Civil Rights Activists Honored

Fund Spotlight - Freedom Riders Park Endowment Fund

The Freedom Riders were a brave group of civil rights activists, both black and white, who tested the desegregation of the interstate bus routes and terminals in the southeastern U.S. in 1961. The group met opposition throughout the South. On Mother’s Day, May 14, 1961, a mob of Ku Klux Klansmen firebombed a busload of the activists five miles outside Anniston.

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This historical site will draw students, scholars, tourists, families and international visitors. Through the development of this park, a small city’s inspirational story will be told and made more available as a part of the entire nation’s civil rights history. The park will boost the region’s effort to promote human understanding of past events as well as heritage and tourism.

A Park Development Committee and an Advisory Committee have been formed to oversee the project. The project has caught the eyes and financial support of many interested parties. The Calhoun County Commission approved a $10,000 donation towards development of the Park; Dr. Barbara Boyd, State Representative, obtained an Alabama Community Service Grant for $11,555; Alabama Power Company contributed $34,000; Westinghouse Anniston contributed $25,000; as have many individuals including Senator Del Marsh who obtained an Alabama Department of Tourism Grant. These generous gifts will help develop and maintain the park.

Dr. Boyd believes the park will be a powerful monument and educational tool in Anniston. Boyd shares, “We have just as much civil rights history as Birmingham or Montgomery, but until now we haven’t done enough to acknowledge it.”

Pete Conroy, co-chair of the Freedom Riders Park Committee, said the core of the park will be a larger-than-life bronze statue depicting a scene from the bus burning. It will showcase a moment in which a (12- year old white girl), Anniston resident Janie Forsyth, witnessed the burning bus and was dismayed that neighbors would not lend a hand to gasping Freedom Riders who had escaped the smoke-filled bus. Janie offered Freedom Rider Hank Thomas a glass of water shortly after his bus was firebombed. “The story is, that this was a moment of hope,” Conroy said. According to Conroy, officials are looking into the possibility of making Freedom Riders Park a

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Growing to Serve

In November 2013, the Foundation began outgrowing its current space. The recruitment of trustees from all counties in our service area, the addition of interns, and training for not-for-profit organizations dictated the need for more space. Two additional office suites on the first floor of Quintard Tower were purchased. The renovation has allowed for a more open and spacious flow, additional offices, a larger reception area, a small conference room, and a larger board room. Renovations to the Foundation offices began in April of 2015 and were completed 75 days later on June 15, 2015.

The renovation added 1,428 square feet of space to the original 2,972 sq. ft. office. The larger board room features new chairs and a virtual meeting solution which enables meeting participants not able to attend in person to still participate virtually, seeing and hearing all aspects of the meeting.

The gracious reception area will welcome events for years to come.

An enlarged workroom now holds all Foundation working files and supplies. Fund holders or fund beneficiaries may utilize the conference room and board room for meetings.

On June 15, 2015, the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama held a soft opening of their newly renovated facility for current trustees, past trustees, and Anvil Society members. Anvil Society members are individuals and families who have made a planned or deferred gift to the Community Foundation. The event began at 5 p.m. and allowed attendees to tour the new offices while enjoying food and refreshments provided by Classic on Noble.

“The event had a wonderful turnout and was a great success,” said Director of Trustee and Donor Relations, Susan Waldron, “We wanted our donors and trustees to be the first to see the growth of the Foundation and to let them know we will be here to honor their legacy gifts for many years to come.”

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national park, which would be a marvelous initiator for economic development for West Anniston and the western area of Calhoun County.

Two funds have been created with the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama to financially support the Freedom Riders Park:

Freedom Riders Park Non-Endowed Fund supports the development of the park as a place of reflection, appreciation, and public education regarding Civil Rights. Donations to this fund will support the building of the park.

Freedom Riders Park Endowed Fund will grow a pool of funds to will be used for the maintenance of the Park forever.

If you would like to contribute to these funds you may do so in a variety of ways and at any time. Consider making a gift in recognition of a special occasion, memorial or honorarium. Use the Donate Now button on our secure website; www.yourcommunityfirst.org or mail your donation to the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama, P. O. Box 1826, Anniston, Alabama, 36202; or, call our office to discuss the wide variety of gifts we accept. All gifts are tax-deductible.
New Funds Established

The Altrusa International Club of Anniston, Alabama, Inc. provides perpetual support to programs and services for at-risk women and children in Calhoun County. Founded in 1965, Altrusa International Club of Anniston, Alabama, Inc. is a local not-for-profit organization that works to better the community through leadership, partnership, and service. Club members are business and professional women with a desire to improve their community. Through the years, the club has focused on literacy and has expanded their philanthropy to help women and children. With this in mind Altrusa has established two funds with the Community Foundation: an endowed fund, Altrusa Women & Children's Fund and a non-endowed fund, Altrusa International Club of Anniston Charitable Fund.

Girlfriend Gala Fundraiser Supports Women and Children in Calhoun County.

On September 24, 2015 at 6:00 p.m., members of the Altrusa International Club of Anniston, Alabama will welcome area ladies and roll out the red carpet for Anniston's first Girlfriend Gala. This tablescape event will bring women together and feature beautiful and unique tablescapes decorated around a movie, play or television series. These girlfriends will enjoy a glamorous evening of food and fun. Proceeds from the event will be granted from the Altrusa Women & Children's Fund to local not-for-profit organizations that support women and children in northeast Alabama. Tickets are $50 and may be purchased by calling 256-453-2618.

Committed to Excellence

Currently, 14 organizations are actively pursuing Standards for Excellence® accreditation. The third class of applicants began the application process in February, 2015. This class is comprised of ten agencies which are working tirelessly to complete and submit their application to the Institute in September, 2015. The second group of applicants are in their final stages of becoming Standards for Excellence® accredited. It is anticipated that these four organizations will receive full accreditation this fall and will join the first group of nine agencies that hold the Seal of Excellence!

Donta Council joins staff as Programs Administrator

In an effort to better serve our donors and community partners, the Community Foundation proudly announces that Donta Council has joined the staff full time as Programs Administrator. In this role, Donta will assist the Vice President of Programs in conducting efficient and effective grant and scholarship processes and initiatives, and maintaining accurate records, files and reports for designated Foundation programs. Donta will continue to serve as the Standards for Excellence® Coordinator in addition to executive assistant to the President & CEO. Donta received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia and his Masters of Public Administration from Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama.

Please join us in congratulating Donta. You may reach Donta at dncouncil@yourcommunityfirst.org or by phone, 256-231-5160, ext. 18.

Summer Learning

Aliyah Salame joined the staff as a summer intern in May 2015 during her second year of her bachelor’s degree in international studies at Duke University. She was drawn to the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama because of her drive to help others through community service. Her passions reside in advocating for equal opportunities for all individuals regardless of background. Aliyah worked with the Community Foundation on research for the Anniston Police Department about the grants available to fund police officers and the Community Foundation's 100 year legacy project about Susie Parker Stringfellow.

Tianna Mason joined the staff as a summer intern in May of 2015 during her final year of her bachelor’s degree at Florida State University. She’s majoring in editing, writing, and media with a double major in Sociology. Her passion resides in multiculture young adult literary research, gender inequalities and social stigma. Tianna worked with the Community Foundation on writing the Community Foundation's 100 year legacy project about Susie Parker Stringfellow. She worked as a media and marketing assistant and developed press releases and provided assistance for Foundation events and projects. Tianna also worked at the Talladega Daily Home as a student editor and designer.
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Evans Litigation Scholarship Fund
If you answered YES and were the owner of residential property in Calhoun County between 1999 to 2010, you may qualify for $250 to $500 in financial assistance for each piece of property owned.

Qualified applicants must be:
The owner, spouse, child, grandchild or dependent of the residential property owner.

Apply online, click the QR code or call for information
Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama
256-231-5160 or www.yourcommunityfirst.org