

Joy Allen of E3 Personal Defense

By ICON Staff on Monday, August 14, 2023



Let's welcome an entrepreneur who is forging a path for others like herself to pursue confidence, training and careers in an untraditional space.

**Pleasure to have you join us, Joy. Please tell us about what you do at E3 Personal Defense.**

My name is Joy Allen and I am the proud owner of E3 Personal Defense & Safety, LLC, based in Raleigh, North Carolina. We are a firearms training organization offering crime prevention programs, community outreach initiatives, and professional, customized firearms training – everything from beginner courses through instructor certification. E3 Personal Defense is also the parent organization to InHER Piece Ladies' Shooting Clubs, founded in 2020.

Excellence in empowerment education is our standard. I am blessed to have the first of many in this journey, I was the first black female instructor in our state to become a certified training counselor. The training counselor designation allows one to certify instructors. I was also the first black instructor to hold many other certifications, and am currently the only black female instructor in the state certified by four national organizations – NRA, USCCA, NAAGA, and Rangemaster.

As you can see, I'm still a student, and that will not change. I often say, "Being the first is hard. But if you do it right, you won't be the last!" I take that VERY seriously. I am doing what I do so others can do so with less strain and more success!



#### Sounds like you've accomplished a lot! What sparked your interest in firearms training?

I'm passionate about disrupting spiritual, professional, and economic spaces! While "disruption" may sound a bit harsh, that really means that I enjoy making room for others that have not been traditionally welcome at certain tables. In this case, I'm referring specifically to the world of firearms and Second Amendment rights. For women of color, this is a space where disruption has been long overdue.

I fell in love with shooting handguns in 2016. I did all the "right" things by visiting gun stores, practicing at the range, and taking a ton of courses. One thing became quite clear: there was no one around who looked like me or shared my culture. As a Black woman, I felt isolated. After sitting in one too many classes where I was forced to stare at a Confederate flag, I realized that I could make a change and a difference!

So, I found some amazing mentors, continued to join gun clubs to sharpen my skills, and in 2017, launched E3 Personal Defense & Safety, LLC. To take things a step further, I also founded InHER Piece, LLC, in 2020. This gun club was created specifically to attract women of color to the shooting sports and professional opportunities, such as firearms instruction. Our goal has always been to ensure EVERY woman has access to the tools, education, and information necessary to safely exercise her Second Amendment rights.



Right now, my focus is on seeking support to keep this movement going. I am interested in networking and partnering with other organizations to ensure education for under-represented populations does not dwindle. To me, this is not about a gun – it's about confidence. When people don't seek to understand or exercise their rights, the root cause is typically a mindset, culture, or underlying feeling of unworthiness. We need to deal with that as a community, even as a country! Our creed declares that all men are created equal, but we don't govern ourselves accordingly. We must change that.

**Joy, you are doing an amazing job making a change. What has helped shape your success?**

I know many say it, but I'm so serious when I declare that God is the reason for my success. I've been in ministry since 2002, and to me, this is ministry. I've been able to meet incredible people who have all contributed to my success thus far. I don't take that for granted. My Father definitely made this possible. I just thought I was going to learn to shoot my little Glock, but the vision, the passion, and the gifts to make this happen – all God!

I also have to say that my husband and children have all supported me tremendously along this journey. It seemed crazy at first, yet they stood close and have worked alongside me to build something great. I am thankful!

To me, success is all about legacy. I look around at all of the students I've been able to educate, the ladies that are empowered, and the women of color who are now teaching others. That's my legacy, and I'm so proud of that!

**We're proud of you too, Joy. Thank you for sharing your story today, is there anything you'd like to add for our readers?**

Wherever you are in life, don't forget your purpose. You were placed on this earth to make a difference, every single day! Be unapologetically authentic. Take up space, and make sure the world knows you are here!







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