

Deputy Mayor pens autobiography



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Shelburne Deputy Mayor Steve Anderson has added the title of author to his list of accomplishments after penning a self-published autobiography, *Driven to Succeed*.

More than a year in a half in the works, Anderson celebrated the official launch of his debut book on Tuesday (Oct. 12), and said he hopes it will serve as a source of inspiration for readers facing difficult obstacles and setbacks.

"I wanted to reach out to folks who may be doubting [themselves] because of their circumstances ? where they come from, what they look like, and their financial status ? and let them know that I faced many of the same difficulties," said Anderson. "Yet, despite all the things that happened to me, I had the continuous mindset and drive to succeed."

Driven to Succeed, starts with Anderson's experiences and struggles growing up in the Jane and Finch community during the mid-80s, and continues through his life becoming a young father, the first Black lawyer at the TTC, and a member of Shelburne

Town Council.

Familiar with sharing his life story through numerous speaking engagements, Anderson began writing his autobiography at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. He recalls sitting on his mother's bed in her Brampton home and seeing a notepad and pen sitting on the dresser.

"I picked it up and just started writing from there," he explains. "I had a lot on my plate and didn't previously have the time to do it, but the pandemic, like for most people, slowed a lot of things down and the thought came to me that I was going to do it now."

While the stories that Anderson shares throughout the book tend to arrive with humble endings, he also doesn't shy away from sharing difficult experiences such as his father's departure from his family, and being guilty by association for crimes as a teen.

Anderson said the book is all revealing, but also noted the difficulty in sharing those details.

"There was the challenge from the very beginning to be authentic all the way through, to be able to get the response that I was hoping I would get, and certainly that I felt the reader should get after we go through it."

A continued topic brought up by Anderson in the book, is the idea of "fitting in".

"Many of us find ourselves wanting to be liked, sometimes we don't act like ourselves or we act the way we perceive a group wants us to, and we tend to lose ourselves," said Anderson. "There were times where I felt like I wasn't really being myself just because I wanted to be accepted. As I've become older and further advanced in my career I started to make it a point to try to resist that temptation of losing myself, just to gain acceptance into a group."

Amongst his recanted experiences and words of guidance, Anderson said his favourite chapter to write was the final one - a tribute to his mother.

"None of what anybody sees today would have been possible without what she was able to do for me and my family," said Anderson.

With *Driven to Succeed* officially launched, Anderson is now gearing up for a number of local events to promote it. Anderson will be appearing at the Orangeville Library on Oct. 22, and the Shelburne Library on Oct. 27. He is also scheduled for a virtual discussion with the Dufferin County Canadian Black Association (DCCBA) on Oct. 27.

Driven to Succeed, is available for purchase through Booklore in Orangeville, and Amazon.