

Building A Better Future

An Interview with Monica Taylor, Founder and Owner, Monuit, and Vice President, Jason Taylor Foundation



Monica Taylor

EDITORS' NOTE Monica Taylor is the owner and designer of Monuit (shopmonuit.com), a sleepwear company, and serves as Vice President at The Jason Taylor Foundation.

FOUNDATION BRIEF Jason Taylor is a legendary Miami Dolphins Defensive End and 2007 NFL Man of the Year. From his humble beginnings as a Pittsburgh youth serving as a missionary, to his endless hours of community involvement as an NFL superstar, he has always given something of himself to those less fortunate. In July 2004, his philanthropy inspired him to establish the Jason Taylor Foundation (jasonaylorfoundation.com), a 501 (c)(3) organization. The Foundation's mission is to support and create programs that facilitate the personal growth and empowerment of South Florida's children in need by focusing on improved healthcare, education and quality of life. Since opening its doors, the Jason Taylor Foundation has contributed nearly \$6,000,000 in programs and services to benefit youth. Holtz Children's Hospital officially renamed its recreational and educational facility "The Jason Taylor Children's Learning Center," 50 middle school students have been awarded college scholarships as a result of the Foundation's work with Take Stock in Children and nearly 1,500 youth athletes have received "scholarships" to participate in the Jason Taylor Football Camp, experiencing hours of expert instruction on the fundamentals of football. The Jason Taylor Foundation prides itself on innovative, impactful programming. Every September, 60

deserving children are each given a \$300 back-to-school shopping opportunity at Old Navy as part of the "Cool Gear for the School Year" program. To date, more than \$200,000 in new clothes has been awarded. Currently, more than 75 middle and high school students participate in the Jason Taylor Reading Room, a comprehensive after-school program designed to address academic challenges among inner-city youth, particularly in the areas of literacy, and the program recently expanded to a second location. The Reading Room also features a Spoken Word Poetry component that incubated a full-blown network, now featuring more than 50 public schools throughout Broward County. The blueapple Poetry Network is rapidly expanding into other school districts with the launch of Louder Than a Bomb Florida, which brings school-based poetry teams together to showcase this art form through a friendly competition, while providing teens from diverse backgrounds a common vehicle for written and performance-based self-expression.

Will you discuss your career journey?

My career journey has been both entrepreneurial and purpose-driven. I'm the founder and owner of Monuit, a sleepwear company I launched in 2020. In addition to running my business, I also serve as the vice president of the Jason Taylor Foundation. Balancing these roles has allowed me to pursue my passion

for building a brand while also contributing to meaningful work that impacts children and families in our community.

How do you define the mission of the Jason Taylor Foundation?

The Foundation's mission is to support and create programs that facilitate the personal growth and empowerment of South Florida's children in need by focusing on improved healthcare, education and quality of life.

Will you provide an overview of the Jason Taylor Foundation programs?

We have many programs at the Foundation. The longest-running is our Reading Room in Miramar, while our largest program is the Omari Hardwick blueapple Poetry Network which operates in schools throughout the tri-county area and even beyond in some cases. As part of blueapple, we hold an annual, month-long poetry festival/competition entitled Louder Than a Bomb Florida. We also have our Careers in Sports initiative – which has really taken off; Cool Gear for the School Year; and the Jason Taylor Learning Center at the Holtz Children's Hospital. These programs all run at different times throughout the year, but all support our mission to better these children's education, healthcare, and quality of life.

What was the vision for creating one of the Foundation's signature initiatives, Monica's Runway: Fashion for a Cause?



Monica Taylor (second from left) with husband, Jason, 2025 Jason Taylor Community Hall of Fame Youth Honoree, Michael Berry, and Joy Taylor at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino



Monica Taylor (center), a former Miami Dolphins cheerleader, joined by a host of current members of the Dolphins cheer squad at a Jason Taylor Foundation event

Monica's Runway was created to help fund the Jason Taylor Reading Room, our free after-school program at New Renaissance Middle School in Miramar. The Reading Room operates throughout the school year for two hours each day and is supported by our educational director, teachers, and teacher aides. It exists to serve students who are struggling academically – many of whom don't have access to tutoring or additional support outside of school.

A few years ago, we lost the program's primary source of funding, and that's when Monica's Runway was born. I wanted to bring together a group of women who believed in our mission and could help us raise the money needed each year to keep this incredible program running. Monica's Runway has become a meaningful way to support the students we serve at the school year-round.

How do you measure success for the Jason Taylor Foundation?

This is an interesting question, because as a football family, so often success is purely measured in wins. But "wins" and success look different in nonprofit work. Sometimes you see the ultimate success story over a period of time – a troubled kid who finds purpose, goes to college, and becomes a working professional with a family, and everything you dream for someone when you invest in them. Or maybe it is a former student who now works for the foundation, paying it forward to others through the same programming that inspired them. Other times the wins are smaller and more immediate. The smiles of the kids we support at our annual back-to-school events, or a hug from a hospitalized child who we give a Christmas gift to. Ultimately, if our work remains true to our mission, I see success.

Where did you and your husband, Jason, develop your passion for philanthropy?

Jason is from Pittsburgh while I'm a Miami girl. So many of our life experiences, especially growing up, were different, but something that

was instilled in both of us was the importance of caring for others and for giving back – especially when it comes to helping young people. It truly is a part of who we are and so I would say it is a shared passion.

How do you focus your time and efforts with the Foundation?

Outside of being a mother and a wife, the Foundation is one of my highest priorities. It genuinely brings me happiness and joy. I don't view it as work – I see it as a lifelong commitment to something I want to help grow and flourish. Supporting the Foundation and serving as vice president feels natural to me. It's incredibly meaningful to be part of something that makes such an impact on the lives of these children.

With all that the Jason Taylor Foundation has achieved, are you able to take moments to reflect on its impact?

Every event I attend – every visit to the students in our Reading Room, every toy drive, every fundraiser, every gala – gives me a moment to reflect on how far the Foundation has come and how much it has grown. I'm constantly in awe. What we do, day in and day out, is truly something special, and I never take for granted the impact it has on the children and families we serve. ●



Monica Taylor delivers a gift to a young patient at Holtz Children's Hospital