

# DETROIT NATIVE SUN

## Don't be deterred

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How many of us have had our hopes and dreams dashed, discouraged, and destroyed by the lack of encouragement and assistance, especially as we were growing up. Quite a few of us, I'm sure.

As you continue to pursue your goals and dreams, keep the *other* components of success in the forefront. In addition to *Hope*, include those of *Faith*, and *Love* and *Work*!

Don't be too afraid or apprehensive to try out an idea or a thought. *It takes a good idea to help motivate forward action, with invested interests, sufficient to accomplish the goal!*

To most people, the *thought* of failing or the *actuality* of it happening, is extremely disappointing and has devastating effects. When failure, *becomes a part of your life*, it is difficult to see *how* there can be any re-

covery or turn around. When your focus, is temporarily clouded or obscured, it makes the possibility of winning or achieving a goal inconceivable.

Achieving at *anything*, no matter how elusive or impossible the goal, *can be* achieved to personal satisfaction, through strong determined perseverance, listening to wise counsel, not being afraid to put shoulder to the wheel and forging straight ahead with your eyes on the prize!! Remember, that the dream or goal is *yours*, that it must be nurtured and protected by *you*, and that *you* are ultimately responsible for its success, and nothing reaches a successful completion or conclusion, without so called failures along the journey or road. Success, could be *failure on fire*, or, Success, could be *failure turned inside out*, or the dark clouds *silver lining*, where once *there was doubt!!*

*Failures and disappointments and set backs*, are all parts of the lessons we *must learn* to conquer, as we matriculate through the curriculums in *The School of Life*. Let us all press forward to our *personal achievements* of success, and try *never*, to be de-

## The DeMarco Project Speaks: Interview - Velonda Thompson, Ph.D. Passionate about health

By Kim J. Clark  
Aka Expanding Love

This writer is pleased to introduce Army Veteran Velonda Thompson. Velonda is passionate about two of my favorite topics. Good health and Nutrition. Next month is National Nutrition Month, and in Part 2 of her interview, Dr. Thompson will share easy-to-use good health through nutrition tips with our readers.

Velonda attended college with the intent of becoming a nurse. She thought she wanted to be a pediatric nurse. However, she wasn't prepared to deal with abused children or infants born to drug-addicted parents. She realized early on she was too emotional for the public health field. In the back of her mind, she felt that she was probably better suited for studies regarding health through Nutrition. She left school because the nursing program was too traumatic for her.

She made a hasty decision and joined the Army. Of the positions available, she decided to enter law enforcement and become a Military Police Officer (MP). After basic and specialty training (MP training), she served at the Oakland Army Base, also known as the Oakland Army Terminal, now a decommissioned United States Army base in the San Francisco Bay Area of California.

Velonda was one of the first female servicepersons to serve as an MP. As a result, she was assigned to teach the Army wives Aerobics. The work was gratifying since she was a health and fitness buff. After leaving the military, she continued to work in the fitness industry.

Committed to her education, Velonda attended Wayne State University and obtained a bachelor's degree in Liberal arts, focusing on food as Medicine. Next, she attended Walsh College and earned a Masters of Science in Management with a focus in small business in 1992. A few years later, she participated at the Union Institute and University in Cincinnati, Ohio, earning her Ph.D. in Nutrition and Health Promotion in 2001. While working with Dr. Fritz on the benefits of fiber-rich, and antioxidant properties of sweet potatoes for diabetics, she became very passionate about sweet potatoes. That same year she wrote her first book, *Pass the Sweet Potatoes Please*. Dr. Thompson, also known as Dr. Velonda, is the founder of Sweet Potato Delights, a wholesale food supplier for several Detroit Restaurants. Visit the website at <https://sweetpotatodelights.org> While working various corporate jobs and teaching fitness on the side, she created a vision of the life she desired. She set a ten-year goal of being fully

self-employed and achieved it. In 2013 Velonda obtained her Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) certification. The Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) works to assure food safety, protect animal and plant health, sustain environmental stewardship.

Presently, she provides Sweet Potato Delights to six wholesale locations in the Detroit area. Some of the locations include The Kitchen, Northwest Farmers Market in Rosedale Park, and the Oak Park Farmers Market.

While interviewing Velonda, it was obvious to this writer that Velonda is very passionate about good health through proper Nutrition. One of Velonda's food tips is, "Food Color is King." She said look at your plate; make sure there are many colors. Foods with color are full of antioxidants. Nutrients from the food enter the bloodstream and are distributed to your whole body. If you don't have much time to prepare meals, start your day by juicing fruits and vegetables. Remember, when you wake up in the morning, your brain asks for support.

While on her health and Nutrition journey, she started a side business called Bfit Incorporated, located at the Coleman Your Reactional Center. She focused on teaching clients from 20 to 70 years old about aging well. Her clients had the opportunity to participate in a video she created called Cardio Tone.

Over five years, Velonda hosted an annual Fitness Carnival, which included fitness and health education, karate class, Double Dutch jump rope, and other fun fitness activities.

One of many success stories with the youth program is about a girl that was 50 pounds overweight and only wanted to turn the Double Dutch jump rope. Over time she lost the excess weight and became the best competitive jumpers in the program. In the March edition of The Detroit Native Sun, we will detail how she developed "Mo Better Health," a very successful health and fitness program for youth.

Velonda has agreed to collaborate with The DeMarco Project and share some delightful healthy sweet potato dessert recipes on the DeMarco Projects Facebook and Instagram pages. We are proud to have Dr. Velonda, United States Army Veteran share nutritional wisdom with you.

*Kim is the mother of a Veteran who loved his country and was willing to lay his life down for the freedoms in which he believed. She is the Founder and CEO of The DeMarco Project, a non-profit organization. Her mission is to save Veteran lives and improve the quality of life for traumatized military service persons. If you would like to support her in this work, please donate via the website [www.TheDeMarcoProject.org](http://www.TheDeMarcoProject.org).*



## Salvation: A magnificent work in progress

By Evangelist Barbara Colbert-Brooks  
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The Apostle Paul commended the Believers in the early church on their faithfulness and perseverance pursuing their new lives

in Christ. He encouraged them to continue on with a spirit of enthusiasm, reverence, and humility. They were to always know that their salvation is an ongoing work of God transforming them to light in an otherwise dark world. Paul wrote "...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

"Work out" means "live out". Not working for salvation, but showing the works of salvation. God has a plan for each of our lives that must be "worked out" with particular fortitude and diligence. However, we must first understand the business of salvation. Merriam-Webster defines "salvation" as; "deliverance from the power and effects of sin; liberation from ignorance or illusion; preservation from destruction or failure; deliverance from danger or difficulty." Then, we must realize the dire need for such "salvation." Yet, in order to truly grasp the need of salvation, we must realize the brevity of life, and the depravity of the heart of man. Psalms 90:12 cries "Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom." James 4:14 declares "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Jeremiah 17:9 professes "The heart is deceitful above all

things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" We are here but a little while, on a journey that has a precise beginning and ending. What we do in between determines how we will conclude this journey, and our final destination.

The late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. sermonized "... I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like any man, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land....I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

Working out one's salvation can only be accomplished when the native acknowledges that life can only be lived with one purpose. As written by Paul the Apostle, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that purpose being, the will of God. Paul beseeched those whom he'd disciples to "work out" their salvation with hope and humility. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. proclaimed to all the world to walk not in fear for there was surely the glory of the coming of the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 declares "He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end." The Father's security measure to remind us that we are not God, nor in any way a contender to His majesty. Yet, He has a purpose and a plan for each one of us.

A purpose we can only know through walking in reverence and submission to Him that he may facilitate the "working out" of our salvation. With that, He leads us gently up the "mountain" that we too may not only see the proverbial "promised land", but partake of its glorious benefits while we are yet in the land of the living.

## U.S. Postal Service shares love of pets

PRNewswire/ -- With a nod to America's great affection for furry friends, the Postal Service unleashes the latest in its popular Love series stamps, featuring imaginative illustrations of two of America's most beloved pets: kittens and puppies.

Each Love (2023) Forever stamp depicts one of the cute, cuddly animals. Intended to evoke feelings of warmth and playfulness, the release is perfectly timed for Valentine's Day cards and can add sentiment and whimsy to letters, birthday or graduation cards, baby shower invitations or notes of thanks.

The stamp dedication took place at the Texas animal shelter Austin Pets Alive!, with adoptable pets on hand for the event, enabling both participants and attendees to see animals receiving and benefiting from the community's love.

"The kitten and puppy each rest their front paws on a big red heart, which captures perfectly the love we have for these special creatures — and their love for us in return," said Judy de Torok, the Postal Service's vice president of Corporate Relations, who served as dedicating official for the ceremony and is a pet lover herself. "I have a feeling these may be some of our most popular stamps ever."

Also participating in the event were Dr. Ellen Jefferson, president and CEO of Austin Pets Alive!; Kelly Holt, senior manager of the Austin Pets Alive! cat program; Richard Scott, volunteer canine behavior specialist with the rescue

and Matt Beisner, star of "Dog: Impossible" on Disney+.

Acting as master of ceremonies was Diaz Dixon, adviser for external partnerships, Austin Pets Alive!

The stamps' two designs feature either a kitten or a puppy with the word "LOVE" along the top, partially obscured by the heads of the animals. The words "forever" and "usa" in lowercase letters run along the bottom. Art director Ethel Kessler designed the stamps with original art by Chris Buzelli.

These newest additions to the Love stamp series are now available at Post Office locations nationwide and online at the Postal Store at [usps.com/shopstamps](https://usps.com/shopstamps).

The Love (2023) Forever stamps will be issued in panes of 20. Forever stamps are always equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

News of the stamps is being shared on social media with the hashtag #LoveStamps.

