

Haitian Culture Examined at PBC School District's Summer Institute

This year marked the 25th anniversary of the School District of Palm Beach County's African and African American Summer Institute. The third day of the four-day event featured a Conference on Haitian Culture and Language.

Many of the people in attendance were teachers and other school staff who benefited from information provided by the keynote speaker Dr. Edwidge Crevecoeur-Bryant. She offered valuable information to help school-based personnel provide better academic support and community resources to Haitian students and families. Institute participants also included school administrators, commu-

nity leaders, parents, and other education stakeholders.

"The goal of the institute is to share resources with school staff including teachers, administrators, and support personnel, and hear the voices of the community," said Nadilia Charles, the ESOL Instructional Specialist in the District's Multicultural Education Department.

Given that Haitian students comprise approximately seven percent of the District's student population, a panel of students along with a roundtable of Haitian community leaders spoke about the challenges and issues that Haitian students face upon entering a new school system.

The panel expressed their

ideas about initiatives the District can implement to better support Haitian students and ease their transition, considering the need to acclimate students to a different culture, language, and education system.

Additionally, several breakout sessions took place in which participants learned about the social-emotional needs of Haitian Creole students, how to promote student engagement, and examine the Haitian Creole culture through the lens of literacy instruction.

"It was such an enlightening experience," said Murielle Alcenat, a teacher at Lantana Elementary School.

Palm Beach County's New Opportunity Zone Website

Recent updates to the Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability's (DHES) home page on the Palm Beach County main website highlight the federal Opportunity Zone Program and U.S. Treasury-designated opportunity zones located in Palm Beach County.

The Opportunity Zone Program is an economic development tool designed to spur economic development and job creation in economically distressed communities. Updates include links to business and housing-related resources for investors and developers, a listing of each local opportunity zone by census tract and municipality, and maps identifying all designated opportunity zones throughout Palm Beach County.

Additional information includes links to the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Opportunity Zone Program FAQs, rules for investing in opportunity zones, and federal contacts to get more information.

PBC Interactive, the county's free, public-search tool designed to facilitate development with parcel-based business information in real time, has been updated to include opportunity zones. PBC Interactive integrates more than 20

search layers, adding high levels of detail to guide economic and real estate development decision making.

For example, search results may be enhanced with information on existing and future land use; parcel ownership and valuation; and identification of businesses based on the North American Industry Classification System. Search results can also identify transportation routes (bus, train and au-

tomobile), educational institutions, and community redevelopment agencies.

PBC Interactive is accessible from Palm Beach County's main website, pbcgov.com with additional links throughout the DHES webpages. For more information on opportunity zones, visit <http://discover.pbcgov.org/HES/Pages/Opportunity-Zones.aspx>.

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