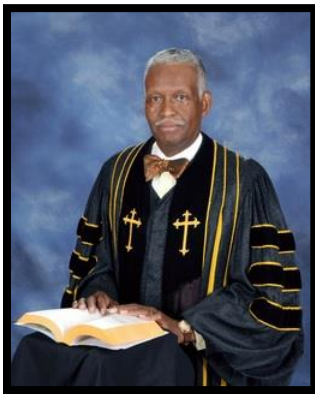
teens has presented over 60 free TWP community events for teens and three outstanding Teen Forums with Ms. Love beside them. She has formed community partnerships with several organizations including Norfolk Health Department, the AIDS Fund, Urban League, Norfolk and Virginia Beach Public Schools, Norfolk Parks, Recreation and Open Space, Garden of Hope, Gethsemane Community Fellowship Baptist Church, and GEICO. She is a member of Virginia Health Department Planning Team on Violence Prevention.

She is a graduate of Project Inclusion- Board Governance Training offered by United Way, committee member for PHAT Conference promoting teen health and fitness, committee member for Eastern Virginia Regional AIDS Coalition, and yoga enthusiast. She lives her life to serve youth and believes that this generation can and will change the world for the better. She only wants to be a gust of wind propelling them forward.

### **Robert Murray**

*First Baptist Church*

*St. Paul's Development Coalition*



Dr. Robert G. Murray is the 19th pastor of the Historic First Baptist Church, Bute Street, a church celebrating over 200 years of Committed Christian Service. Pastor Murray has been a pastor for more than 35 years and has been at First Baptist Church since 1983. He brings a visionary approach to ministry with an emphasis on revelation and relevance in preaching and teaching the gospel. He led the people of God at First Baptist Church in Norfolk in the renovation of the New Shepherd's Village @ Park Avenue, an assisted living facility, and the construction of a 38,000 sq. ft. facility, The Murray Center, which contains the READY Academy Christian School, the Taste 'N See Banquet Facility, the Renew Counseling Center and the church's Administration Wing.

Dr. Murray is a graduate of Hampton University, and the Boston University School of Theology, where he earned both his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees. He also studied at Robert College, Istanbul, Turkey as a Foreign Exchange Student. He served as adjunct professor at Virginia Commonwealth University in the department of African-American Studies and Religious Studies. He taught Social Ethics and Homiletics at The Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University.

Dr. Murray is a former President of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia. During his tenure, he initiated a \$1 million funding drive for the Baptist General Convention Foundation. He presently serves as the chairman of the Foundation Fund's Board of Directors that manages the Convention's invested funds. For more than 21 years, Dr. Murray served as the Recording Secretary of The Lott Carey Foreign Missionary Convention and Vice President. He is a former President of the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Missionary Convention.

He has also served as president of the Minister's Council of ABCOTS. For four years, he was chairman of the Board of Directors of the William A. Hunton YMCA, the oldest African American YMCA in America. He is a member and the host pastor of The Tidewater Metro Baptist Ministers Conference. Most of all, Dr. Murray is a dedicated Christian. He is married to Amanda Battle Murray and they are the grateful parents of three adult sons, three daughters-in-love, and three grandchildren.

**Donald Musacchio**

*Chairman, NRHA Board of Commissioners*

Donald J. Musacchio retired from a notable federal career. Mr. Musacchio last served as the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Management of the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. He was responsible for Agency-wide policy formulation and implementation in the areas of Labor and Employee Relations, Human Resources, Civil Rights, Emergency Planning, and Administrative Services. Post September 11, 2001, Don also had responsibilities in the programs of Continuity of Government (COG) and Continuity of Operations (COOP). Prior to entering the Senior Executive Service, Don was the Director of Labor and Employee Relations for FSIS.P. He has also served in various LR/ER and EEO counselor positions throughout the Department of the Navy. He is a trained and experienced mediator and facilitator with expertise in alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and interest based problem solving techniques.



Don is a founding member and former Vice-Chair of the Interagency Labor Relations Forum. The ILRF is a group devoted to focusing on labor and employee relations advocacy and professional development from a management perspective. He is also on the Board of Directors of several organizations including, the Society of Federal Labor and Employee Relations Professionals, the Darden College of Education at Old Dominion University, and the City of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. He is also licensed by the International Rugby Board as an educator and evaluator of rugby referees.

Mr. Musacchio received his B.S. and M.S. from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. He is the co-author of The Federal Supervisor's Guide to Drug Testing; The Federal Employee's Guide to Drug Testing; and Managing Leave and Attendance Problems: A Guide for Federal Managers. Don is an entertaining and sought after speaker and trainer. He has conducted hundreds of labor and employee relations courses and trained thousands of federal managers.

**Ruth Jones Nichols**

*Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore*

Ruth Jones Nichols is the CEO of the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore where she has been striving to eliminate hunger in the region since she began her work with the organization in 2016.

Prior to this role, Dr. Jones Nichols was the CEO of the YWCA of South Hampton Roads from 2012-2015. Her position with the YWCA is what brought her back to Hampton Roads from a career as Director of Resource Development for District of Columbia Schools. Previously, Dr. Jones Nichols held several positions as a clinical and macro social worker.

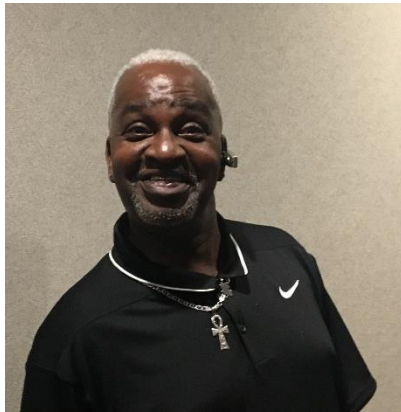
Dr. Jones Nichols was born in Norfolk and raised in Virginia Beach where she graduated from Bayside High School. She earned a Bachelor's degree in social work from William and Mary, a Master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and her Doctorate in social work from Catholic University. She now lives with her family in Chesapeake.





## **Brodie Parker**

*Tidewater Gardens*



Mr. Brodie Parker has served as a member of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Committee for the Tidewater Gardens public housing community for the past four years. This group has been studying the feasibility of a RAD transformation for Tidewater Gardens and Young Terrace communities. He has also been recently named to the Mayor's St. Paul's Advisory Committee, which advises on transformational efforts within the St. Paul's area of Norfolk. Mr. Parker has participated in visits to Purpose Built Communities in Nebraska and Alabama.

Mr. Parker provides care to a patient with autism as an employee with Briggs Home Healthcare. The single father of one daughter, Mr. Parker is a Norfolk native and has lived in Tidewater Gardens for four years. He attended Booker

T. Washington High School and is currently working to obtain his GED. He attends Gethsemane Baptist Church.

Mr. Parker's passion is working with kids six to ten years old. He is in the process of creating "The Circle", an opportunity for kids in this age range to sit in a circle and discuss issues with Mr. Brody and other mentors. He says he wants kids to know there are adults they can trust.

## **Glenn Porter**

*Queen Street Baptist Church*

Glenn E. Porter, MDiv, DMin, has a passion for serving church, academy and community. He serves as senior pastor at Queen Street Baptist Church, adjunct associate professor of religious studies at Tidewater Community College, and volunteer chaplain with Norfolk Police Department. He is the author of the new book JOURNEY WITH JESUS THROUGH LENT, published by Judson Press.

Glenn served as associate regional pastor/area minister with American Baptist Churches of New Jersey, and president of the Division of Clergy of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia. He also served as treasurer for Tidewater Metro Baptist Ministers Conference of Virginia.



A former TV and print journalist, Glenn has taught at Virginia Union University and Mary Baldwin College, and was a member of the Board of Trustees at Bacon College. He is the author of two books, and his work has appeared in The African American Pulpit. He is member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

## **LaVonne Pledger**

*Young Terrace*



Mr. LaVonne Pledger describes himself as a “community activist” within the Young Terrace public housing community. As an eight-year resident, Mr. Pledger says the voices of residents in public housing often go unheard and he is determined to use his knowledge and skills to ensure that the concerns of the community are considered.

A single father with two children, Mr. Pledger is currently employed as a Physical Education Assistant at Larrymore Elementary School, a position he has held for the past ten years. He is also a Certified Personal Trainer and fitness professional who enjoys spending time with his son and daughter in physical activity. He attended Maury High School, received

his GED in 2004 and has attended classes at Tidewater Community College.

Mr. Pledger is a member of the Young Terrace Tenant Management Council and uses his time with the organization to advocate for those who cannot speak for themselves.

## **Tara Saunders**

*Executive Director of the Real Estate Foundation, Old Dominion University*

Ms. Saunders is the Executive Director of the Real Estate Foundation at Old Dominion University. Prior to beginning that role in 2007, Ms. Saunders served as Deputy Director of Economic Development for the City of Portsmouth for five years and the Assistant Director of Economic Development for the City of Suffolk. Prior to that, she served as Senior Business Development Manager of Economic Development for the City of Chesapeake.

Ms. Saunders earned a Bachelor’s degree in Marketing and Management and an MBA degree from Old Dominion University’s College of Business Administration.



## **Marquitta White**

*TMC President, Tidewater Gardens*



Marquitta White is the president of the Tidewater Gardens Tenant Management Council. This 35-year-old mother of two girls says she’s involved because she wants to help others gain a fresh start and prepare for stability in family, finances and employment.

Marquitta is a “military brat,” originally from Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She has a degree in culinary arts, and in 2020 will graduate from Tidewater Community College with a degree in communications. All this despite the car accident in 2017 that left her paralyzed and forced her to learn to walk again. She has been a resident of Tidewater Gardens for a year.

Marquitta says she knows first-hand that life can be overwhelming and that’s why, as she says, “I try to go above and beyond to help anyone I can.” And she says she will take advantage of job and/or educational opportunities through the transformation project. She says, “It’s important to show through example that you can create a new mindset.”