

# Third-Annual April Pools' Day at Eatonville Community Pool

by J. Lajuana Miller

Dozens of children and families made a splash at Eatonville Community Pool on Saturday, April 4th, for the third-annual April Pools' Day.

The event, hosted by the Alma Swim Foundation, in partnership with the Town of Eatonville and Courageous Leap Inc., provided an engaging and exciting outlet for young swimmers to learn more about water safety and its importance. From Storytime to poolside games, April Pools' Day offered activities for everyone — deep-end divers and toe-dippers alike.

But the Alma Swim Foundation's aim goes beyond teaching swim strokes. The nonprofit organization provides representation for the community's children, giving them role models and creating safe spaces for them to thrive.

Many of the swim instructors reside in cities across the country and flew in so April Pools' Day could be put on this year. Alma's founder, Danielle Hodge, wanted to ensure Black swim instructors could impart their guidance and uphold the organization's mission for those in attendance.

"The instructors are not just attending; they're passionate about ensuring the Black community understands the importance of learning these skills," Danielle said. "It's impactful for the Eatonville community to see themselves reflected in their instructors, emphasizing the need for more representation in this space."



Photography by Ramzy Hicks and Dae Crenshaw

3rd Annual **APRIL POOLS DAY**

SWIM INSTRUCTOR LINE UP

SHANA LORDE  
Fort Lauderdale, FL  
@LetUsSwim

SHYDONNA TOSSIE  
Orlando, FL  
@TheChocolateMermaid

COACH Q  
Fort Lauderdale, FL  
@SwimmingWithCoachQ

ADRIENNE WESLEY  
Atlanta, GA  
@SwimLifeFitness

COACH KALVIN  
Houston, TX  
@EquestrianSwimCoach

TAYLOR HARRIS  
Decatur, GA  
@EatSleepSwimTlh

Founded in 2023, the nonprofit organization primarily works with Black children, addressing the gap in access to affordable swimming lessons. Black children aged 10-14 are nearly seven times more likely to drown in pools than white children in the same age group, and the average cost to teach someone to swim is anywhere between \$300 and \$600, depending on if an adult or child needs private or semi-group lessons.

Events like April Pools' Day work to address these disparities by emphasizing drowning-prevention education, affordable lessons, and making swimming a safe and joyful experience for Black children and their families.

To learn more about the Alma Swim Foundation and its mission, visit <https://www.almaswim.org/>.