



Urban League of
Broward County

Contact: Shannon M. Carey
Title: Chief Development Officer
Email: scarey@ULBC.org
Phone: 954.625.2545

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMERICAN EXPRESS AND URBAN LEAGUE YOUTHBUILDERS PREPARE HOME FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

FORT LAUDERDALE (April 7, 2010)— On Saturday, April 10, the Urban League of Broward County's YouthBuild participants will join volunteers from American Express for a CLEAN & GREEN project to restore the home of 98-year-old Mrs. Avis Shep McSmith before being honored with an historical landmark designation. This project will be in conjunction with a neighborhood clean-up day hosted by the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale Step Up Apprenticeship and the City of Fort Lauderdale Citizens Volunteer Corps.

Located in Fort Lauderdale's Sistrunk neighborhood, the McSmith home has been recorded as the first indoor nursery school in the community. The nursery school was founded in the 1940's and attended by many prominent African Americans. The City of Fort Lauderdale has nominated the McSmith home as a historical site. As a part of the rehabilitation, YouthBuild participants will refurbish the exterior of the home and original nursery school. The project will include high pressure cleaning, painting, and lawn restoration. The volunteers will also lay topsoil, plant trees and install a flower bed as a part of the beautification process.

In addition to the commitment of substantial financial resources, American Express has developed an employee volunteer program that encourages community service and civic participation. This event is one of two upcoming collaborations between American Express and the Urban League. "We are delighted to partner with American Express on this project," said Urban League of Broward County's president and CEO, Dr. Germaine Smith-Baugh. "The historic landmark designation is a boon to community pride and allows our YouthBuilders to be engaged in the ultimate service-learning experience."

The Urban League of Broward County's YouthBuild program provides young adults between the ages of 18-24, most of whom have not completed high school, the opportunity to transform their lives and roles in society by building and rehabilitating affordable housing for low income families. In addition, the program offers GED instruction and pre-apprenticeship training through successful partnerships with program funders including Department of Labor, Habitat for Humanity, the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale, the Minority Builders Coalition of Broward County, Children Services Council of Broward, Atlantic Technical Center, JM Family Foundation, American Express and Workforce One.

For more information about the YouthBuild program, please call the Urban League of Broward County at 954.584.0777 or you can visit us online at www.ulbroward.org.

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The Urban League of Broward County is a non for profit, community based organization founded in 1975. We empower communities, develop children and change lives. Our mission is to assist African Americans in the achievement of social and economic equality. The League operates programs for Broward County residents from age 8. Programs/ services include affordable housing development and redevelopment, youth development, diversion, employment and training, education and community empowerment, and civic engagement.