

The Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center 2023 - 2024 Strategic Plan

Introduction

The Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center (FDMCC) is housed in Twin Oaks, the summer "cottage" built in 1895 for Frederick Douglass, a former slave who achieved international acclaim as an abolitionist, orator, civil rights advocate, writer, publisher, and statesman.

In 2015, the Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center was established as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and conducts tours of the museum and offers cultural events under the direction of an Executive Director, Museum Director and Board of Directors.

The impressive, two-story, historic summer home is situated on the western bank of the Chesapeake Bay, in Highland Beach, Maryland's first African American incorporated town. The home was impeccably restored in the late 1980's, purchased by the State of Maryland and ownership was transferred to The Town of Highland Beach, which continues to maintain the structure. Directors and docent volunteers offer tours by appointment, sharing the home's and the town's unique, rich history and culture with Town residents, students, tourists, and scholars worldwide.

The FDMCC Strategic Plan was developed to help ensure the museum's continued efficient operation, relevance, and sustainability. The plan is implemented by members of its board and reviewed annually, with updates that reflect new strategies, activities, plans, and projects.

Additional information about the museum can be found on the website at fdmcc.org

The Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center Strategic Plan

The Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center (FDMCC) is housed in Twin Oaks, the summer cottage built as a retirement home for Frederick Douglass. When Highland Beach was founded in 1893, Douglass selected a lot facing the Chesapeake Bay to build his cottage with a balcony, as he said, "so that I as a free man could look across the Bay to the Eastern Shore where I was born a slave." Although he was involved in the design of the house, he died in February of 1895, before the cottage was completed. It was used by his son Lewis and later by his grandson Joseph Douglass and his wife, Fannie. After her death, the cottage suffered from neglect until it was purchased and restored by architect Chip Bohl and his wife, Barbara, in the late 1980s. In 1995, the State of Maryland and Anne Arundel County acquired the property and deeded it to the Town of Highland Beach as a memorial to Frederick Douglass, one of Maryland's most famous sons.

Mission Statement

The mission of the FDMCC is to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the life and work of Frederick Douglass and his family, identify, document, and preserve the social and cultural histories of the towns where the FDMCC is located - Highland Beach and Venice Beach, and to make this history and resources available for information, enlightenment, and research to visitors.

Vision Statement

The FDMCC continues to be a significant historical and cultural site in Maryland, chronicling the legacy of Frederick Douglass and his family, and the communities of Highland Beach and neighboring Venice Beach. Through its evolving exhibits and collections, tours, and guided interpretations, FDMCC strives to preserve and share this history and its impact on African American life and culture.

Values Statement

The FDMCC supports the cohesiveness of family and community and values equality, enlightenment, honesty, compassion, and a sense of righteousness. These same values were embraced by Frederick Douglass in his lifelong endeavors.

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES
<p>A. To create a stronger, better functioning board to meet the present and future needs of the Museum.</p>	<p>A.1. Add Vice Chair</p> <p>A.2. Create an Executive Committee consisting of the Chairs of the Standing Committees of the Board.</p> <p>A.3. Hire an Administrative Assistant</p> <p>A.4. Schedule regular Board meetings and standing committee meetings.</p> <p>A.5. Develop and implement board terms and qualifications through approved processes.</p>	<p>A.1.a. Vice-Chair will assist the Chair with managing the Fiscal and Fiduciary responsibilities of the Board.</p> <p>A.2.a. Vice-Chair will Chair the Executive Committee.</p> <p>A.3.a. Administrative Assistant will ensure Board and Committee meetings are coordinated, scheduled and minutes go out in a timely manner.</p> <p>A.4.a. Board will meet quarterly and committees will meet monthly.</p> <p>A.5.a. Draft and vote by the board, communicate terms via website</p>
<p>B. To conduct and maintain a balanced budget and other agreements capable of sustaining museum operations.</p>	<p>B.1. Establish an annual budget.</p> <p>B.2. Account for gift shop sales and inventory.</p> <p>B.3. Create online sales and donor options.</p> <p>B. 4 Establish and implement a MOU and support agreements with the Town.</p> <p>B.5 Establish and implement permanent grant writing capacity with the Town (for building and museum).</p>	<p>B.1.a. Review budget items and adjust accordingly.</p> <p>B.2.a. Maintain accounting spreadsheet.</p> <p>B.3.a. Use email service and website to promote gift shop sales and donations.</p> <p>B.4.a. Establish subcommittee and liaison; approve agreements for building repair and maintenance and museum maintenance.</p> <p>B.5.a. Identify grant writer(s), support grant writing.</p>
<p>C. To attract donors and benefactors to ensure the museum's high quality of exhibits and its facilities.</p>	<p>C.1. Sponsor an Annual Fundraising event.</p> <p>C.2. Show appreciation for donors.</p>	<p>C.1.a. Organize an annual Juneteenth event.</p> <p>C.1.b. Conduct an annual end-of-year campaign.</p> <p>C.2.a. Coordinate effective communication with donors.</p> <p>C.2.b. Schedule private tours and receptions for donors.</p>

<p>D. To preserve historical documents, display collections and make them available to the public for the study and research of African American history and culture.</p>	<p>D.1. Apply standards of the National Parks Service and Smithsonian Institution for preservation of materials.</p> <p>D.2. Develop a relationship with the National Museum of African American History and Culture.</p> <p>D.3. Provide access to historical archives & the Terrell/Langston Library of African American History and Culture.</p>	<p>D.2.a. Digitize documents, oral histories, home movies, obituaries, and other archival materials.</p> <p>D.3.a. Advertise and schedule periodic visits to the library.</p>
<p>E. To maintain the museum as a historic house museum to enhance the visitors' experience.</p>	<p>E.1. Update displays and exhibits.</p> <p>E.2. Re-create the upstairs bedroom to period style.</p> <p>E.3. Reimagine use of the kitchen area with relevant displays.</p> <p>E.4. Investigate lighting options for better visibility.</p> <p>E.5. Evaluate use of space throughout the house to accommodate displays, artifacts and gift shop operations.</p>	<p>E.1.a. Update Frederick Douglass family tree.</p> <p>E.1.b. Gather information about the diverse history of HB and VB families: past and present.</p> <p>E.3.b. Set the kitchen table in period style.</p> <p>E.4.a. Update/add/replace light fixtures.</p>
<p>F. To build capacity to accommodate an increasing number of requests for tours.</p>	<p>F.1. Update the FDMCC website.</p> <p>F.2. Increase the number of volunteer docents/student volunteers.</p> <p>F.3. Accommodate self-guided tours.</p> <p>F.4. Create virtual opportunities on the website.</p>	<p>F.1.a. Schedule tours via the website.</p> <p>F.2.a. Invite community volunteers; offers annual docent training.</p> <p>F.2.b. Offer tours at the museum annex at the Town Hall</p> <p>F.3.a. Improve signage.</p> <p>F.3.b. Promote walking tours with the Highland Beach and Venice Beach Passports.</p> <p>F.4.a. Post virtual tours and oral history videos on the website.</p>

<p>G. To inventory and catalog, maintain and collect appropriate items in all collections.</p>	<p>G.1. Explore internship programs at local colleges and universities.</p> <p>G.2. Evaluate current artifacts for inclusion in displays.</p>	<p>G.1.a. Hire interns for administrative support.</p> <p>G.2.a. Review and update inventory of artifacts</p>
<p>H. To serve as a venue for external appropriate-scale cultural events.</p>	<p>H.1. Use the website and email lists to promote events.</p> <p>H.2. Suggest possible events in concert with the HBCA and VBCA</p>	<p>H.1.a. Publicize events to targeted audiences.</p> <p>H.2.a. Organize literary events, such as book signings, poetry readings and speaker series.</p>
<p>I. Increase Community Engagement to give FDMCC an increased presence in the HB/VB community and the greater DMV.</p>	<p>I.1. Increase awareness of and access to FDMCC during core community events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4th of July - Memorial Day - Juneteenth - Labor Day - Founders Day (New) 	<p>I.1.a. Make the community and greater DMV more aware of the FDMCC.</p> <p>I.1.b. Conduct Open Hours for Self-Guided Tours on selected holiday weekends.</p>