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**AFRICAN AMERICAN ALUMNI OF TAMPA'S PRIVATE SCHOOLS LAUNCHED "PRIVATE SKOOL VILLAGE," A NONPROFIT TO SUPPORT AREA STUDENTS, ON AUGUST 28**

*The launch event was a fundraiser for St. Peter Claver, the oldest black grade school in Florida*

**TAMPA, FLORIDA** – Private Skool Village, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit formed in 2021 by African American alumni from Tampa's private schools, held its inaugural launch event on Sunday, August 28 at 3 pm. It was held at the scenic Tampa River Center located on the Hillsborough River. The Private Skool Village (PSV) nonprofit launch event was a festive reunion, the first of its kind bringing together a nationwide network of African American alumni from Tampa's private schools spanning five decades. The highlight of the launch was a fundraiser for St. Peter Claver, the oldest Black grade school in the state of Florida, established in 1894 near downtown Tampa.

Private Skool Village was formed to expand private school opportunities for African American students in Tampa and the surrounding areas. In addition to tuition support, funds raised will support enrichment activities that include education, the arts, sports, mentoring and more that make a private school education so valuable. The idea for the alumni reunion and the nonprofit organization was the brainchild of Rigo Garcia, Jr., a second-generation alum of Tampa private schools and a graduate of Epiphany of our Lord and Tampa Catholic High School. "My private school experience changed my life. It not only prepared me spiritually, for college, a successful professional career and life, but also exposed me to high-level sports and provided lifelong relationships that I still cherish today," says Garcia, president of PSV. "St. Peter Claver as the organization's first beneficiary was an easy decision. Many in our network are alums, have family members that are alums, or attended or still attend St. Peter Claver Catholic Church." At the event, a check for \$20,000 was presented to Dr. LaTonya White, principal of St. Peter Claver Catholic School. Each year, the nonprofit will select a beneficiary.

PSV alumni – successful professionals covering multiple industries and states – are eager to help generations of students to come have even greater opportunities. Garcia said, "The fundraiser was phenomenal with alums traveling from as far away as California. We were so excited to come together to support future generations in this way to create more pathways to success." In addition to an onsite raffle for prizes, Private Skool Village presented its first Impact Awards to adults who had a significant impact on them while they were in school. The inaugural Impact Award recipients were Yvonne Fort, a second-grade teacher at St. Peter Claver for over 30 years and Betty Bell, who passionately worked with students at St. Peter Claver in multiple capacities. Several of their students were in attendance. There were also reunion group photos for the schools represented.

Private Skool Village welcomes more support to meet their mission. Private school alumni and the public are invited to support the support the nonprofit by donating or becoming a sponsor. To learn more about Private Skool Village, visit [skoolvillage.com](http://skoolvillage.com).

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**Private Skool Village, Inc.**

Private Skool Village, Inc., a 501(3) nonprofit, was formed to address the issue of relief of the poor, the distressed or the underprivileged by providing financial assistance and resources; hosting a series of events, community and civic engagement outings, mentoring activities, and empowerment trainings; providing uniquely designed mentoring programs; and making economic development investments for private schools and students attending private schools in the Tampa Bay area.