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**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





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**BBC World Service** 



Taylor Walker

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.

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

Walker said the scholarship will help her expand

The scholarship program is in its second year. It provides a full-ride scholarship to Florida

Taylor Walker teaching a student how to swim.

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



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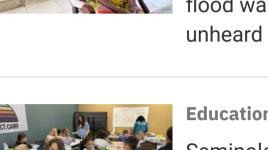


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Taylor Walker

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

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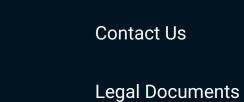
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