

Forward to: **Broward County Historic Preservation Board** (Email: hpb@broward.org)
Or C/O Rick Ferrer, Historic Preservation Officer
Broward County, Urban Planning Division
1 North University Drive, Box 102, Plantation, FL 33324

2023 PIONEER DAY NOMINATION AND BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM

Your input is requested for the following awards categories also recognized on Pioneer Day:

- **Judge Clayton Nance Memorial Award** – This award is presented to a person or group devoted to the study and/or promotion of local history.

Nominee name and brief reason for nomination: Trailblazers of Broward County, Inc. See attached background information.

Nominee contact information (mailing address, email, phone number): Derek Davis, dtyrone914@gmail.com, 954-549-4713
--

- **Dr. Cooper C. Kirk Award** – This award is presented to a person or group that have published works highlighting our local history and/or historical research.

Nominee name and brief reason for nomination:

Nominee contact information (mailing address, email, phone number):

- **Stuart P. McIver Historian's Award** – This award is presented to a person or group who has contributed to the mission of historic property conservation, rehabilitation, restoration or preservation.

Nominee name and brief reason for nomination:

Nominee contact information (mailing address, email, phone number):

Trailblazers Of Broward County Begins Research Project

In 1908, Beau Cummings, a local community organizer and Mary Black Razor, a retired Broward county teacher, recruited and organized sixty sons, daughters and relatives of former black pioneers. Initially they met for the purpose of reliving the past life of blacks in Fort Lauderdale and to make plans for a social event, however after several meetings, it was agreed to expand those efforts to include blacks within the entire county. They named themselves "Trailblazers of Broward County, Inc. "

The general purpose is to recapture information substantiating the achievement made by black county residents during the period 1900 to the present and to promote public understanding and appreciation of achievements made.

The Social Science department at BCC was contacted during the initial organizational period and under the leadership of Dr. Winston Thompson, Associate Dean of the college, is supporting the efforts of the Trailblazers.

Along with BCC, the City of Fort Lauderdale's City Commission awarded the group \$10,000 in startup funds.

Over the years, the organization has conducted oral history interviews, produced plays, managed the erection of monuments (such as the Sankofa Bird on Sistrunk Boulevard), hosted community events (such as the Dixie Court Family Reunion), and assisted other organizations with documenting the history of Fort Lauderdale and Broward County.

Currently, the Trailblazers meet each month at the Old Dillard Museum.

For information regarding the organization and/or its activities, please contact Derek Davis at 954-549-4713.



Trailblazer Research Projects Sample

1. Original Trailblazers Group Interview

- Researcher - Dr. Marvin Dunn
- Interviewees - 60 yrs and older black residents of Ft. Lauderdale
- Research Objective - a search down memory lane of historical experiences
- Number of Participants - 40
- Location of interview session - AARLC (African American Research Library & Cultural Center)

2. Second Research Project

- Researcher - Dr. Kitty Oliver
- Interviewees - longtime residents of Ft. Lauderdale's black community
- Research Objective - select and interview offspring / decedents and relatives of deceased black residents of Ft. Lauderdale and the achievements and outstanding contributions toward the development of the city
- Number of interviewees - 45
- Location of interview sessions - AARLC
- Project Need - Transcriptions need to be completed (45 interviews)
- Project duration - 6 months
- Interviews archived in the Special Collections section at AARLC

3. Project Continuation

- Interviews - 35
- Research Coordinator - Lillian Small
- Location of interviews - AARLC
- Project duration - 5 months

Interviews Benefits to the Community:

- Research data - basis for theatrical script
- Purpose of the theatrical script - to dramatize the lifestyle and experiences of blacks during the late 1920's through the 1960's
- Script writer- Tony Thompson
- Script title - Echoes Through the MGM Seasons (Mangos, Guava, and Mullet)
 - Dramatic presentations - 2 performances
- Performance locations - downtown Main Library and AARLC
 - Total attendance - 650
- Performance was videotaped and reproduced on DVD. DVD copies are available to interested residents. DVD copies were available for sale to the general public



Trailblazer Research Projects

4. Fourth Project- Highlighted Public Housing and its impact on Ft. Lauderdale's community
 - Historical data on Old Dixie Court Housing project and its residents
 - Writers - Lillian Small / Don Mizell
 - Historical stories of life within and around the public housing community were placed in the Trailblazers records
 - Project duration - 5 days
 - Community legacy - naming and dedicating a public housing community center after a deceased community activist and pioneer, Ivory Mizell

5. Proposed Fifth Project
 - Project name - Historical Black Women and their Impact on Ft. Lauderdale's black community (Trailblazers Ring of Honor)
 - Project partnerships - Broward College Black Student Union