

A United Community

SPONSORED BY

Greater Union Life Center and
West Volusia Historical Society



Official Program

February 25, 2024

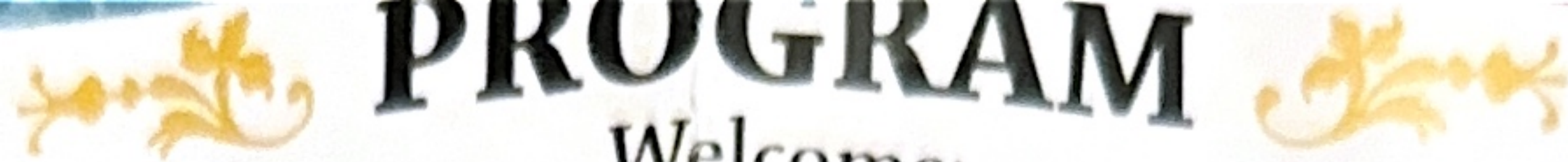
12 pm

**Dedication of Historical Plaques
Commemorating
1960 Lunch-counter Sit-ins in
Downtown DeLand**

Chess Park, Old County Courthouse

**“Let us sit together as human beings
are supposed to do.”**

Resident of Greensboro, N.C., February 1960



PROGRAM

Welcome:

Mario Davis, Greater Union Life Center and
Sarah Finch, West Volusia Historical Society

Master of Ceremony:

Al Bouie

Invocation:

Rev. Wendell Raulerson

Scripture:

Rev. Reginald Williams

Hymn:

Bishop Eugene Collier

Music:

Dr. Andre Darby

Introduction of Special Guests and Acknowledgments:

The Honorable Dr. Joyce Cusack and Kathy Hersh

Benediction:

Rev. Troy Bradley

Ribbon Cutting: 1 pm and Unveiling of Plaques

100 N. Woodland Boulevard

The Honorable Dr. Joyce Cusack and
Greetings by Commissioner Jessica Davis, City of DeLand

101 N. Woodland Boulevard

The Honorable Dr. Joyce Cusack
Mr. Roger Baumgartner and Mr. Troy Baumgartner

Special Guests:

Lewis McRae and Caretha Evans Brown
Euclid High School Class of 1960

Ushers:

Iota Kappa Kappa of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity

Refreshments and Celebration at Chess Park

Honoring the Past is Honoring the Future

We are gathered here today to honor the courage and convictions of the Euclid High School students who, 64 years ago this month, staged a series of sit-ins at the lunch counters of Woolworth's and McCrory's, claiming their right to equal service, denied to them because of the color of their skin.

Over the course of a week, starting February 6, the students repeated their action daily until the stores shut down their lunch counters. This was no insignificant act. The local white backlash was so strong, the City of DeLand police were called in to protect the students. When Woolworth's and McCrory's reopened months later, they served all customers regardless of the color of their skin.

The Euclid High School student's action was the second sit-in in the State of Florida. Their action was preceded only days before by the Woolworth's sit-in in Greensboro, North Carolina, which garnered national headlines and media attention around the world.

Sit-ins became an effective non-violent protest tactic which spread to 55 cities across the country by the end of 1960. The DeLand sit-in was the only one on record organized entirely by high school students. Most sit-ins were staged by college students, organized and trained in non-violence by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and its offshoot, SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee), founded in April 1960.

(Over Please) >>>

One of the leaders of the DeLand student sit-in was Joyce Cummings Cusack, who eventually was elected to the Florida legislature, the first Black person from Volusia County so honored and the only Black legislator representing a non-minority district. She served two terms (2000-08) and later was elected to the Volusia County Council. Ms. Cusack's work on behalf of the citizens of Volusia County culminated with the founding of the Dr. Joyce M. Cusack Resource Center, a social service agency.

Last fall, Ms. Cusack was interviewed by oral historian Kathy Hersh for the West Volusia Historical Society's oral history archive. Ms. Hersh suggested that they join forces to get historic plaques commemorating the DeLand sit-in installed on the downtown buildings where the sit-ins occurred. A formidable team, Ms. Cusack and Ms. Hersh raised the necessary funds and with assistance from the Greater Union Life Center and the West Volusia Historical Society accomplished their mission.