

The Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center

2021 – 2022 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. The **FDMCC** 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 2021 **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.

For more information regarding the museum, contact the Museum Director at fdmccchb@gmail.com.

Additional information about the museum can be found on the website at www.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 cottage built as a summer 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, the museum 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 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>A.1. Apply National Park Service recommendations for preservation of materials A.2. Initiate contact with institutions of learning A.3. Provide access to historical archives & the Terrell/Langston Library of African-American History and Culture</p>	<p>A.1.a. Digitize documents, oral histories, home movies A.2.a. Post selected historical documents on the website A.3.a. Advertise and schedule periodic visits to the museum annex at the Town Hall, to include the library</p>
<p>B. To build capacity to accommodate an increasing number of requests for tours</p>	<p>B.1. Maintain the FDMCC website B.2. Increase the number of volunteer docents B.3. Offer and schedule self-guided tours B.4. Create virtual opportunities</p>	<p>B.1.a. Schedule tours via the website B.2.a. Invite community volunteers; offer annual new-docent training B.3.a. Offer instructional material to self-tour guides B.3.b. Promote walking tours with the Highland Beach Passport B.4.a. Post virtual tours and oral history videos on the website</p>
<p>C. To maintain the museum as a historic house museum to enhance the visitors' experience</p>	<p>C.1. Update displays and exhibits C.2. Re-create upstairs bedroom to period style C.3. Reimagine use of kitchen area C.4. Investigate lighting options for better visibility</p>	<p>C.1.a. Update Frederick Douglass family tree C.1.b. Gather information about diverse history of HB and VB families: past and present. C.1.c. Replace information placards. C.2.a. Visit NPS warehouse for loan of Douglass furniture C.3.a. Display history of house renovation and acquisition in a designated area C.3.b. Set the kitchen table in period style C.4.a. Update light fixtures with LED lighting</p>
<p>D. To serve as a venue for appropriate- scale cultural events</p>	<p>D.1. Use the website and email lists to promote events. D.2. Suggest possible events in concert with the HBCA and the VBCA</p>	<p>D.1.a. Publicize events to targeted audiences D.1.b. Create email lists to promote events. D.2.a. Organize literary events, such as book signings, poetry readings, speaker series</p>

<p>E. To conduct and maintain a balanced budget and other agreements capable of sustaining museum operations</p>	<p>E.1. Establish an annual budget E.2. Account for gift shop sales and inventory E.3. Create online sales and donor options E.4. Sponsor annual fundraiser E.5. Identify grant opportunities</p>	<p>E.1.a. Review budget items and adjust accordingly E.2.a. Maintain accounting spreadsheet E.2.b. Obtain a bank credit card E.3.a. Use email service and website to promote gift shop sales and donations E.4.a. Co-sponsor a summer event with HBCA and VBCA as a fundraiser E.5.a. Hire a grant writer to write and manage grants</p>
<p>F. To attract donors and benefactors to ensure the museum's high quality of exhibits and its facilities</p>	<p>F.1. Attract donors F.2. Conduct events for current, past, and prospective donors</p>	<p>F.1.a. Support a fundraising committee F.1.b. Coordinate effective communication with donors F.1.c. Share strategic plan with donors and post on website F.2.a. Schedule private tours and receptions for donors</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 G.2. Evaluate current artifacts for inclusion in displays</p>	<p>G.1.a. Hire interns for administrative support G.2.a. Review and update inventory of artifacts</p>