



## **Will Jawando**

### **Topics**

Activism and Social Justice, Criminal Justice, Education, Education and Parenting, Inspirational Speakers, Politics and Pundits

### **Travels From**

Maryland

### **Bio**

Will Jawando is an attorney, activist, and community leader with a lifelong dedication to public service. His career has been crafted by a unique combination of grit, compassion, and integrity. Born in Silver Spring, Maryland to a Nigerian father and white Kansan mother, Will's bi-racial identity gave him an appreciation for the varied experiences life in America can bring. Raised in a low-income household, he was determined to secure a successful future for himself through the pathway of education. When he was a teenager, tragedy struck when one of his best friends was killed in a senseless act of gun violence. The aftermath of this ordeal would be the catalyst that would solidify Will's commitment to becoming an agent of change through public service. With unwavering dedication, he earned a B.A. in Sociology from Catholic University of America and completed his J.D. from their prestigious Columbus School of Law. While attending Catholic University, he started the first NAACP chapter on their campus – a move that would chart the course for his burgeoning career in law and politics. Described as “the progressive

leader we need” by revered civil rights activist and Congressman, John Lewis, Will has worked with House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senator Sherrod Brown, and then-Senator Barack Obama. During the 8-year Obama Administration, Will had the honor of serving as Associate Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement, followed by a position as an advisor to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. He has worked tirelessly to ensure a quality education, opportunities for prosperity and guaranteed civil rights are available to every American. Will has also served as Director of Corporate Affairs at Discovery Communications, Inc. and in 2018, was elected and sworn-in as an at-large Montgomery County Councilmember. It’s Will’s family and friends that keep him grounded and focused on what’s most important in life. A devoted husband and father of four beautiful children, his family is his greatest achievement. He and his wife Michele work together to create a loving and safe environment for their children and won’t rest until Americans everywhere can have the same.

## SPEECHES

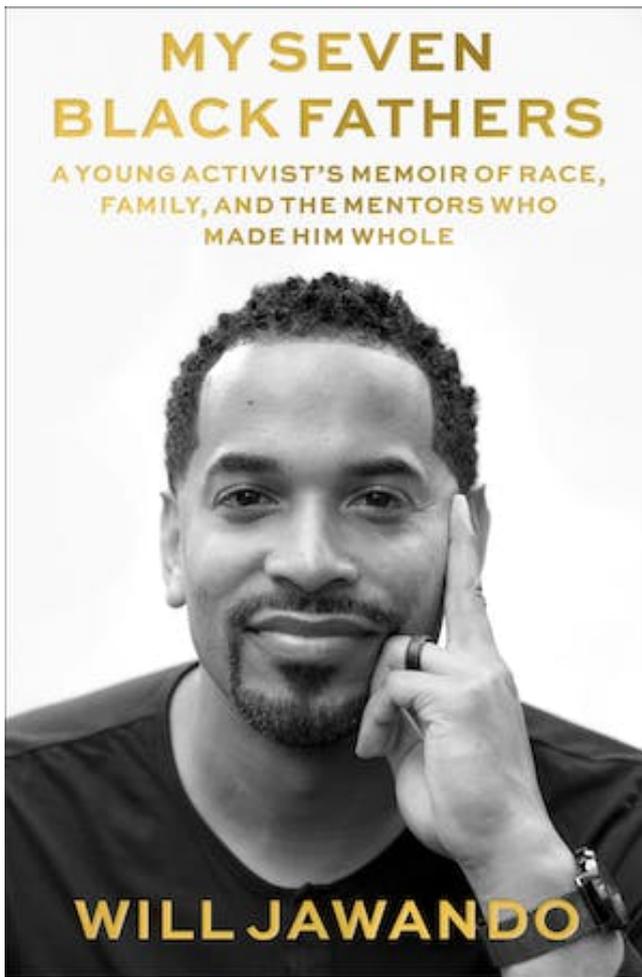
***My Seven Black Fathers*, May 2022 Politics, Policy, Fatherhood, Mentorship, Race, Criminal Justice, Civil Rights, Education and Housing policy**

## BOOKS

[My Seven Black Fathers](#) A Young Activist's Memoir of Race, Family, and the Mentors Who Made Him Whole

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Will Jawando tells a deeply affirmative story of hope and respect for men of color at a time when Black men are routinely stigmatized.



## HARDCOVER

**REVIEWS: Praise for *My Seven Black Fathers*** "There is nowhere near enough writing about the inner lives of Black folks. Will Jawando's story is a necessary and important contribution to our understanding of Black men's grief, pain, and fulfillment. The story of the men who stepped in and helped raise Will not only shows us how present and capable Black men can be and already are within the Black community, but also provides us with an emotional template for Black male interventions that matter, that change the lives of Black boys and young men."

—Michael Eric Dyson, New York Times–bestselling author of *Tears We Cannot Stop* and *What Truth Sounds Like*

"Research tells us that Black boys who have access to Black fathers and mentors in their communities have a much better chance of navigating the world successfully and overcoming systemic racism to achieve their full potential. Will Jawando's story poignantly demonstrates this point but also provides critical insight into the form and structure of these relationships, and the power they have to not only transform the lives of Black boys but to rebuild whole communities."

—Arne Duncan, former U.S. Secretary of Education

"Will Jawando's book, *My Seven Black Fathers*, speaks urgently to the moment. In walking us through his recovery from the wounds of his own father loss, he speaks to our potential for healing as a people

and to the incredible resources for becoming whole that are already contained within our communities.  
His book is the key to unlock that healing."

—Jelani Cobb, author of *The Substance of Hope: Barack Obama and the Paradox of Progress*

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