

Holla! CHEER & DANCE MAGAZINE

AFTER 25 YEARS METRO CHEER & DANCE EMBARKS ON ITS FINAL SEASON

Written by Dr. Kim Harris, EdD/CI

Edited by Maude Campbell for HOLLA! Cheer and Dance Magazine | Images provided by Jerry Hughes George Stewart, and Elite Event Photography.

Perrmella Harris allowed HOLLA! to share her reflections and gratitude as the Founder and Director of Operations of one of the most successful black-owned all-star programs in the country.

As I sit back and reflect on my professional cheer career, I cannot be more thankful. Through my efforts I was able to develop a structured program enhancing the growth and development of the sport of cheerleading in the state of Michigan, especially for youth in the city of Detroit. I started Metro Cheer Training Center when I was only 25 years old, just a young adult with a dream. My goal was to introduce young athletes to the sport, provide training in a safe environment and present a beautiful dwelling they could call their second home. The dream started at Oak Park Recreation Center where there was no training, conferences, or groups that I could turn to for help.

Metro Cheer Training Center was established to provide wholesome fun and character-building experiences for young children in the Metro Detroit area to focus more on family and personal goals. By being the first African American cheer gym in the state of Michigan, I had the opportunity to impact thousands of children's lives by traveling to many other states, participating in community service projects and bringing diversity into a sport. I have also had the pleasure and opportunity to

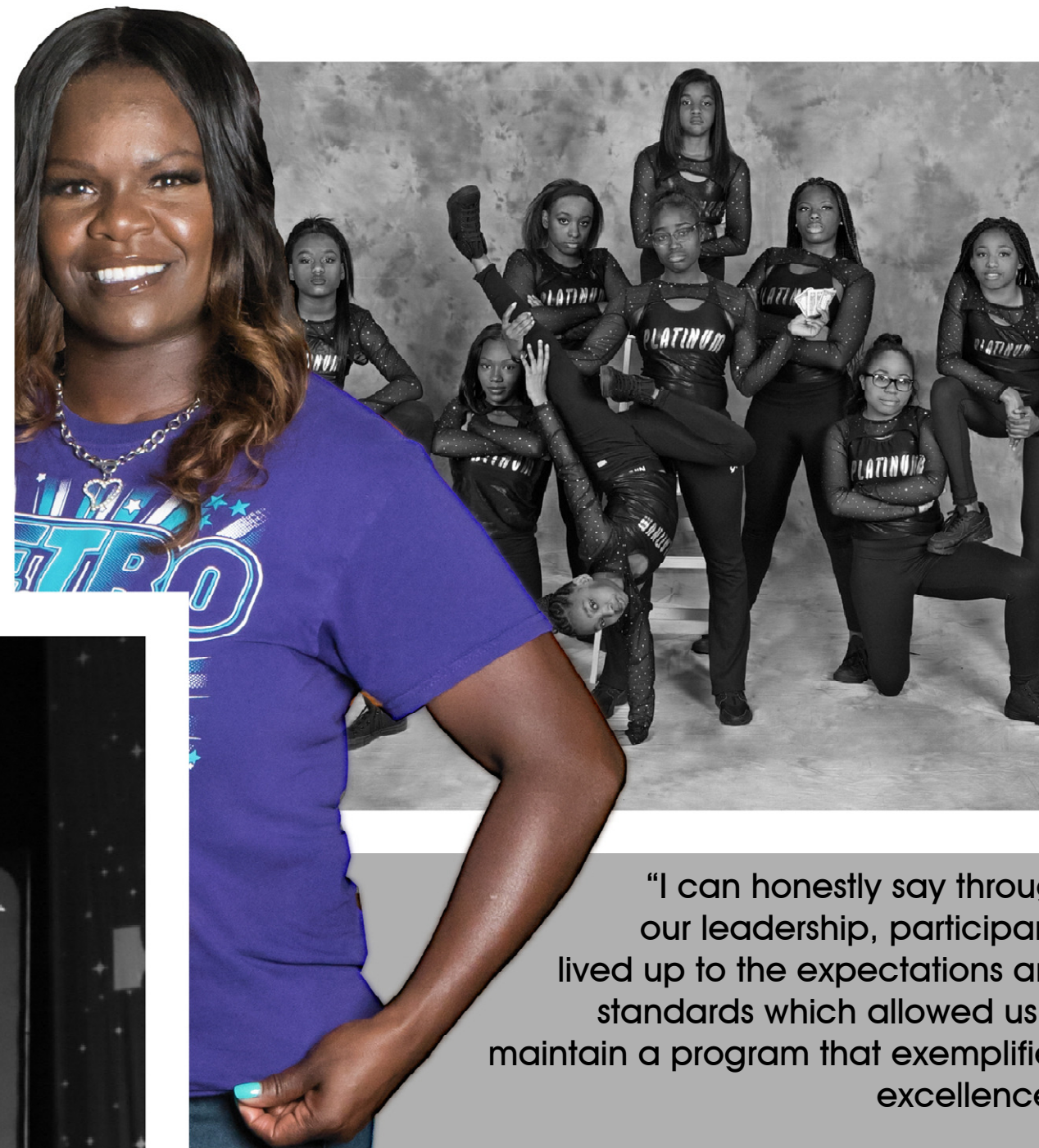
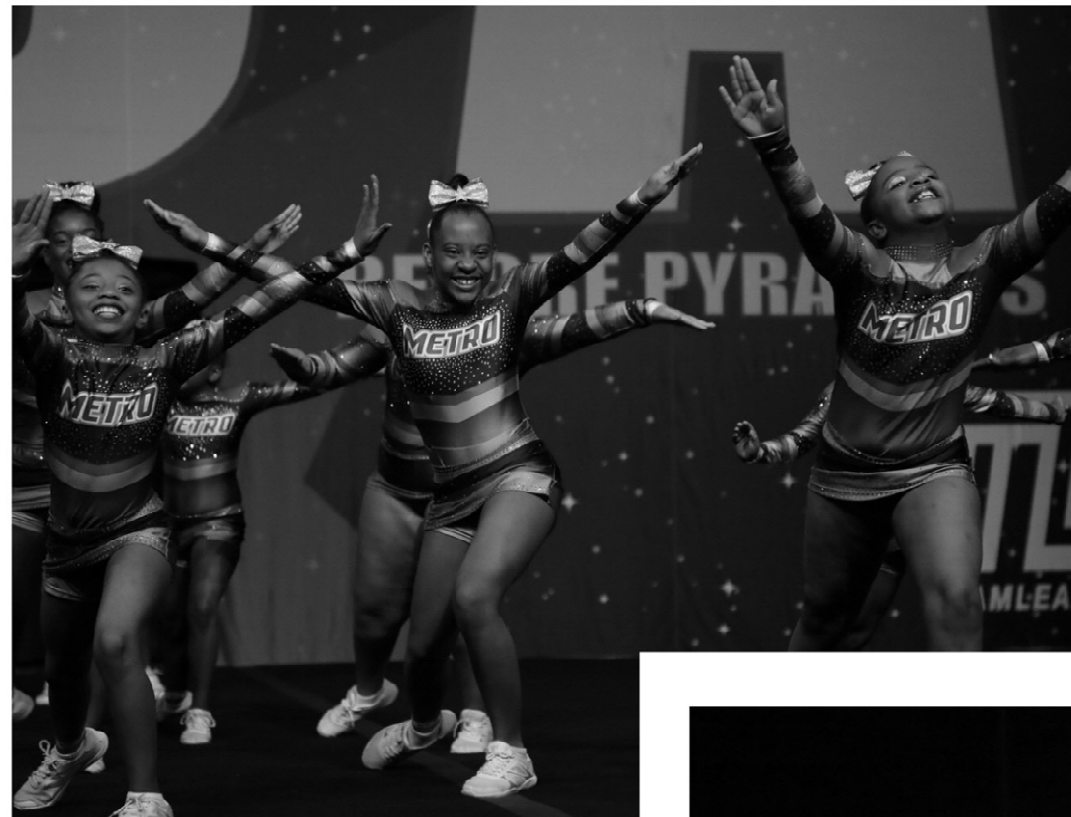
judge at almost every major U.S. city around the United States, including at the local, regional, college, and national level as well as for the NFL Detroit Lions Cheerleaders.

I am very proud of all the athletes and of my coaching staff that I have trained and worked with over the years. I can honestly say through our leadership, participants lived up to the expectations and standards which allowed us to maintain a program that exemplified excellence. Those standards provided many opportunities for our athletes and coaches to continue the tradition of youth development in the sport of cheerleading rooted and grounded through Metro Cheer. Our leadership team has always tried to instill good morals, values and ethics while maintaining integrity. These values aligned with my mission and vision and have truly provided our youth with the foundation to become more than just great cheerleaders but great leaders in our society. Looking back at all the amazing people that have come into my life (both parents and kids), watching them grow up to be young adults and move on to having their own families and now I'm even coaching their children (crazy). I am truly blessed to have had the opportunity to be a part of such an amazing community of people.

After 25 years of servicing youth and the community, Metro Cheer & Dance has decided to embark on its final all-star season. Through a collaboration of teamwork, confidence, leadership, perseverance, and with over 200 national championships under our belt, we have accomplished our goals, conquered our fears, laid down our laws, and proved there is nobody better. We have established a legacy, and maintained a tradition of excellence that is now being carried on through our athletes and coaches who are now gym owners and program directors.

Founder and Director of Operations Perrmella Harris has decided to support, advise, and be a mentor to the newest all-star team in Metro Detroit (Envy Elite All-Stars Cheer & Dance, LLC) which is owned by Ashley Fountain, Ashley Mattison, Derek Nesbitt (former Metro Cheer All-Star), and Dominique McDonald (former Metro Cheer All-Star). Coach Harris decided to pass the torch at the end of season 25 while guiding the excited gym owners of Envy Elite All-Stars Cheer & Dance, LLC.

Although Metro Cheer & Dance leaves their legacy to be upheld by some of the same athletes who started with Mrs. Harris over 25 years ago, she will continue with her involvement as the AAU State Cheer Director. Harris' goals are to continue to uplift the community and bring awareness at the next level of cheerleading and dance. Her plans are to host college recruitment showcase across the country for high school students to provide opportunities to earn scholarships both academically and through the sport of cheer and dance. These efforts will open doors for more African American representation for college cheerleaders, judges, coaches, NBA, NFL cheerleaders, and dancers. AAU Tumbling & Performance Rec., classes will continue to be held on Wednesday's under the direction of Mrs. Harris. For more information, please email aaucheermi@icloud.com.



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Thank you to the families and coaches that continue to support our organization past and present. Thank You to our office manager, Camille McKinley, and Coaches Crystal and Desaray Harris who both have been with Harris for over 15 years. Season 25 has been one for the record books with our teams earning the following awards and accolades:

Largest Tiny and Mini Teams in our history • 1st Place - GMCE Nationals • Full Paid Bid to The One Finals in Sandusky, OH • Hung 10,000 medals for Community Service at the 2019 Detroit Turkey Trot • 3rd Place - Jamz Nationals in Las Vegas, NV • 1st Place - CCA Christian Cheer Nationals • CCA Grand Champions (Earned Rings) • National Solo, Duo and Stunt National Champions • Full Paid Bid to Max Out Nationals in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Envy Elite All Stars Cheer & Dance, LLC sincerely thanks Mrs. Perrmella Harris and her program, Metro Cheer & Dance, for setting the standard high and embracing them as they embark upon their new journey. They plan to lead their program with poise, professionalism and stand behind a motto to keep our standards high, community engaged, and make our athletes proud! We know that the world has been upended by the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, but life will resume a level of normalcy soon. In the meantime, we encourage you to support small black owned businesses. ■



For more information regarding Envy Elite All Stars Cheer & Dance, LLC, email them at EnvyEliteAllStars@gmail.com.