



# The Big Red Magazine

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JULY 22, 2022

## Spotlighting Two SAC Alumnae Stars

### Raquel Beneby-Hart ('91)

Reprint from Tribune



As we celebrate "Women's History Month," we will spotlight several Bahamian women making an impact in their respective fields and local communities.

In 2019, Ms. Raquel Beneby-Hart participated in the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), focused on "Technical Entrepreneurship and Empowerment of Women and Girls." She is a motivational speaker, trainer, and facilitator in the areas of women's empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Today, Raquel is actively engaged in the community through the NGO Bridge of Hope Bahamas, that focuses on developing empowerment programs for disenfranchised women and girls in inner city communities. She also serves as the chairperson for Women United Northern Bahamas (WUNB) an umbrella organization that provides advocacy, capacity building and resources for women and girls focused organizations in Grand Bahama, Abaco and Bimini. She is also the Founding Director of Grand Bahama's Women's Investment Group.

Last year, Raquel coordinated an App Development Program on Grand Bahama that was made possible through the U.S. Department of State's Fulbright Specialist Program. The training, held on Grand Bahama as a partnership between the U.S. Embassy and the Office of The Prime Minister last summer, brought together over 45 participants with varying degrees of expertise to learn from American technology expert Aaron Saunders on developing applications for consumer use. The program gave participants practical insight and business development strategies. Great job Raquel and continue to excel!

## Charlis Robins ('95)

Reprint from the Tribune



TURN hopelessness into hope, can't into can, and impossible into possible" - a quote that Charlis Robins resonates with as she reflects on her growing career as an occupational therapist.

It is a global healthcare profession that helps people develop, recover, or maintain the meaningful activities and occupations that are important to them. Clients get the gift of freedom and independence, in order to be more in control of their lives.

Charlis has worked with people of all ages since her journey began. As a teenager, she volunteered at the Sandiland's Rehabilitation Centre. It is here that she fell in love with the profession.

Likely, OT felt like a natural fit for her, as she enjoys staying active as well as helping others. She grew up as an athlete, under the big wings of her father, basketball coach and National Sports Hall of Farmer, Charles “Softly” Robins.

She spent her early childhood years in Grand Bahama. She attended St Vincent de Paul, Mary Star of the Sea, and Sunland Lutheran School.

“I enjoyed holiday trips to Bimini, boating and playing Nintendo with my Godbrothers and sisters,” she said.

“I enjoyed the close-knit community... it was as if everyone was connected.”

That sense of community spirit followed her as she moved to New Providence with her mother, Edith Burns, née Seymour. Edith, a popular artesian in Turks and Caicos, ensured that her daughter knew the value of family, and appreciated her rich Turks and Bimini heritage. She wanted her to go out there and shine, knowing that she has the love and support of family to see her through. Charlis attended Queen’s College and went on to St Augustine’s College, where she graduated. My lifelong friend and I had many days of fun, attending school and playing on several sports teams together, including softball, basketball, and volleyball. We won many a championship for SAC’s Big Red Machine with the likes of other sports stars like Leslia Brice (née Miller), Sandena Neilly (née Mortimer), Nakara Miller (née Williams), Samantha Kemp (née Culmer), Shara Moss and many others.

Charlis went on to Palm Beach Community College on volleyball scholarship and then to Florida A&M University to study Occupational Therapy. She always showed team spirit, school pride and a willing spirit. An outspoken attitude and leadership skills helped her to excel along the way. It was important, though, for her to find a career that would allow her to remain active and engaged in community activities.

“Occupational Therapy (OT) focuses on engagement in meaningful activities of daily life (such as self-care skills, education, work, or social interaction),” she explained, “to enable or encourage participation in these activities despite impairments or limitations in physical or mental functioning.”

“The goal is to maximize one’s functional potential, thus improving the quality of life - from the cradle to the grave.”

Charlis started off working in the Neurodevelopment Treatment Clinic at Princess Margaret Hospital, where she was afforded the opportunity to do additional studies in Paediatrics at City Kids in Chicago. Here, her “true passion” was ignited.

“I matriculated from Staff Occupational Therapist to department head,” she said.

She moved on to become the deputy director responsible for OT at the hospital. As Charlis cared for people of all ages, she found a special place in her heart for children with special needs. Seeing their transformation and growth has, in turn, transformed her as well. Because of it, she eventually started Genius Soul Therapeutic Day Centre, and has touched the lives of many children over the years. After a brief hiatus, she is getting ready to relaunch the brand, and she has the support of many parents in whose lives she has made a difference.

“Miss Charlis has been working with my son since he was four,” one parent shared.

“He is now 19 and she is still a part of our lives. When she first started working with him, we were in survival mode because there were so many medical issues. She worked with him with love and patience. In a very short time, he was able to go outdoors, and we even started to play and use words! Before long, he was playing basketball, riding a bike, swimming, and communicating. As he grew older, she taught him life skills and we even had a money-making business during the Christmas holidays!”

One parent spoke of the “strong bond that developed between her and my son due to the love and care she gave”. Another parent has a toddler with ASD level 2, noting less meltdowns and improvement in his behaviour after meeting Charlis and having the Genius Soul experience. A mother testified that her son Aaron’s life has improved physically and socially and says that Charlis’ approach to her work is “outside of the box, original, and works every time”, adding that her son is “better for it and enjoying a better quality of life”.

“Starting Genius Soul is the highlight of my profession to date,” Charlis tells me.

“This was birthed out of the desire to see children with various diagnoses receive the care they needed and the academics under one roof at an affordable cost. That, coupled with community integration caused families to see their children achieve goals in a short window of time. We became a family. I am still connected to those families today and I am excited about its relaunch. This career literally fell into my lap as if it was God-ordained.”

Genius Soul has offered a myriad of activities for its children, including horseback riding, swimming, tennis, bowling, and art. Uplifting programmes include entrepreneurship, money management skills, life skills training, parent coaching, communication enhancement and behaviour modification.

As Genius Soul grows, so does Charlis’ personal career journey. She is the newly appointed President of the Occupational Therapy Association of The Bahamas, which was established as a non-profit organisation in 1992.

“This appointment marks another major milestone on my career as an occupational therapist,” Charlis said.

“It would have meant that I attained every level in the succession of an occupational therapist in the country.”

She is excited about the position, as the association has plans underway, including: paying a courtesy call on Prime Minister Philip E Davis; art exhibition and educational seminar hosted by Sandilands Occupational Therapy Department; articles and community service initiatives to increase awareness of the importance of OT in The Bahamas. In 2023, the OT Association of The Bahamas will represent as host country for the Association of Caribbean Occupational Therapists Conference.

Charlis will have her hands full, but she always has time for her family: “I am my father’s oldest and my mother’s middle child. I have two brothers, one sister, four nephews and a beautiful niece. I am the parent of a Junkanoo genius and basketballer, Keitho Johnson.”

Charlis is pouring into Keitho the best of her values that have brought her this far - determination, faith, selflessness, and a heart of gold.

# SAC's 8T6ers Fire Run

By Nadene Charlton

In an impassioned, televised National Address January 23, 2022, the Minister of Education and Technical & Vocational Training declared an emergency and expressed the dire need to “reverse” and “avert” what could be a “devastating blow” to future educational prospects in our country. St. Augustine's College's graduating class of 1986's emergency response was to create a fundraiser, the 8T6ers Fire Run! The objective of this fundraiser is ultimately to support the SAC Alumni Association's tuition grant programme, which aids students whose families are experiencing financial challenges so that they can successfully complete high school. With this fundraiser, we hope to gain the support of not only the alumni of St. Augustine's College, but every citizen and private organization that are concerned about the growing disparities in the education of our Bahamian students. The 8T6ers Fire Run will be an annual Fun Run/Walk that takes place in the month of June with the race beginning and ending on SAC's campus.





Sac Alumni are a proud lot. We've been instilled with values such as self-respect, self-reliance, loyalty, honesty, and forgiveness. We have a great sense of accountability and responsibility for each other, our communities, our country, and this world that we live in. The opportunity centered around a belief that not only that all Bahamians should have access to a good education but that all should have access to an educational experience unlike another, a life changing projection into a world that encourages ingenuity, self-exploration, accountability, and pride. It is these values that have driven the 8T6ers to take up this mantle to give back to our alma mater, St Augustine's College, and a deserving student.







## **BIGREDMACHINE SAC**

**Class of 86**  
invites you to join us  
at our in person

**Runners Route:** Leave SAC Office, left on Bernard Road, right on Village Road to Montague Beach and back to SAC (5 miles).

**Walkers Route:** Leave SAC Office, left on Bernard Road to Village Road and back to SAC (3 miles).

### **REGISTRATION LOCATIONS**

**Touch Control Ltd.**

Old Fort Bay Town Center

Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

Saturdays 10am - 2pm

**The Sports Center**

Harbour Bay Shopping Center

Sat 28 May

**SAC Alumni Office**

Monday - Friday 10am - 3pm

# **RUN—**

**11 JUN 2022**

**6:00AM**

### **REGISTRATION FEES**

**Running Route**

**\$20 Adult**

**\$15 Student**

**Walking Route**

**\$15 Adult**

**\$10 Student**

# The SAC Class of 1972 celebrated their Golden Anniversary in Nassau and Andros, Bahamas May 27 - June 6, 2022

By Peter Mitchell

SAC Class of 1972 culminated its 50th anniversary celebrations during the month of June 2022. As part of their festivities, the class embraced and “recognized a 3-year journey, celebrating opportunities and remembrance as they rededicated themselves through engaging in many photos captured via mini reunions”. Over the past 6 months the class has quietly been doing good, uplifting downtrodden humanity, in their various communities through engaging in 50 Acts of Kindness!





## Back 2 SAC Fun Day & Tree Planting Plaque Dedication



Some 60 plus Classmates and former teachers gathered to commemorate the lives of 37 beloved fallen classmates. Bishop Arnold Josey treated the class with a trumpet rendition of "Taps". Peter Mitchell led the dedication service, recalling the names of the 37 deceased. The fun day also included Munroe and Bastian fruit salad, chicken souse and stew conch brunch, followed up by BBQ Jerk chicken, burgers, and hotdogs. The Fun Day was filled with a plethora of conversation, swimming, games and topped off by the signature Munnings mastered Class of '72 Seventy's Video Montage. The day featured visits from Principal Marici Thompson, her facilities manager, William 'Knucklehead' Johnson, SACA President Cherelle Cartwright and Avinel Rutherford (SACA Treasurer). A special treat was the participation of Class former teachers Paul Christophilis (History), Matthew William (French), James Rolle (Art) and LeDaunne Davis (ZNS), the daughter of our recently departed beloved classmate, Linda E. Davis, aka the 'Briland Androsia Queen.

## Golden Reunion

- Friday, May 27, 2022 - Class Meet n Greet was held at Nirvana, Love Beach.
- May 28, 2022, At 10:00am classmates attended a Home Going Service for Jeffrey Chandler at Holy Cross, Anglican Church.
- May 29, 2022, the class was out in full force with some 75 members to celebrate Sunday Mass at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. The class made a \$500 donation to the Catholic Archdiocesan Annual Appeal. Following mass, Classmates continued on for Lunch at Curley's Arawak Cay.
- Monday, May 30, 2022-The Class came together at the invitation of Classmate Basil "The Kid" Sands; the Class came together for a night of song and dance at the SAC '72 Karaoke Night & Golden Photo Booth
- On Tuesday, May 31, 2022-most classmates took a pause and got together individually on their own. The Class Endowment Committee also visited with SAC principal Thompson and a member of the Catholic Board Finance Committee to make a \$5,000+ donation to the school, and to cultivate furthering the relationship that will also have staff/ professor's training and STEAM development as a focus.
- Wednesday, June 1, 2022: Classmates came together to break bread at the Golden Anniversary Party at the Breezes Resort, Cable Beach. The feature of the night was the excellent SAC Class of 1972 Commemorative Booklet that captured classmates in their 1972 pictures and those taken more recently. Featured in the booklet are stories about teachers that contributed to shaping the Class of 1972. These included Vince "Geech Ferguson, (Coach, English teacher and Dean of Students), Ms. Linda Kelly, who was a Spanish teacher and Dean of Students and the beloved Leviticus "Uncle Lou" Adderley, mentor, teacher, and coach.
- Thursday, June 2 - 6, 2022: Some 20+ of our number travelled with our very own Cheryl Bastian for three days of fun, food, fishing and Chickcharnie culture at Swains Cay Bone Fishing Lodge in Mangrove Cay Andros. We all live vicariously through those that made the trip via constant WhatsApp videos, pics, and voice notes. What a fitting beginning of the end of our celebrations!!

SAC Class of 1972;  
We are Golden!!



## SAC Class of 2002 Celebrates 20 years!





# SAC Alumnae Survive Fatal Long Island Plane Crash

Nassau Guardian Reprint



From left, Le'Annka Rigby ('13), Alicia Rolle ('11), and Nia Bethel-Sears on the Piper Navajo airplane bound for Long Island from Nassau.

The three friends — Le'Annka Rigby, Nia Bethel-Sears, and Alicia Rolle — had been long overdue for hanging out. So, they booked a girls trip to Long Island during regatta time. After Bahamasair canceled their flight, they were able to get on a charter. Rolle, 28, said she was initially apprehensive about flying on a small plane, but once they were up in the air on the Piper Navajo with pilot Brad McPhee heading to Long Island from Nassau last Thursday, it was smooth sailing.

"On my way, my fear subsided because it was great," Rolle said. "I felt very comfortable with pilot McPhee."

Once in Long Island, where Rigby has family, the friends did not do much at night, but they had a blast during the three days they were there, according to Rolle. They toured the island. They ate sheep tongue souse. They visited Columbus Monument. They had a stop at Dean's Blue Hole and checked out the festivities at the regatta site. But their fun-packed weekend took a tragic turn early Sunday, June 5, 2022 after McPhee took off from Deadman's Cay Airport around 9 a.m. with the three friends and three other women onboard — Patsy Higgs, Rhiannon Thomas and Aleithea Newbold, a 22-year-old mother of a six-month-old. Newbold was the only person

killed when the plane crashed in bushes about two miles from the airport. It has taken days for some survivors to even speak publicly about the incident. Not long after take-off, recalled Rolle, who had been sitting on the left side of the plane, an alarm went off and there was a flashing on the side of the aircraft.

"I realized that something was wrong, but I thought that maybe it was something like maybe the wing, something that wouldn't have been a huge deal," Rolle said.

"I was trying to remain as positive as possible. I didn't want to panic.

"At some point, the plane made some movements where I realized that all was not well. We did a nosedive after that and that's when I first started to realize the plane might be in danger of going down, but I still wasn't afraid. I was just processing everything, like in a very calm state."

She continued, "The pilot pulled the plane up. We were horizontal again and then the plane started to go down from the tail and that's when I really realized that this plane is going to go down and I accepted that."

Rolle said her friend, Bethel-Sears, grabbed her hand "and the look in her eyes was confirmation".

"I remember I closed my eyes because after the plane went down on the tail end, it started to lean severely on my side," Rolle said.

"I was sitting right behind the pilot and Nia was sitting right in front and then there was the door, and that's the moment I realized we were going to [crash]. I just closed my eyes, and I was holding Nia's hand.

"I had Nia's hand in my right hand and my phone in my left and I just closed my eyes and, honestly, all I remember was I felt that we had hit the ground, but that was all I felt. I didn't hear anything."

Asked what went through her mind as she held hands with her friend, Rolle said, "I was holding her hand trying to transfer onto her that I felt we were going to be OK. Not for one second did I think I was going to die. I just kind of surrendered to the moment and said 'OK', and it happened like two to three seconds after." Rolle added, "Rhiannon, she was unconscious upon impact and, unfortunately, Aleitheia Newbold was ejected from the plane upon impact, and I realized that as I was getting out of the plane because she had been sitting opposite the door."

They crawled out the plane as quickly as they could, fearing it would explode. Rolle said she remembers smelling fuel. After they got out, Rolle said, they were still afraid the plane may blow up. She, Bethel-Sears, and Higgs scrambled into nearby bushes. Rigby ran back to help the pilot who was administering CPR to Newbold after he called on her to assist.

"The only time I was afraid was when I thought that the plane might have blown and I wasn't sure how far we could get away because there was no space," Rolle said.

"The bush was dense. I just thought it was a race against time at that point and I was not afraid in that plane at all."

Rolle said she and the pilot were the only two who still had working cell phones after the crash. She said she immediately called 911 to get help, as did the pilot.

In the bushes, she said, she realized that Bethel-Sears and Higgs had significant injuries as they were having difficulties moving and breathing. Rolle said that since her injuries were minor, she tried hard to keep them calm and assured that help was on the way. She also called her parents and Bethel-Sears' parents. Meanwhile, she could hear McPhee and Rigby encouraging Newbold to hang on.

"All I heard them saying is 'You got to stay with us. You got to stay with us,'" she said, adding that she did not immediately realize that Newbold had not survived the crash.

“My first time seeing her was that day. It was just surreal. It could have been any of us. It was just a matter of seat placement and the series of events, but I felt terrible because I know Patsy in the bushes kept saying that she had a baby. I couldn’t imagine.”

Rolle said it was at least an hour before the first responders arrived and given where the plane had crashed — an area that was extremely difficult to access — she was surprised they arrived as quickly as they did.

“They had to come with cutlasses,” she added.

“They were breaking the branches with their hands. Someone had to come break branches to even help us get back to where the plane was because, at that point, they (Bethel-Sears and Higgs) couldn’t do a lot of bending under branches and they really couldn’t afford to be misstepping or falling because, at that point, we still didn’t know what was wrong and they were in great pain.”

Rolle is grateful to the rescuers who braved the harsh conditions to help them.

“I really appreciated the quick reaction of locals,” she said.

“I do want to say thank you to the Coast Guard. They were very empathetic and very professional.”

After being treated at the clinic in Long Island, they were transported via a US Coast Guard chopper to New Providence — finally arriving back home, but under circumstances they could never have imagined hours earlier. “Even though the pain is unimaginable that Aleitheia passed away, and I don’t know what that feels like [for her loved ones] and I feel terrible, it’s a miracle that people were able to walk away from a plane crash,” said Rolle, who works in the Sustainable Development Goals Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister.

“I can’t explain it. Only God knows. I do feel like God was with me on that plane because I am terrified of heights, and I can’t explain why I was not afraid, or I knew that I was going to be OK.”

The SAC alumni association is grateful for the safety of these alumnae and wishes them well for overcoming such a traumatic experience.

# Results from the Unca Lou Charity Golf Tournament

by Geno Nairn

The event that was held on Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at the Royal Blue Golf Course at the Baha Mar Hotel and Resort was an excellent day for golfing. The successful tournament had a field of 32 teams. Plans are to make the tournament an annual event. The following are the results of the tournament:

1<sup>st</sup> Place team: Richard Gibson Jr. and junior player Kerrington Rolle. The team had a gross score of 60, net score of 59 with a -13 under par carting off crystal trophies and first prize which was a 2 night stay at the Baha Mar Hotel with a free round of golf.

2<sup>nd</sup> Place team: John Hall and junior player Chemari Pratt had a net score of 62 with a -10 under par. The team received a 2 night stay at the Comfort Suites, Paradise Island.

3<sup>rd</sup> Place team: Kevin Marche and Capt. Lynford Miller. The team had a net score of 64 with a -8 under par. The team also won two 40" TV sets.

Junior player Chase Newbold, (11years old) won the Men's Longest Drive. His prize was 2 Bahamas Air Tickets and a one week stay at Westgate Resort in Orlando, Florida.

Junior player Miranda Tucker won the Women's Longest Drive. Her prize was 2 nights stay a Breezes Resorts and 2 tickets on Western Air.

Junior player Tiar Gibson won the Straightest Drive of the Competition. The prize was a BTC cell phone.

Just missing out on winning the grand prize, a \$63,000, 2022 BMW X1 was Jim Laroda. He was the closest to the pin on hole #12.



# President's Column

## NEW! News from the SAC Alumni Association

We made a decision coming into office to restore alumni confidence in our alumni association. To start that process we had to make all our transactions transparent to our dues paying members and be accountable for all monies entrusted to us for various initiatives.

Receiving our certificate has been a long time coming but finally we got it!

We are a legitimate organization that can operate on the same level as any other NGO. It is our intent to formulate strategies to leverage our revenue generation capacity and access grants that may be available to us.

To that effect, any alum who are grant writers please contact us at our alumni office 242-397-1744, alumni cell 242-826-0312 or via email: [thesacalumni@gmail.com](mailto:thesacalumni@gmail.com)

One other exciting update is that our new alumni merchandise is in stock. The new shirts come in red or white, they are sublimated and dri-fit. We have ordered a limited amount. So, they are available while supplies last, but if they go well we may order more.

I would suggest purchasing via MobileAssist to automatically secure your order as inventory is updated. Or come to the office and purchase. Also, these run a bit large so there is a bit more room, see the designs below:



## The New SACAA Shirts are in Stock

Sizes M-XL are \$35 2XL are \$40



# The SAC Alumni Association receives its Non-profit organization status



## List of Alumni Business Partners

Business Name	Alumni	Contact
Braynen's Maintenance & Lanscaping	Levio Braynen Jr.	428-2751 / 341-1751 / 421-7942
The Captain's Deck	Chima Johnson	603-0384
Jay Fitness	Donovan Jason Rolle	359-1156
Sideline Entertainment	Jerome Smith	455-2507
BGG Wow Bags	Bolera Glinton	428-1209
Prestige Events and Bar Services	Benson Russell	427-3560 / 451-6188
Caribbean Sweat	Macumbula Smith	803-5783
ALBREEZE Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Mechanical Contractors	Paul and Lakeisha Albury	394-1341 / 477-1341
Shindingzzz	Tamara Knowles	466-1566
Drifters at Da' Fry	Ricardo Williams	603-3474
Handling Your Health Wellnes & Rehab	Dr. Kitiboni Rolle Adderley	322-5496
HearLife Bahamas	Dr. Kim Scriven	302-4754 / 328-8411 (4754)
Bonaventure Medical Laboratory	Bonnie Culmer	328-3518
E-Man-U-Well Medical Center	Norad Morgan and Sean Knowles	393-9355
Bay Street Medical	Dr. Tyneil Cargill	326-5230
Daddy Joe's	Tiffany Johnson	335-5688
MobileAssist		451-7024
LetsParty242	Shamani Adderley and Irma Ferguson	454-7725 / 525-1249
Centreville Food Store	Horace Miller	325-8106
F&BH Inspections & Related Services	Dominic Bain	359-0811
RBNetwork	Raquel Beneby-Hart	804-4770 / 352-8525
Cia Monet Organic Candles Soaps & Scents	Patricia Chatti	(904)-300-5371 (WhatsApp)
Excel Dental	Jania Darville	428-3842
Live sounds entertainment	Marvin Cargill	395-5777
Hilltop Pharmacy	Gina Sands-Coakley	603-1801
Mama Sassy's gourmet foods	Cherelle Cartwright	809-0720
HR Career Centre	Nadene Charlton	376-8823 / 327-8398
Fries with Benefits	Rakell Rolle	544-2009



# ALUMNI DUES



## HOW TO BECOME A FINANCIAL MEMBER

**1**

### VISIT

*[www.thesacalumniassociation.org](http://www.thesacalumniassociation.org)  
and Click " Become A Member"*

**2**

### PAY YOUR ANNUAL DUES

*Alumni Office*

*Auto mall, Toyota Showroom*

*M-F 9am - 5pm , Sat. 8:30am-1pm*

*Tel:242-397-1744*

*or*

*Direct Deposit:*

*First Caribbean Bank*

*or via MOBILE ASSIST APP*



### BENEFITS

*ALUMNI ID CARD*

*RETAIL & BUSINESS DISCOUNTS*

*\* MULTI-YEAR DUES PAYMENT OPTION AVAILABLE*



*[thesacalumni@gmail.com](mailto:thesacalumni@gmail.com)*



# WE'RE LOOKING FOR WRITERS!

*Share your thoughts, support and congratulations, invite fellow alumni into your SAC memories or pay tribute to a fellow alumnus!*

Call us at (242) 397-1744 Or email [thesacalumni@gmail.com](mailto:thesacalumni@gmail.com) for more information.

*Articles will be featured in our upcoming E-Newsletter or on our website [www.thesacalumniassociation.org](http://www.thesacalumniassociation.org)*