

A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF GAINESVILLE: A WORK IN PROGRESS

For countless generations, Native Americans lived in the region known today as North Central Florida. When the first Spanish invaders arrived in the 1500s, this land was inhabited by Timucuan cultures consisting of 15 separate communities who all spoke a common language. The Potano occupied most of present-day Alachua County and raised corn, beans, and tobacco.



Potano villages began having to accommodate Diocesan priests and Franciscan missionaries from St. Augustine. Fr. Martin Prieto establishes the missions of San Francisco and Santa Fe in what is now Alachua County, where missionaries worked to convert the Potano and other Native Americans to Christianity. The Spanish established a large cattle ranch called Rancho de la Chua on the northern rim of Alachua Savannah. The ranch grew for fifty years and was known as the largest cattle ranch in Florida, until it was raided by the English in 1702.



Hernando De Soto

1539

Hernando de Soto and his troops invade Potano territory, consuming produce and enslaving people. The Potano fought a massive, fourteen-hour battle near present-day Paynes Prairie, which they lost in the end.



1606-1655

1704-1708

Timucuan culture was destroyed by military intrusions and slave raids by the English militia and their Yamassee allies, as well as the ravages of diseases such as smallpox and measles. In the process, the English and Yamassee wiped out Spanish missions, and enslaved over 10,000 Timucuan.

1740

1783

England signs Treaty of Paris and Florida is returned to Spain.

Oconee tribe (later became Seminoles) led by Ahaya Secoffee "Cowkeeper" from central Georgia relocated to Alachua in response to Anglo encroachment. The Oconee tribe established their main village on Alachua Savannah and built Tuscawilla near present day Micanopy.



Ahaya Secoffee "Cowkeeper" (1710-1783)



Lake Pithlachocco / Newnans Lake

1812

1817-1818

First Seminole War between US armed forces against the Seminole Indians and the Black Seminoles. Several raids and military campaigns in North Florida and along the Florida-Georgia border.

Don Fernando de la Maza Arrendondo, a merchant from Havana, Cuba, receives a land grant to settle Alachua County and recruits White settlers to settle here.

1820

1821

United States claims legal ownership of Florida Territory.

Alachua County is created, originally stretching from the Georgia border through Central Florida Territory up until Port Charlotte. "In 1824, there were seventy Indians, living in ten houses in San Felasco—the fertile land outside Newnansville." At the time, the town was named Dell, not yet known as Newnansville.

1824



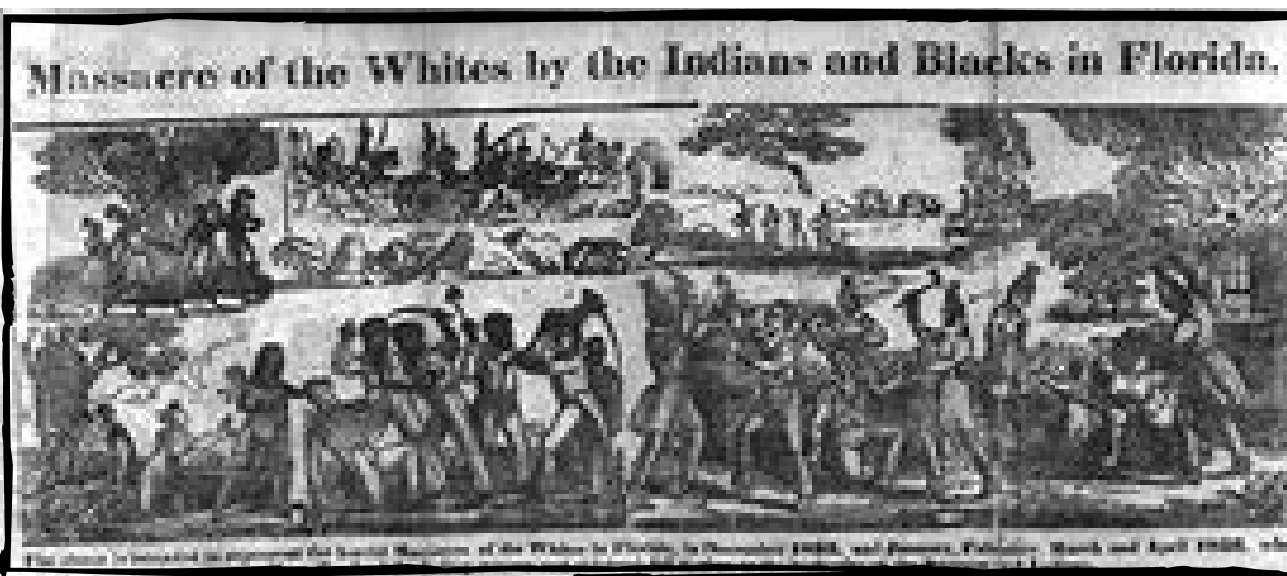
The legislature of the Florida Territory changed the name from Dell to Newnansville, which then became the Alachua County seat. However, the post office retained the name of Dell until 1837. "The name Newnansville was adopted in honor of Colonel Daniel Newnan of the Georgia militia who had led the troops in Alachua to fight the Indians."

1830

1828

President Jackson signs the Indian Removal Act, forcing all Native Americans to settle west of the Mississippi River.

1835



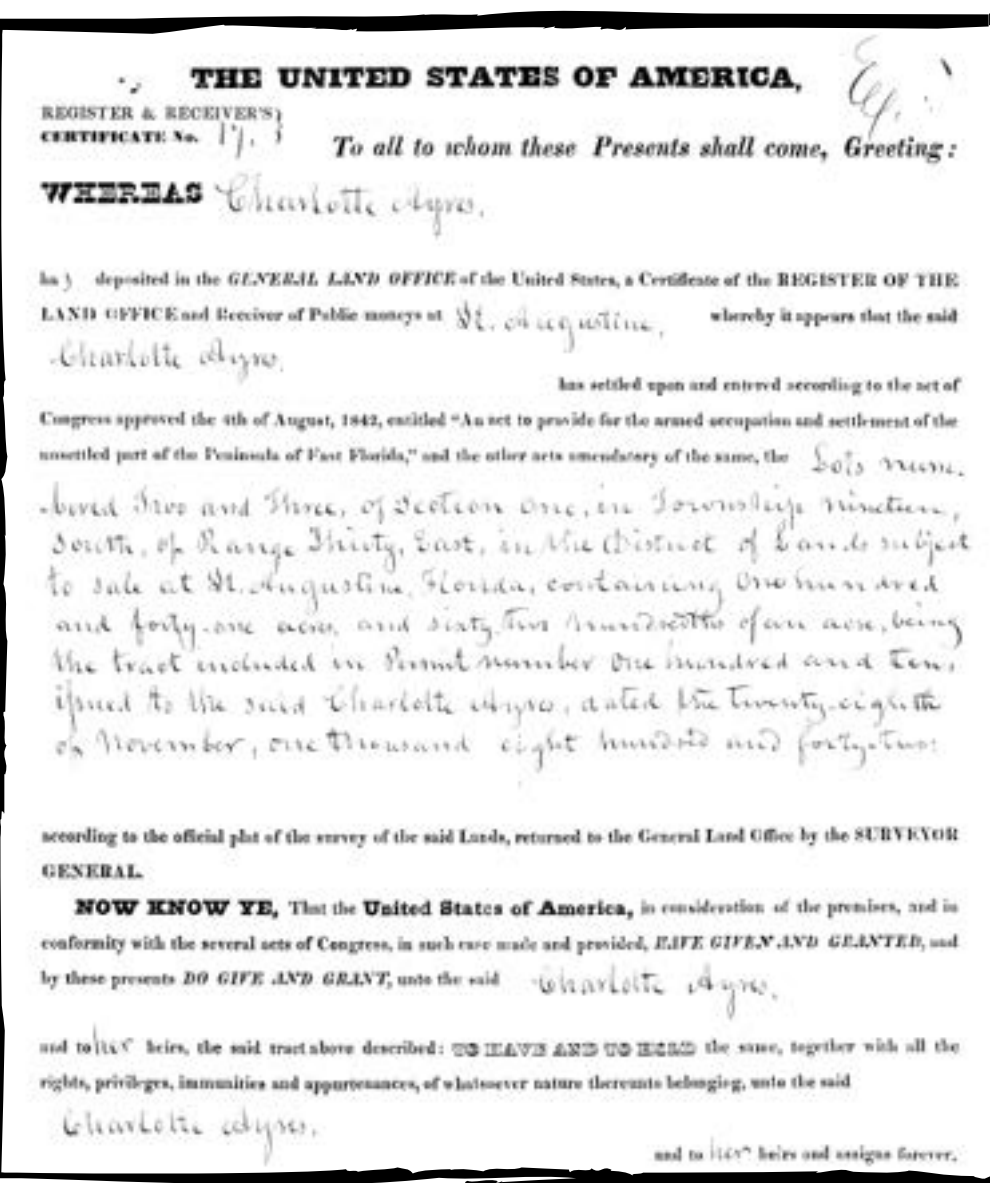
Beginning on Christmas Day and continuing into January 1836, more than 400 enslaved African Americans from across the region escape in the largest slave rebellion in US history. They joined forces with Black Seminoles and Seminole Indians to fight the US Army. After three years of fighting, Army officers negotiated a surrender, recognizing the freedom of maroons.

James Dell, a White settler and Captain of the Florida Militia asked the Territorial Council to assist in driving Seminole families out of the area. The United States government constructed Fort Gilleland, near Newnansville. "Its dimensions were large, it had flaring walls of double thickness, made of pine logs, firmly placed to prevent the enemy from scaling the walls. Roads were badly in need of repair, but the Indians had stopped this, even though the monies had been appropriated. And, by December, the Seminole War had begun."

1835

1835

1835-42



1842

President Jackson signs the Armed Occupation Act, which offers 160 acres of land to any man over 18 or head of household who can bare arms and registers through the Newnansville or St. Augustine offices. To receive the land title, Anglo settlers were required to hold and maintain the land for at least five years. The purpose of the arms requisite was the ability to raise an army quickly if needed.

Leaders of Seminole nations, the most prominent being Neamathla, negotiated the Treaty of Moultrie Creek which required a mass migration to the Creek reservation. The Treaty was not completely upheld by either party, and several battles resulted in thousands killed on both sides. Over 3,000 people were forcibly resettled by 1842, with only a few hundred still free.



Seminole Chief Neamathla

1850



A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF GAINESVILLE:

1850

Alachua County officials move the county seat from Newnansville to Gainesville.

1854

The 342 Union troops stationed in Gainesville, under the command of Colonel Andrew L. Harris, were attacked by 200 Confederate soldiers. Taken by surprise, the Union troops were defeated after 2 hours and forced out of town. Gainesville would remain in Confederate control for the rest of the Civil War.

FEB. 1864



Colonel Andrew L. Harris



Where the battle took place (Intersection of Main Street and University Avenue)

MAY 20, 1865

Emancipation was officially proclaimed in Tallahassee eleven days after the end of the Civil War, after the Third United States Colored Infantry liberates the city. This event was celebrated annually thereafter as Emancipation Day or "May Day." The celebrations paid homage to the survivors of slavery, who urged young people to take advantage of freedom and advance the entire community. May Day was one of the most important holidays in the African American community into the 20th century. By the 1890s in Gainesville, African American churches celebrated "Watch Night" services each New Years' Eve to commemorate the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.

AUG. 17, 1864

MAY 1865

The Third United States Colored Infantry Regiment was deployed to Gainesville. The protection of African American United States soldiers makes Alachua County a mecca for Black landownership and the possibility of racial uplift. The presence of Black soldiers—while it lasted—also lessened the possibility of violent White supremacist reprisals. As soon as the Black soldiers left Gainesville, White attacks on African American communities increased.



Photo of Glover and Gill's Grocery

APRIL 9, 1866

The Civil Rights Act of 1866: "All persons within the jurisdiction of the United States shall have the same right in every state and Territory to make and enforce contracts, to sue, be parties, give evidence, and to the full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of persons and property as is enjoyed by white citizens."

JAN. 1866



Union Academy

African American community leaders worked with the Freedmen's Bureau to establish Union Academy in Gainesville. It was the first school for African Americans in Alachua County, and started off with 175 students.

1867

Soon after the Civil War, African Americans began moving into the Fifth Avenue/ Seminary Street community of Gainesville, where they were able to purchase land to establish themselves. African American men in Gainesville and much of the South registered to vote for the first time. Although African American women could not vote, they played a major role in Black politics in Gainesville and throughout the South. Black women instructed their husbands, sons, and brothers to use the franchise on behalf of the entire community.

Four lynchings in Alachua County are documented: Cooley Johnson (Feb. 12) and George Bibbon in Newnansville, Harry Simonton in Micanopy, and Jacob Lee, near Wacahoota.

1867-68

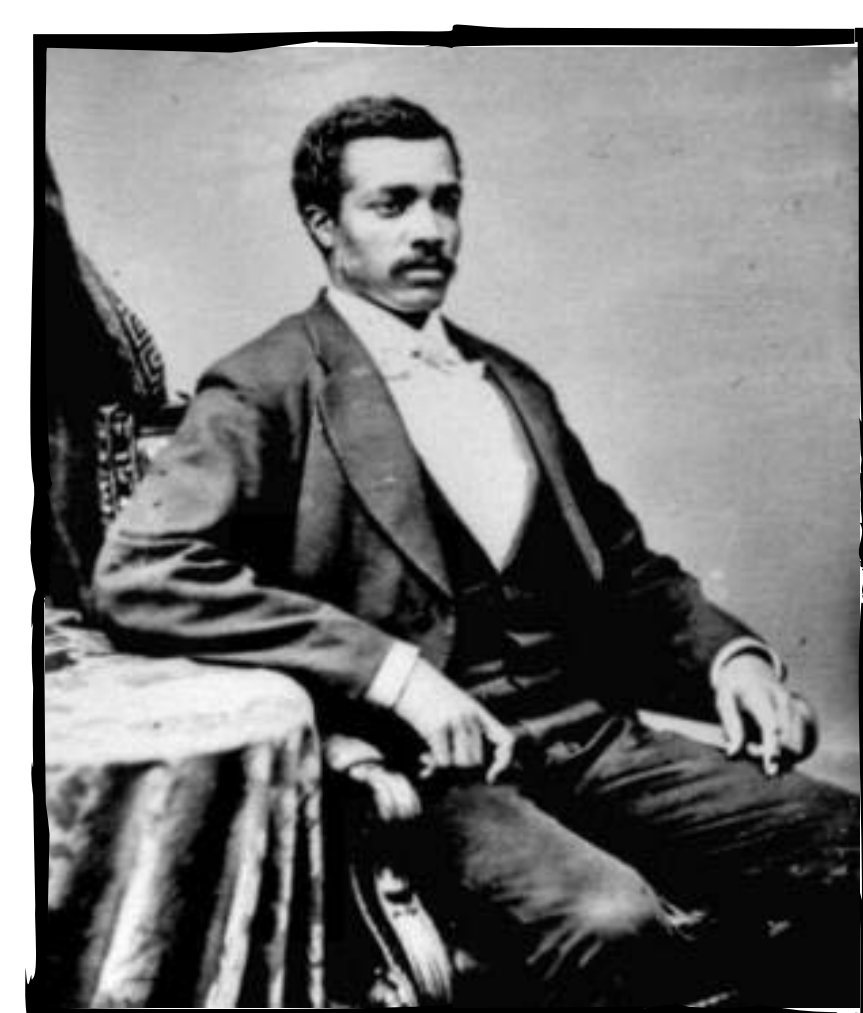
The Florida Ku Klux Klan is founded to terrorize African American communities, discourage Black land ownership, and to engage in voter suppression. William Stewart Simkins, a longtime law professor at the University of Texas, co-founded the KKK in Florida. He wrote: "Florida was more fortunately situated than other states to facilitate the operation of the Klan. The railroad from Tallahassee to Gainesville passed through the center of the black belt where we were most needed, and the conductors, engineers, and telegraph operators, being mostly Southern young men in hearty sympathy with us, never hesitated to carry out our orders."

1868

Five lynchings in Alachua County are documented: Moses Smith was lynched near Gordon on November 1. Harry Franklin and a person only known as "Stephens" were lynched in Gainesville. Wiley Bradley and Cesar (Caesar) Sullivan were lynched on October 12 in Newnansville.

JAN. 1868

Josiah T. Walls was one of 18 Black delegates sent to the 1868 Florida Constitutional Convention. A former mayor of Gainesville, he would later be elected as part of the first group of Black representatives sent to Congress as the sole representative for the entire State of Florida. His election was contested in 1870, and his opponent, Silas L. Niblack, replaced him. In 1872, he ran again and won uncontested.



Josiah T. Walls

1869



Liberty Hill Schoolhouse

The Liberty Hill Schoolhouse opened its doors to serve African American children of Gainesville. The one-room school remained in operation until the 1950s. On August 28, 2003, the school was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The current building is located at 7600 NW 23rd Avenue.

The town of Gainesville was incorporated.

Three lynchings in Alachua County are documented. Henry (Harry) Hurl and Joseph Hurl were lynched in Newnansville, and the 15-year-old son of Harry Harold was lynched at his home near Newnansville. The murderers were caught, indicted on November 23, tried, and acquitted

1870

Two lynchings in Alachua County are documented. Jim Jenkins was lynched near Wacahoota, and Christopher Cummings near Gainesville.



1871

Five documented lynchings in Alachua County. Sandy Hacock was lynched in Gainesville on September 14. A Jewish man, Alexander Morris, was hanged by a mob of Klan members in Gainesville on January 14. Henry Washington on October 7, Tom Williams on October 8 in Archer, and W. M. Lucy (a White person) on October 9 in Newnansville.

1874

In early May, an African American man named Eli was lynched at the Gainesville jail, where he was burned to death. The city's coroner was involved in the murder. The same year, Josiah T. Walls introduced a Congressional resolution in support of the Cuban War of Independence. He called for an end to slavery in Cuba, urging Congress to provide aid to the revolutionaries to help end "a crime against humanity... an institution repugnant to every sense of decency and right."

MAR. 1, 1875

The Civil Rights Act of 1875 was passed and signed into law, in an attempt to provide equal access to public facilities, transportation, and jury duty regardless of race.

1875



A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF GAINESVILLE:

1875



Sarah Lucretia Robb



Sarah Lucretia Robb came to Gainesville to be a "horse and buggy" doctor after being rejected by medical schools in the U.S. and getting her degree in Heidelberg, Germany. She was the first female doctor in the county.

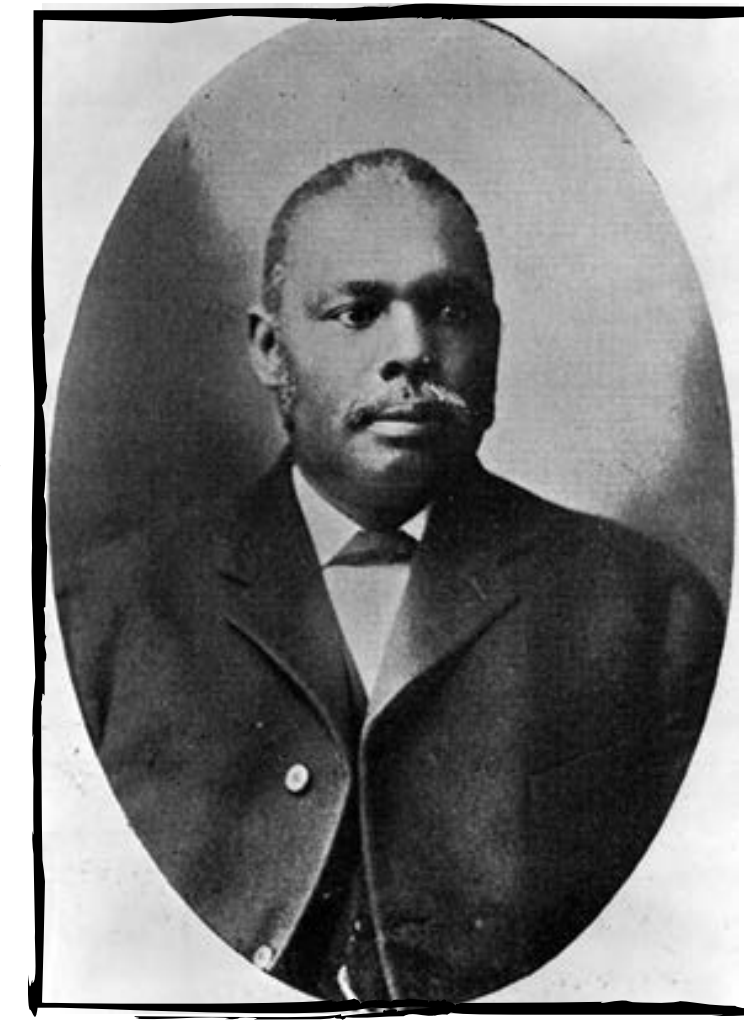
1882

MAR. 1883

In an 8-1 decision, the United States Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional, claiming the government cannot control corporations or individuals.

1884

Over 200 African American political activists representing 20 different counties gathered at Roper's Hall in Gainesville for an emergency meeting of the Colored Men's Conference to combat voter suppression and save democracy in Florida. The representatives formed an independent, interracial party. Keynote speaker James Dean presented a plan for slavery reparations that would help fund and build an equitable public education system in Florida. Matthew M. Lewey, a Civil War combat veteran and the mayor and postmaster of Newnansville, reported to national newspapers: "Here we come, the entire [N]egro population of Florida, asking our fellow American citizens irrespective of color or party proclivities to join you in the overthrow of the enemies of human and constitutional rights."



James Dean

1887

Matthew M. Lewey founded and worked as publisher for The Gainesville Sentinel and The Florida Sentinel. He was a leader of the 1884 Independent Party, the 1905 Pensacola Streetcar Boycott, and the 1919-1920 Florida Voter Registration Movement. He was a graduate of Lincoln University, and attended Howard University.



Matthew M. Lewey

Two lynchings in Alachua County are documented. On January 12, after a fight broke out at a tightrope walking performance, Henry Hinson was lynched by hanging in the Micanopy town square. An unknown African American boy was lynched by hanging in Waldo for suspicion of burglary and incendiarism.

1892

1891

Three lynchings in Gainesville are documented. Tony Champion and Michal Kelly (White) were taken from the Gainesville jail and lynched by hanging on February 17. Andrew Ford was lynched in the same way on August 24.

JAN. 12, 1894

Charles Willis was lynched at his home in Rochelle. After being injured, he was shot and burned to death in his bed.

1893

A thriving Cuban community threw a party for visiting composer Juventino Rosas and his orchestra. By the 1890s, about 300 Cubans lived in Gainesville at a time when the city's population was around 3,000. Up to four different cigar manufacturers operated during that time, with one of them employing about 100 people.

Alfred (Alfredo) Daniels was taken by a mob in Gainesville and lynched by hanging and gunshot. He was suspected of arson, and although there was no evidence, he had been arrested and was on the way to the jail when he was abducted.

NOV. 26, 1896

William Rawls was taken from the Newnansville jail and lynched by hanging and gunshot.

APR. 2, 1895

1904

African American women in Jonesville and other communities organized the Female Protective Society, a mutual aid organization whose mission was, and still is, "to help the sick and bury the dead."

1902

Two lynchings in Alachua County are documented. Manny Price and Robert (Bob) Scruggs were killed by a mob in Newberry. Mr. Price was accused of murder and Mr. Scruggs was a suspected accomplice. While on their way to jail, they were abducted by a mob and killed by hanging and gunshot.

The Black community held a great torchlight parade to celebrate Emancipation Day and sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and the "Star Spangled Banner," to the chagrin of White observers.

JAN. 1, 1913

Jack Long (White) was accused of murder and lynched by hanging in Newberry.

FEB. 6, 1908

Jumbo Clark was arrested for allegedly assaulting a White girl, was abducted by a mob, and lynched in High Springs by hanging and gunshot.

Eleven African Americans were lynched on August 19th in Newberry. Six were accused of helping Boisey Long escape from the Sheriff's custody: Stella Young, Andrew McHenry, Reverend Josh J. Baskins, Mary Dennis, and Bert Dennis were killed by hanging, and Jim Dennis was shot. Further research and oral history evidence indicates that at least five others were also lynched, including Dick Johnson and John Baskins.

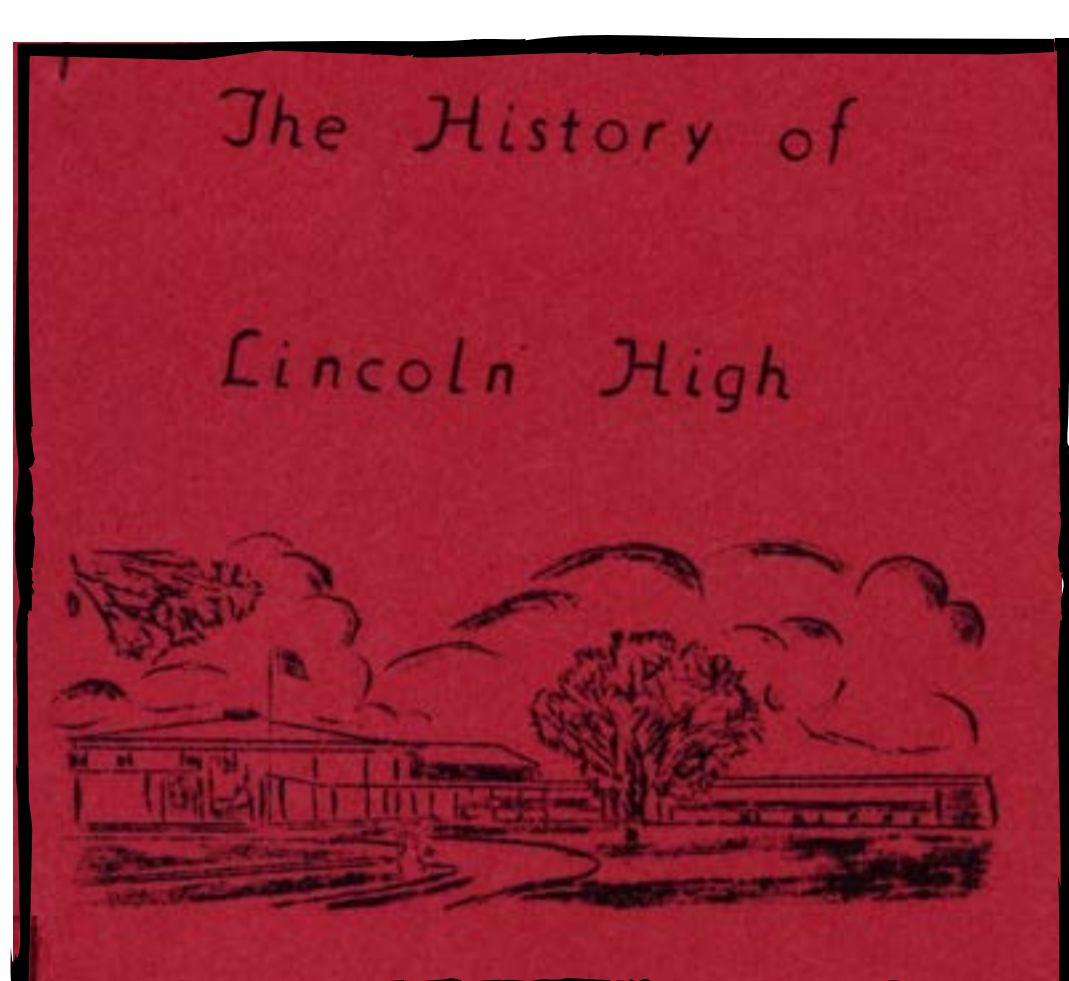
DEC. 13, 1913

Henry White was lynched in Campville after being discovered under the bed of a White woman.

1914

Charles S. Chestnut, Sr. and members of the Chestnut family begin serving the mortuary needs of Gainesville's African American community. Since Johnson Chestnut first settled in Gainesville, serving as city commissioner in 1868-1869, the Chestnut family has provided community support, leadership, and service in several public offices including the state legislature.

AUG. 1916



1938 graduating class of Lincoln High School

Charles Chestnut, Sr., Charley Duvall, and African American community leaders successfully founded Lincoln High School. Under the guidance of Professor A. Quinn Jones as principal, Lincoln gained state accreditation in 1926.

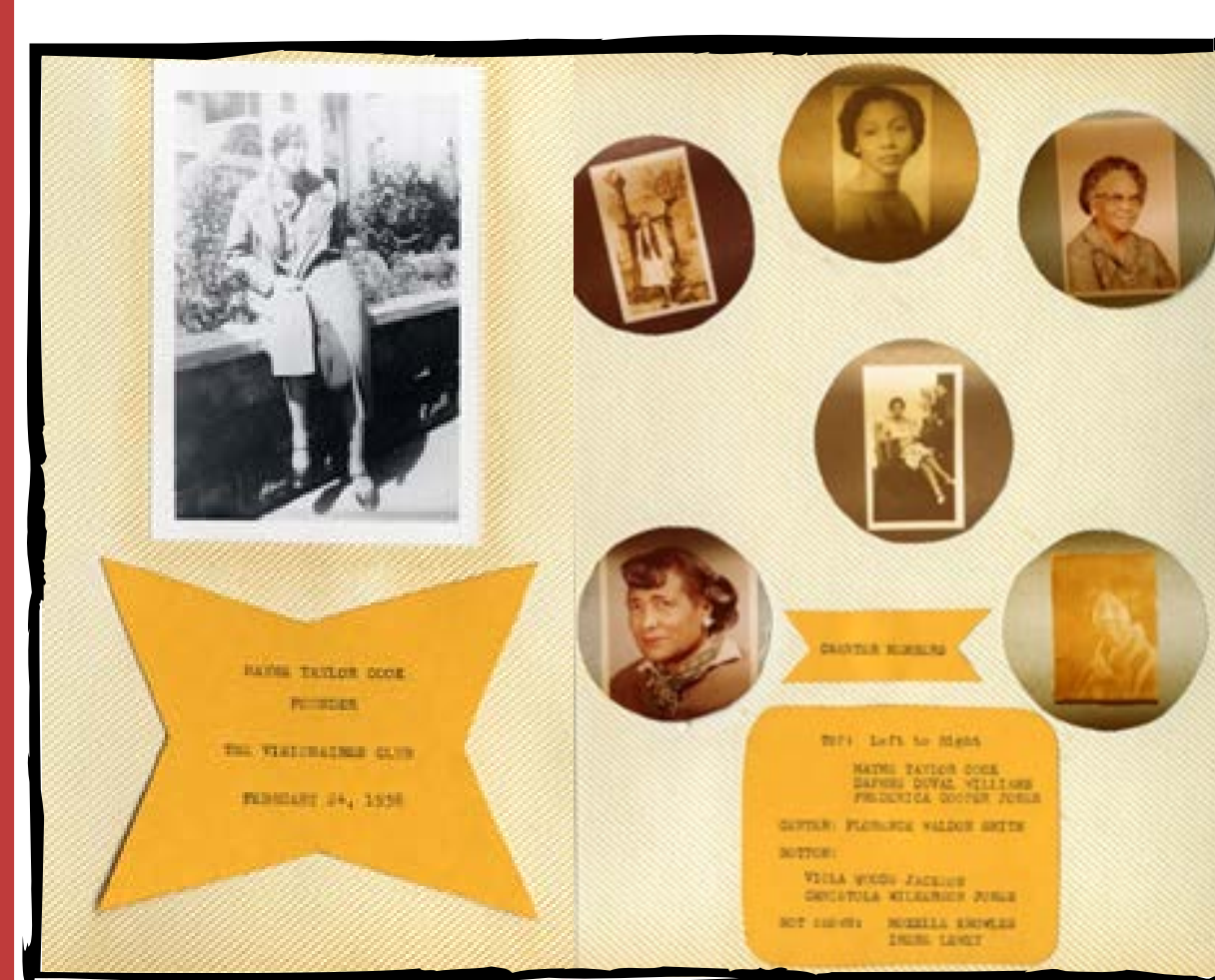
1923

Abraham Wilson was taken from the Newberry jail and lynched by hanging.

JAN. 17, 1923

Mayme Taylor Cook, Daphne Duval Williams, Frederica Cooper Jones, Florence Waldon Smith, Viola Woods Jackson, Christola Wilerson Jones, Mozelle Knowles, and Irene Lewey founded the Visionaires. The group worked to support and award Black scholars, and built support for organizations such as the United Negro College Fund and the NAACP. The Visionaires also sponsored community musical events, voter registration drives, and community initiatives for the health of African American communities.

FEB. 24, 1938



Pages from the Visionaires Scrapbook

FEB. 1924

Catholic Father John Conoley was kidnapped, beaten, and castrated by three members of the Ku Klux Klan, including the mayor of Gainesville and his father-in-law, the chief of police. The incident was not made public until almost seventy years later.

1941

Charles S. Johnson's A Statistical Abstract of Southern Counties states, "African Americans make up 44.6% of the population of Alachua County. Expenditure per white pupil per year is \$28.27 dollars. Expenditure per black pupil is \$5.90."

1949

Virgil Hawkins applied for UF Law School but was denied. He and others sued the university, and his case makes it up to the Florida Supreme Court. They ruled he had all the necessary qualifications for admission, but still could not matriculate, upholding segregation.



Virgil Hawkins

Sarah McKnight, an African American entrepreneur and owner of Sarah's Restaurant on 5th Avenue, opened up the Cotton Club on 7th Avenue. Both places were a part of the Chitlin' Circuit. The circuit provided performance venues for Black musicians, such as B.B. King, James Brown, Brook Benton, and Bo Diddley.



Sarah's Restaurant

1950



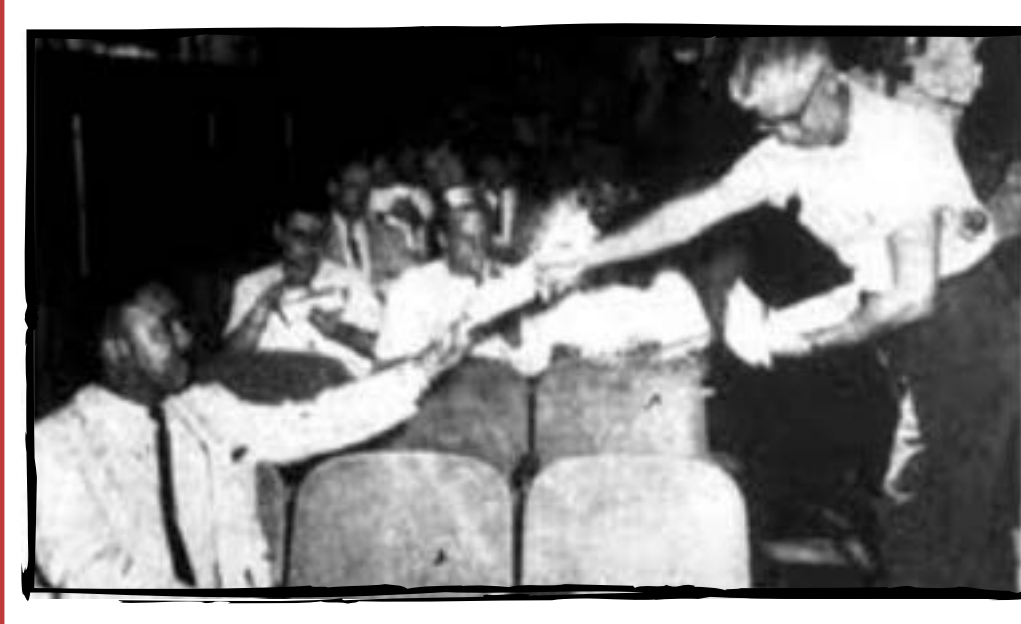
A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF GAINESVILLE:

1950

The Johns Committee sent R.J. Strickland to Gainesville to investigate LGBTQ+ people in the University of Florida. According to Charley Johns himself, they removed 17 people from the campus in the years following.

1957

1962



The Rev. Thomas A. Wright and his wife Affie Wright and family left St. Augustine and moved to Gainesville, where Rev. Wright began as pastor of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. The Ku Klux Klan and White law enforcement in the Ancient City had targeted the Wright family with violence for their civil rights organizing. The Wright family worked as leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in Gainesville for over half a century.

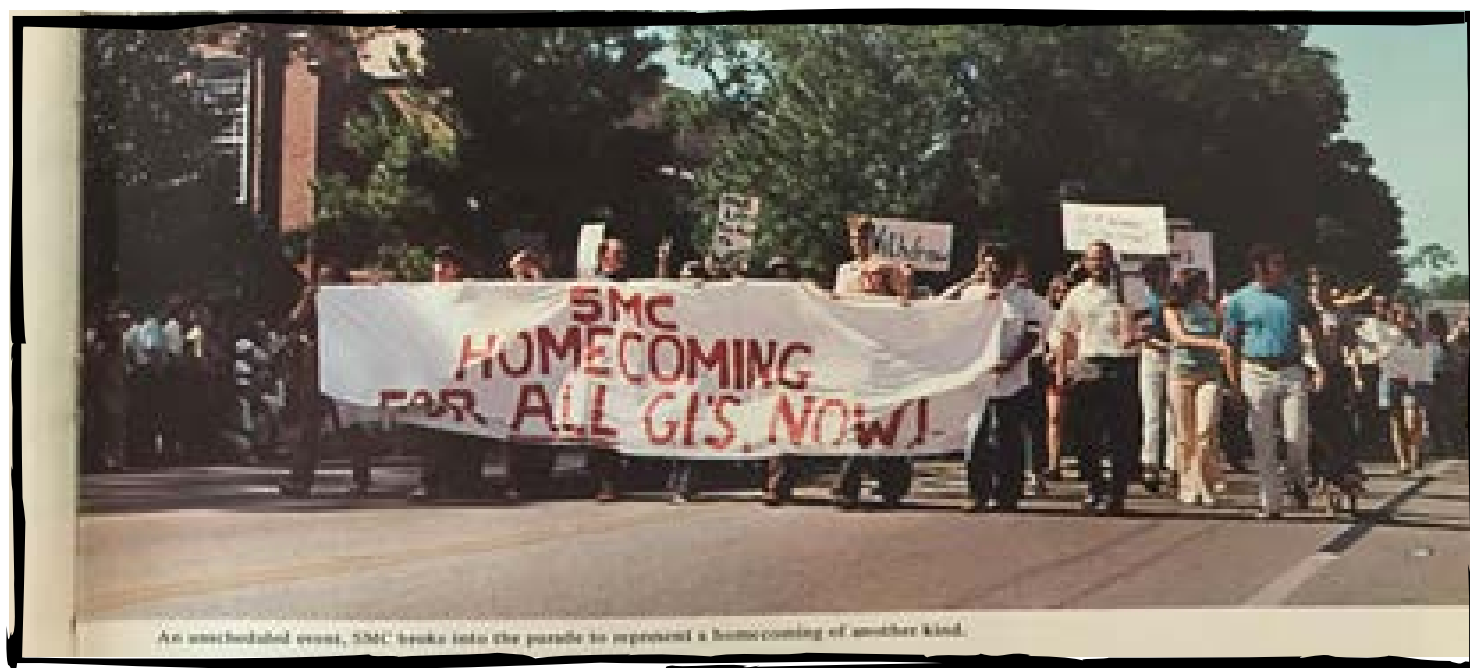
Gainesville Women for Equal Rights (GWER) formed. GWER was an integrated organization committed to battling segregation and inequality within the Gainesville community. Vivian Filer, a GWER member, recalls "...we had women, strong women, in strategic places who were not afraid to really go to battle."



Following the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Barbara Higgins and dedicated community members initiated a vigorous campaign to register and inspire voters. Ms. Higgins was the first Black woman to work professionally in the Alachua County Courthouse.

The Student Mobilization Committee disrupted the University of Florida Homecoming Parade to protest America's war in Vietnam.

1969



APRIL 15, 1971

The University of Florida Black Student Union submitted a list of demands to UF administration and organized a sit-in at Tigert Hall, during which 66 protesters were arrested; that day is now known as Black Thursday. President O'Connell denied them amnesty, and over a hundred students and faculty withdrew from UF. The following year, the Institute of Black Culture was established without crediting the protesters.



MAY 9 - 11, 1972

Over 3,000 UF students and antiwar demonstrators blocked University Avenue and 13th Street for nearly three days in response to President Nixon's mining of Haiphong Harbor in Vietnam. Police battle the protesters in what becomes known as "The May Riots."

Women's Health Center is founded by Byllye Avery, Judith Levy, Margaret Parrish, and Joan Edelson. In 1978, Byllye founded the alternative birthing center, Birthplace. She spoke out against Black women's "conspiracy of silence," especially on health issues.



1974

Nkwanda Jah, community residents, and UF students united to promote Fifth Avenue neighborhood history by founding the Fifth Avenue Arts Festival. The first performers were the Lavern Porter Dancers. Though fewer than 100 people attended originally, the festival has enjoyed over 20,000 attendees.



APR. 9, 1980

James Baldwin and Chinua Achebe gave a keynote address at the University of Florida, moderated by Cameroonian author Francis Bebey. The authors discussed how the African slave trade kept African Americans and Africans apart for over 400 years—something Achebe discussed through the concept of "historical alienation."



1987

The Gainesville chapter of Veterans for Peace is formed.

Members of the local Indian community, including Drs. Dinesh Shah and Rasik Nagda, formed the India Cultural and Education Center (ICEC). The ICEC's mission is to help students of Indian heritage fulfill their cultural and educational aspirations and to create a network of students, faculty and community of Indian heritage to assist in times of emotional stress.



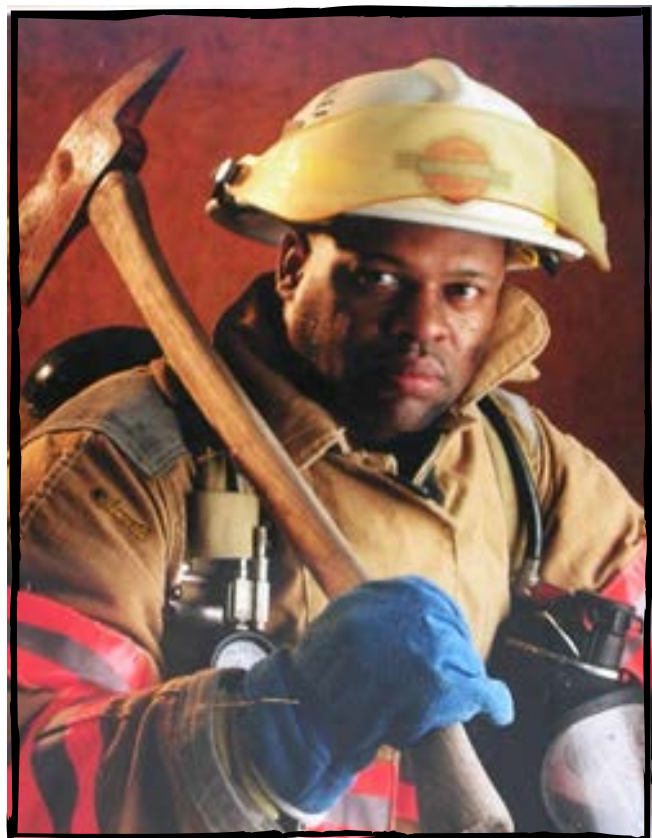
1991

Civic Media Center & Library, Inc. is established. The Civic Media Center is a community-based non-profit organization that serves as a resource for progressive grassroots activism and promotes public awareness in Alachua County and North Central Florida. The CMC offers a public access library, educational lectures, cultural performances, media presentations, and other community-driven events.



OCT. 1993

JAN. 31, 1994



Donald J. King earned the rank of District Chief for Gainesville Fire Rescue. Serving in Emergency Operations and Training Bureau Chief, Chief King was the first African American to earn this rank.

1996

The Hon. Phyllis Kotey was elected to serve in the county court. She was the first African American woman elected to this office.



2000

1958

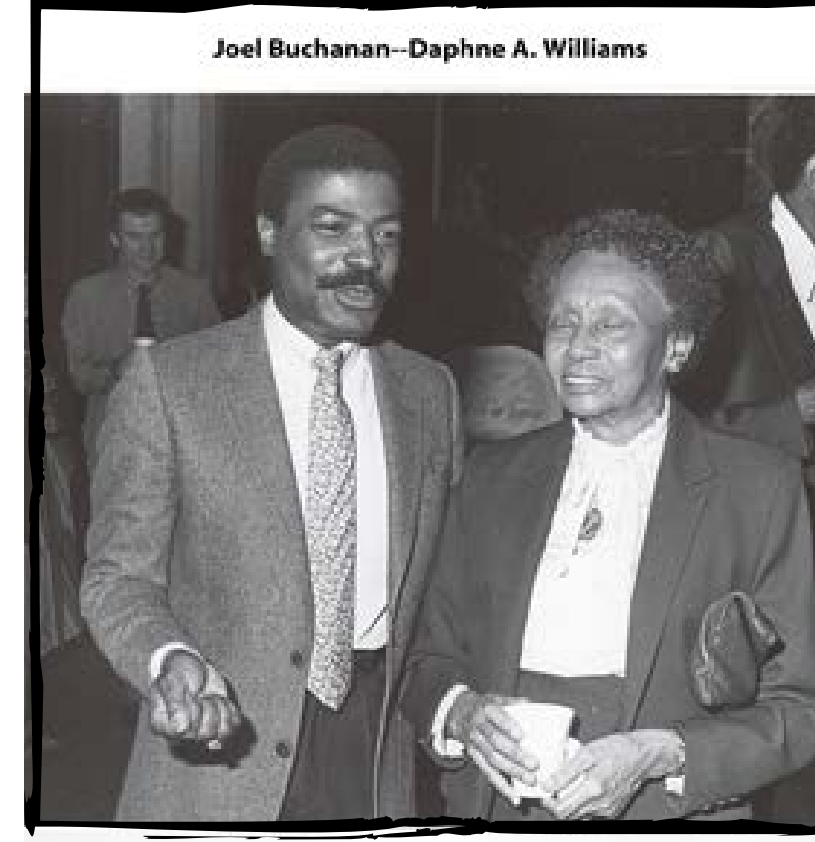
George H. Starke, a veteran from the Air Force, matriculated in UF's Law School, making him the first African American student UF. Starke's arrival required police protection, and after feeling isolated as UF's only Black student, he left the university.

1963

After emigrating from Cuba in 1961, Rafael and Fe Angulo opened their home as a boarding house for Cuban women coming to study at UF, as well as a cantina where Latin Americans and Latino/as could get a home-cooked meal. When the cantina closed, the family opened a restaurant in town.

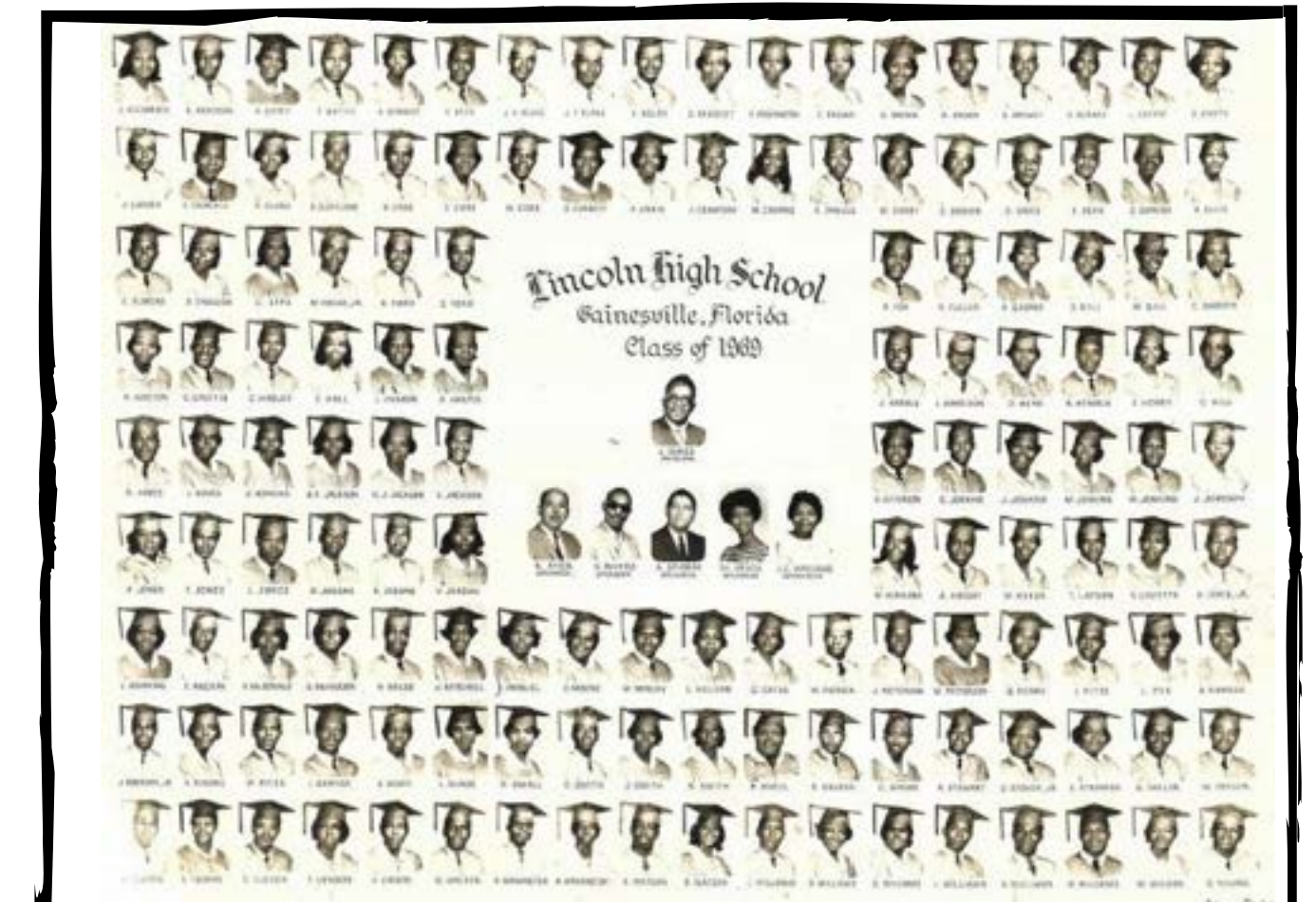
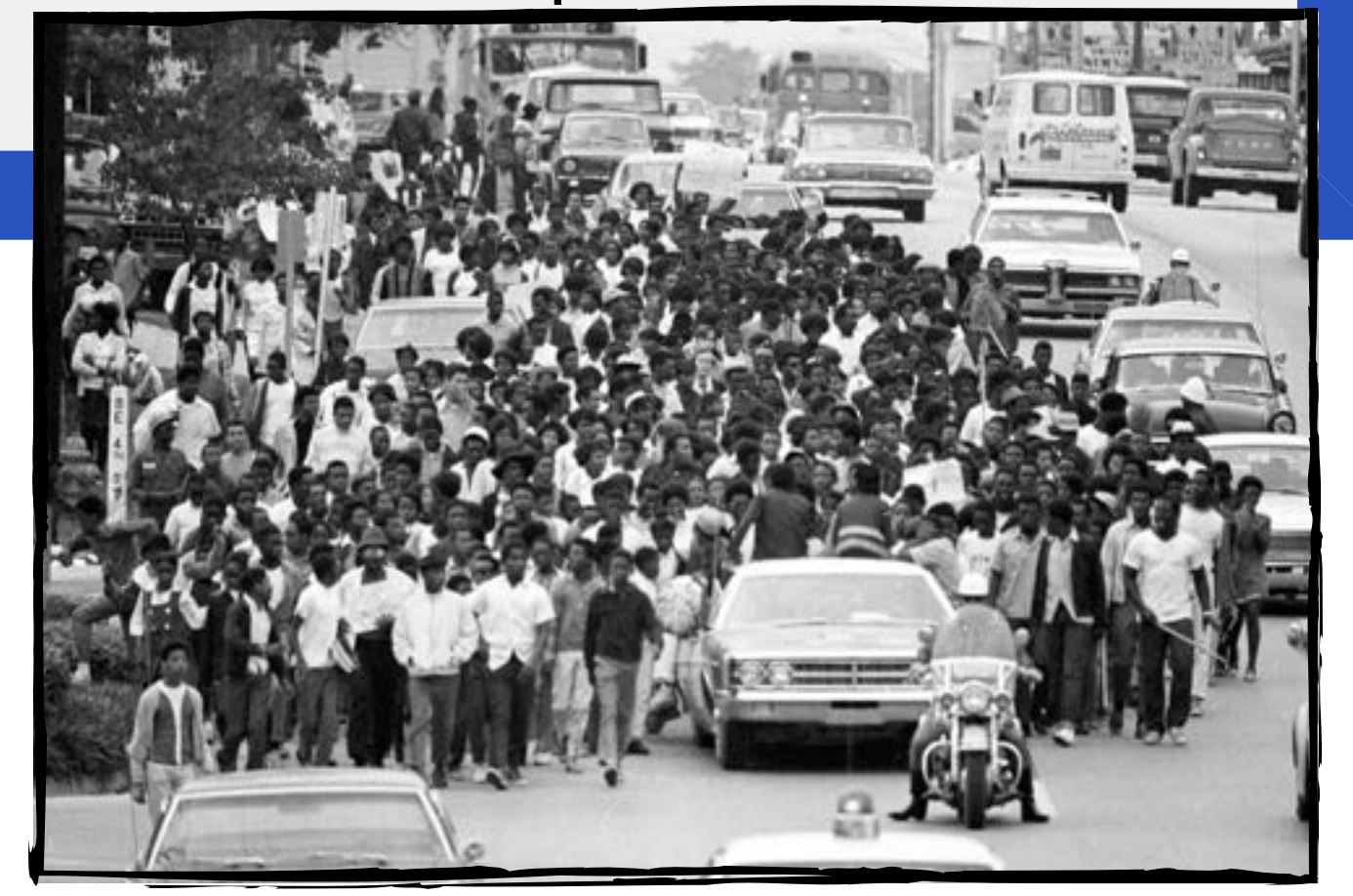
1963

LaVon Wright, Sandra Williams Cummings, and Joel Buchanan became the first three African American students to attend Gainesville High School, with significant support from the NAACP through Rev. Thomas A. Wright, Charles Chestnut III, and others. Joel Buchanan went on to conduct oral history interviews that helped to create this timeline.



NOV.-DEC. 1969

Students at Lincoln High staged a walkout to protest the decision to convert their school into a middle school and then a vocational school. By January of 1970, Lincoln High School shuts down, forcing the graduating class of 1970 to integrate into Gainesville High School.



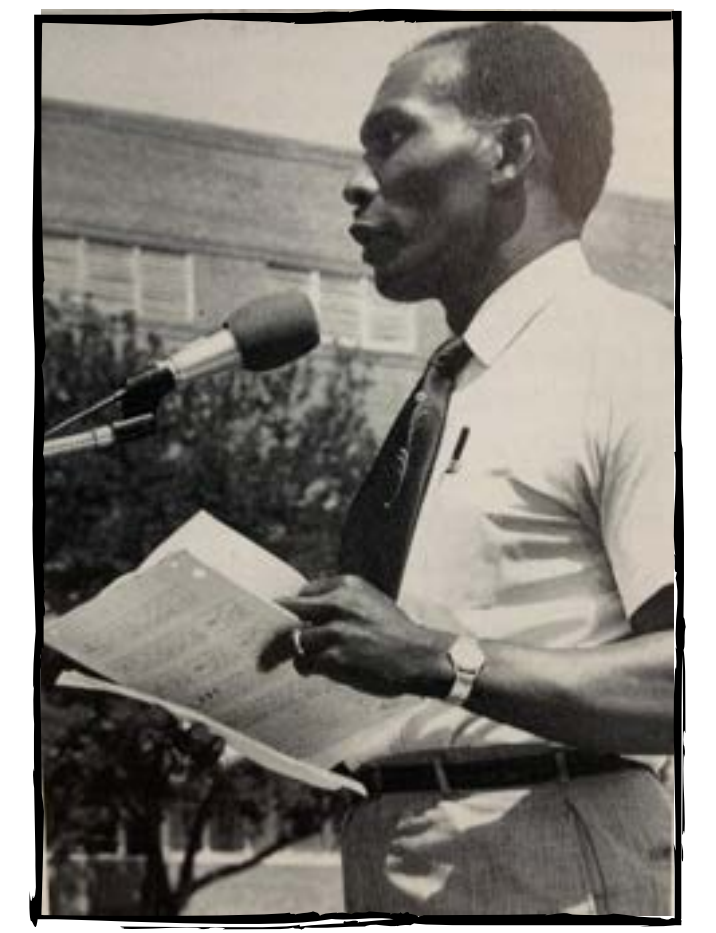
1971

Jane Fonda spoke at Graham Pond on UF Campus about the upcoming investigation of the Vietnam War, and asked if any Vietnam Veterans would be willing to talk about their experiences in Vietnam. Scott Camil and others volunteer to testify at the Winter Soldier Investigation. Scott Camil returned to Gainesville and started the Gainesville Chapter of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW).



NOV. 1971

Neil Butler was elected the first Black mayor of Gainesville since the Reconstruction era. While Butler served on the commission, Gainesville received the national designation of an "All-American city."



JUNE 1972



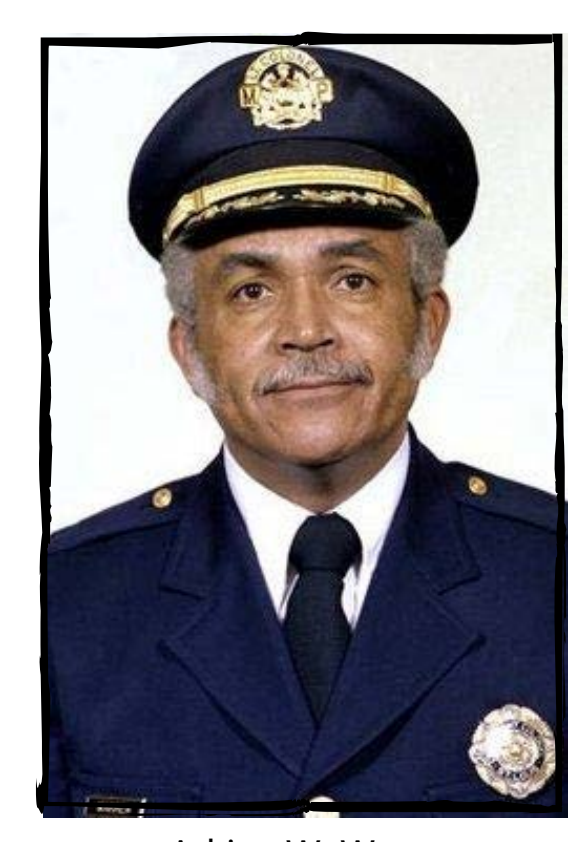
Members of VVAW are indicted for Conspiracy to disrupt the 1972 Republican convention and are called "The Gainesville 8." By August 1973, A Gainesville federal jury acquits the Gainesville 8 of all charges.

1974

Chilean citizens, Dr. Hernán Vera and his wife Maria Inez Concha Gutierrez, relocated to Gainesville after the U.S.-supported coup in Chile overthrew democratically elected Salvador Allende. Hernán went on to become an internationally recognized scholar of race and president of the United Faculty of Florida.

MAR. 31, 1975

Scott Camil was shot in the back by federal agents in Gainesville in an assassination attempt. In October, a Gainesville federal jury acquits Scott Camil and recommended that the federal agents be indicted for attempted murder. The agents are not charged.



1980

Atkins W. Warren became the first Black Police Chief for Gainesville Police Department

1985

SCAAR (Student Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism) formed after six years of student organizing to protest the University of Florida's financial holdings in Apartheid South Africa. Student organizer Theresa Agrillo described their major protest action: "On the front steps of the UF administration building... students ate, slept, studied and even typed papers for 40 days and 40 nights." Gainesville became the first city in Florida to fully divest from South Africa.

APR. 20, 1989

The Pleasant Street Historic District was designated as a US Historic District by the National Register of Historic Places. Pleasant Street was the first African-American neighborhood to be added to the register in Florida. The community continues to fight an ongoing battle against gentrification and demolition.

1992

Iris Books was established, later becoming Wild Iris Books in 1996. It was Florida's only feminist bookstore and a significant part of the Gainesville activist community before closing in 2017.



1994

Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures, or "La Casita," was established at the University of Florida after years of organizing efforts by Latinx students. Students have continuously organized since that time to keep La Casita staffed, resourced, and vibrant.

1995

Alianza Latina, a non-profit dedicated to providing a forum for informational exchange about issues that affect persons who are Latino/a, or from Latin America or the Caribbean in North Central Florida, is created. This group provided colloquiums, seminars, lectures, exhibitions and educational events.



A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF GAINESVILLE:

2000

Terry Fleming and Kitty Fallon organized a meeting at the downtown library to discuss the possibility of creating a non-profit dedicated to serving the well-being of LGBTQ+ communities in Gainesville. More than 120 people attended, leading to the creation of the Pride Community Center, which now serves thirteen counties in North Florida.

2000

2000

During a drought, 101 ancient canoes were discovered in the sandy bed of Lake Pithlachoco, which to the Seminole means "place of long boats." The canoes ranged from 500 to 5,000 years old.



The Hon. Walter M. Green

After serving as an Assistant State Attorney for 15 years, the Hon. Walter M. Green was elected to serve as Alachua County judge.

2005

2005

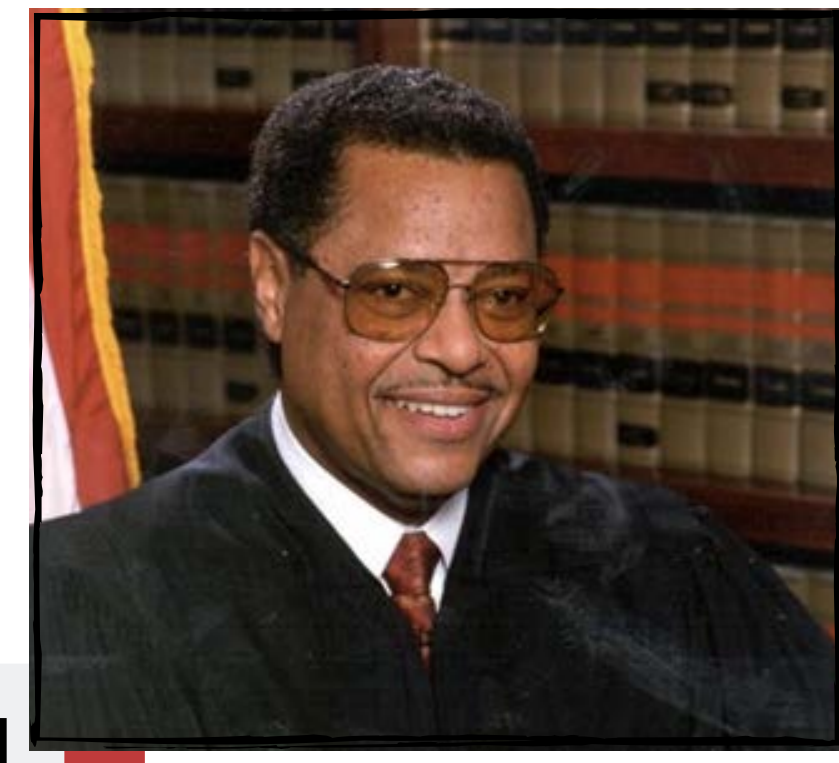


Creation of the Latina Women's League Corp. an all-woman non-profit organization dedicated to contributing to Hispanic-Latino/a arts and culture in Gainesville, as well as to community mentorship and activism. The organization achieves its mission through a variety of cultural and educational programs, including: the Gainesville Latino Film Festival, English as a Second Language classes, Bilingual Children's Storytime, Citizenship and Naturalization classes, Migrant Farmworker Program, and the Health and Wellness Project.

MAY 1, 2006

Members of the Hispanic community in Gainesville organized a local march in solidarity with the national "El Gran Paro Estadounidense," a general strike organized by Latinx communities against anti-immigrant legislation proposed by the US Congress.

2011



The Hon. Stephan P. Mickle

Hon. Stephan P. Mickle is named chief judge of the Northern Florida District, the first African American to serve that position. In 1965, he was also the first African American to receive an undergraduate degree from UF, and in 1972, the first to establish a legal practice in Gainesville. In 1979, he was the first African American to serve as Alachua County judge, in 1984, the first to serve as judge for the Eighth Judicial Circuit, and in 1998, first to serve as a judge in the Northern District.

2011

Iglesia Hispana de Alachua was founded. Pastored by Jaime Zelaya, Iglesia Hispana is an intentionally multi-lingual and multi-racial church anchored by first-generation immigrants from Latin America.

The Dream Defenders, a human rights organization led by youth organizers who seek to end the criminalization of Black and Brown communities, is founded. DD was founded when activists marched from Daytona to Sanford to protest the murder of Trayvon Martin and the failure to arrest his killer, George Zimmerman. The Gainesville chapter seeks to train and organize youth and students in nonviolent civil disobedience, civic engagement, and direct action to challenge systemic White supremacy in Gainesville.

2012



Dream Defenders at No Nazis at UF Protest

The Alachua County NAACP, the Alachua County Labor Coalition, Black and Latinx churches, and allied organizations formed a successful coalition to pass a Wage Theft Protection ordinance in the county to protect workers from having their wages withheld or stolen by employers. Pastor Jaime Zelaya and other church leaders testified and organized with the Labor Coalition and NAACP on these campaigns.

JAN. 2014

APR. 2016



Original IBC and La Casita (1994-2016)



New IBC and La Casita (2019-Present)

The University of Florida announced that the Institute of Black Culture and the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures (La Casita) would be torn down, rebuilt, and then conjoined. Students organized the No LaIBCita movement in opposition of conjoining the buildings, citing concerns of homogenizing cultural spaces over time, a lack of transparency in the planning process, and erasure of the historical integrity of each space. The university eventually conceded to keep the designs separate.

Stand By Our Plan formed to ensure the upholding of Alachua County's Comprehensive Plan to protect 6,000 acres of wetlands from destruction and development by Plum Creek corporation. Their efforts succeeded; in March 2016, the Alachua County Commission denied the Plum Creek plan. These grassroots activists included Katy Davis, who drove her beat-up blue pickup to rural communities, visiting a minimum of 10 homes each day to inform them about Envision Alachua's proposal.

2014

"Old Joe" Confederate statue was taken down from outside the Alachua County Administration Building. This effort was spearheaded by numerous local activists in civil rights and labor organizations as part of a national effort to dismantle symbols of White supremacy, the county commission voted in favor of returning the statue to the Daughters of the Confederacy who had dedicated it outside the building in 1904.

AUG. 2017



2018

OCT. 19, 2017

Dream Defenders organized the No Nazis at UF to protest a White nationalist speaker on campus in the wake of the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville. Students and community members flooded the event space and drowned out the speaker, ultimately pulling national attention toward their demonstration and away from the speaker's rhetoric.



No Nazis at UF Protest

NOV. 2018

Amendment 4 passed by an overwhelming majority, making it possible for citizens with felony records to restore their voting rights. This victory was the result of the Alachua County NAACP, the Alachua Labor Coalition, Black churches, labor unions and other organizations that took part in a statewide petition campaign that ultimately gathered one million signatures to place Amendment 4 on the ballot.



The Hon. Gloria Walker The Hon. Meshon Rawls

The Hon. Gloria Walker was the first Black woman and first Latina to be elected judge for the 8th Circuit Court. The Hon. Meshon Rawls won in the same election, and now serves as Alachua County judge.

NOV. 12, 2018



Ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center

The Cotton Club Museum & Cultural Center celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, after over a decade of restoration efforts, grant-seeking, and community fundraising.

NOV. 13, 2018

Alachua County Board of Commissioners establishes a Commission for Truth and Reconciliation.

MAY 28, 2019

Alachua County Commissioners voted unanimously to ban conversion therapy for minors which attempts to change individual's sexual orientation and/or gender identity. This followed Gainesville passage of its own ordinance in 2018 to combat the stigma of treating non-Cis and non-heterosexual identities as mental illnesses.



Psychologist Rachel Needle speaking to the Alachua County Commission

JUNE 25, 2019

Alachua County Board of County Commissioners adopted a formal resolution, announcing the County's commitment to observe 500 years of African American history in Florida, celebrating "a people who overcame adversity and seemingly impossible odds."

CITATIONS



This timeline developed as a collaboration between the Cultural Arts Coalition (CAC) and the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program's (SPOHP) student, staff, and faculty researchers. The project was coordinated and sponsored by the CAC and the City of Gainesville.

Our Mission Statement:

Cultural Arts Coalition (CAC) was founded in 1979 as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Its purpose is to educate and empower the community by establishing and maintaining community oriented programs through the use of arts, culture and social awareness. CAC implements its mission by:

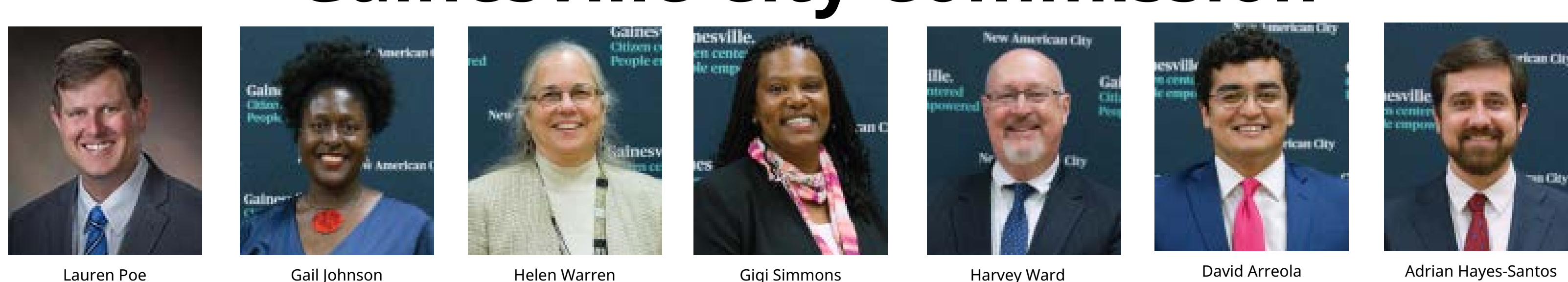
- 1) Promoting African American art and culture, using art music and history to instill cultural awareness of the Afro-Centric perspective
- 2) Offering educational programs based on current and relevant community and social issues.

CAC's primary programs include the coordination and hosting of the Annual 5th Ave Arts Festival and offering educational empowerment programs for at risk youth to foster environmental awareness and develop healthy lifestyles.

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