



Education

# Orlando swim school founder wins full-ride to Florida Technical College

Central Florida Public Media | By Danielle Prieur  
Published February 24, 2024 at 8:09 AM EST



▶ LISTEN • 1:22



Taylor Walker was the recipient of this year's African American Chamber of Commerce Central Florida Black History Month Scholarship.

The African American Chamber of Commerce Central Florida has announced that its Black History Month scholarship will go to a local swim school founder.

Her motto is anyone can swim.

The recipient of this year's scholarship to Florida Technical College is Taylor Walker, the founder of The Olympian Fortress Swim Academy.



Taylor Walker and her students at The Olympian Fortress Swim Academy.

Walker said her mission is to teach all children to swim.

According to the CDC, [drowning rates for Black people are 1.5 times higher than the rates for white people.](#)

"We have to stop allowing the ages of one to four to be the top number of fatal drownings. We have to make sure that just because of funding or finances or anything that makes swimming not affordable, that we make and create those spaces for kids that are underprivileged or not able to get those classes," said Walker.

Walker said growing up she was often the only person of color on her swim team, as a lifeguard and later as a swim instructor. She said she wants to change that one student at a time at her school.

"And so I just took what the YMCA taught me, plus, my family taught me, my grandmother taught me, and I put it into my work. And the mission was, everybody can be taught brown, black, yellow, white, whoever," said Walker.

Walker said the scholarship will help her expand the reach of her school, while creating a welcoming and encouraging space for everyone, even parents who may not know how to swim themselves.

The scholarship program is in its second year.

It provides a full-ride scholarship to Florida Technical College and a free laptop, with the goal of supporting Black business owners.

Read more about the statistics around being a Black business owner in America [here.](#)

Danielle Prieur  
Taylor Walker teaching a student how to swim.

Taylor Walker, her husband and two children at the award ceremony.

Tags Education Central Florida News Orange County



**Danielle Prieur**  
Danielle Prieur covers education in Central Florida.  
[See stories by Danielle Prieur](#)

## Related Content

### Education **Under the direction of Dr. Shanta Barton-Stubbs, New Image Youth Center keeps growing**

Danielle Prieur  
The center provides comprehensive after-school and summer camp programs for K-12 students in Parramore and the surrounding communities.

▶ LISTEN • 4:04

### **One attorney is paving the way for change**

Marian Summerall  
Attorney and President of the Paul C. Perkins Bar Association, Lisa Harvey, is helping lead her community, and giving back to the youth.

▶ LISTEN • 3:06

### Government & Politics **Windermere Prep student starts first Black Student Union**

Joe Mario Pedersen  
Carrington Meyer is a 14-year sophomore at Windermere Preparatory School. She's also the president of the school's first Black Student Union, which she started after noticing a need.

▶ LISTEN • 3:39

### Education **Black business leaders can get scholarships to Florida Technical College**

Danielle Prieur  
The African American Chamber of Commerce Central Florida is looking for an aspiring or established Black business leader to give a full-ride scholarship to Florida Technical College.

▶ LISTEN • 0:54

### Journalistic Ethics Code

[Read The Guidelines](#)

### Public Media Code of Integrity

[Read More Details](#)



### Rising Water

Exploring the effects of water on Central Florida and urgent calls to address policy and other barriers to change as we prepare for a supercharged upcoming storm season.

[See The Stories](#)



## Featured Stories

Environment & Climate  
Changes to OUC pricing schedule coming in 2025

Economy & Business  
Hurricane season continues to bring short-term benefits and long-term costs to Florida's economy, says Rollins Professor

Environment & Climate  
In multilingual Central Florida, hurricane and flood warnings can go unheard

Education  
Seminole County one of Florida's first to bring kids trauma-informed camp after hurricanes

Environment & Climate  
One seaside community is fighting against its biggest threat: Water

### Why Donate to Central Florida Public Media?

Simply put, your support ensures we are able to provide independent, trustworthy journalism for all. Please make a donation today.

[Donate](#)

