

# City of Gainesville, Florida

## Office of Mayor Craig Lowe PROCLAMATION

*WHEREAS, in 1938, when Gainesville was a small town with a segregated society, four local African-American women envisioned a community more conducive to cultural and educational growth; and*

*WHEREAS, each woman was asked to bring a friend and ideas for implementing the vision, and on February 24, 1938, this group formed the Visionaires as a women's organization dedicated to civic, cultural and social affairs with the purpose of improving the quality of life for all citizens of the community; and*

*WHEREAS, the founding members were Mamie T. Cook, Viola W. Jackson, Christola W. Jones, Frederica C. Jones, Mozelle Knowles, Irene Levey, Florence W. Smith and Daphne Duval-Williams – all of whom were residents of Gainesville/Alachua County; and*

*WHEREAS, the Visionaires sponsored various cultural events including concerts by "Wings Over Jordan", "The Southernaires", classical soloist Daniel Comegys, and jazz artist Pamela Laus, an art exhibit by the late Mr. Jesse Aaron – a local sculptor, and a reception for professional entertainer Marion Caffey – a Gainesville native; and*

*WHEREAS, through the years, the Visionaires expanded to include civic activities such as voter registration drives, providing personal services for nursing home residents, and participating in the "Developing Leadership Potential" (Take Our Daughters to Work) program for middle school students; and*

*WHEREAS, since 1946, the Visionaires annually award achievement scholarships to local graduating high school seniors; and*

*WHEREAS, the Visionaires donate to and provide support for Duval Elementary School, Pleasant Place, The Preserve, BASE (Black AIDS Services & Education), local child care centers, the March of Dimes, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the United Negro College Fund; and*

*WHEREAS, February 24, 2013 will mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Visionaires; and*

*WHEREAS, the 23 current members of the Visionaires have planned a series of activities to celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Diamond Jubilee, including a commemorative Founders Day service and special exhibit of its archival material at the University of Florida Smathers Library and a jazz concert at the Senior Recreation Center.*

*NOW, THEREFORE, I, Craig Lowe, by the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Gainesville, do hereby proclaim February 24, 2013 as*

## *Visionaires Day*

*in the City of Gainesville and invite all our citizens to join me in recognizing the Visionaires for their exemplary service to and for the Gainesville Community.*

*IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the official seal of the City of Gainesville, Florida, this 29<sup>th</sup> day of January, C.E., 2013.*

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*Craig Lowe  
Mayor*