



October 2022

# THE DEEP BENCH

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of African American Affairs

The Office of African American Affairs is proud to recognize the many Black professionals throughout New Mexico who are committed to impacting the lives of Black New Mexicans. Their education, expertise, and experience have poised them to be leaders in their careers, in the public and private sectors.

Each month we recognize individuals, spotlighting their accomplishments and their impact on New Mexico. If you would like to nominate a Black professional (including yourself) to be in the Deep Bench, please send your name and contact information to [Charlycia.Strain1@state.nm.us](mailto:Charlycia.Strain1@state.nm.us)



## Courtney McCary-Squyres

**Courtney McCary-Squyres** is the wife to James Squyres and mother of four. Courtney and James arrived to New Mexico in July of 2018 for James to serve at his duty station for his time in the Air Force. During the spring of 2020 Courtney began to learn the ins and outs of gardening as a way to get outdoors, support her mental health and engage in some low impact exercise to help with heart rehabilitation after overcoming heart failure in the latter half of her most recent pregnancy.

After lots of learning experiences, trial and error and determination be successful at growing a garden in the harsh New Mexico high desert, Courtney found the learning process and harvest to be a source of joy, fulfillment and even a sense of grounding during the unpredictable times of the pandemic. Courtney and James have since been working on transforming the front and back yards of the Squyres home in to a productive micro farm able to service two local farmers markets as well as small roadside farm stand.

### **Degree and Alma Mater:**

Bachelor Of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences, Tarleton State University

### **Current Position:**

Owner/Operator of Squyre Studio Suburban Microfarm

### **Community Involvement:**

Alamogordo Community Garden, Active member of Christian Joy Center, Farmers Market, The Local Bodega Spring Seeding and Gardening Class Facilitator.

Courtney takes joy in sharing handcrafted bouquets, a variety of naturally grown fruits and vegetables and homemade baked goods with patrons of her roadside farm stand as well as with community members who visit her vendor table at the local Otero County and Alamogordo farmers markets.

Courtney hopes to be able to start a Community Supported Agriculture or CSA program in the coming year to be able to provide bi-weekly fresh produce boxes for local area families as well as be able to raise awareness and increase participation at her city's community garden. Courtney's desire is to be able inspire others to find joy and peace in the garden and as she says in her YouTube sign off, to always "keep learning and keep growing."

**What do you want your influence on the NM Black Community to Be?** To be able to inspire members and physical health benefits of enjoying the outdoors.

**What can NM do to attract more Blacks to our state?** I think if New Mexico had more career advancement opportunities outside of just the larger cities and military that could help.

**What do you believe are the strengths of the NM Black Community?**

Creating readily available and accessible resources to help unite the NM Black community as well as creating opportunities to participate in community building activities.

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