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YMCA SUCESSFULLY HOSTED ITS 15TH ANNUAL MLK INSPIRATIONAL WEEKEND WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKER XERNONA CLAYTON AND A DAY OF SERVICE WITH OVER 500 VOLUNTEERS

Xernona Clayton delivered an encouraging and fierce keynote address at the Inspirational Breakfast in Broward and the Luncheon in Miami.

SOUTH FLORIDA, January 21, 2018 – The YMCA of South Florida held its **15th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Inspirational Weekend on January 18-21, 2019**. The weekend of activities included a breakfast in Fort Lauderdale, a luncheon in Miami and a Day of Service in communities of both counties.

MLK Inspirational Weekend brought together a myriad of South Florida business leaders who joined the YMCA in this cause. "The YMCA has a poignant connection to Dr. King because he grew up and held civil rights meetings at the Butler Street YMCA in Atlanta, so honoring Dr. King and giving back on a holiday named in his honor is very appropriate," said Sheryl A. Woods, CEO & President of the YMCA of South Florida. "What makes it even better is that, along with our partners – JM Family Enterprises, the Miami Heat, BB&T, City National Bank, Milner, Ocean Bank, and so many others, we're providing an opportunity for the community to Stand for Something."

The tribute to Dr. King's Legacy started as a breakfast in Broward County, but has grown over the years to include a luncheon in Miami and a Day of Service. This year, the event was honored with broadcast journalist and corporate executive **Xernona Clayton** as the keynote speaker. She shared her inspirational stories at the breakfast and luncheon. Ms. Clayton, aside from working closely with the King family, was also the first black person in the South to have her own television show. She is the creator, founder, President and CEO of The Trumpet Awards, a worldwide televised award show highlighting the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans. She has a large number of accolades and accomplishments surrounding her dedication to promoting racial understanding and her persistent fight against prejudice and bigotry.

The breakfast and luncheon were held on Friday, January 18. The breakfast, presented by JM Family Enterprises, took place at First Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale, and the luncheon, presented by the Miami Heat, took place at the AmericanAirlines Arena.

They included Spirit of Community Award recipients, honoring the work of local community leaders, as well as, Youth Leadership Award recipients who receive scholarships in recognition of their commitment to social activism, civic engagement and the diversity ideals of Dr. King.

Dave W. Cash Youth Leadership Award

- **Breakfast:** Albert Gonzalez, senior at Boyd Anderson High School
- **Luncheon:** Alvaro Perpuly, senior at Coral Reef Senior High School

Spirit of Community Award

- **Breakfast:** Trailblazers of Broward County, an organization dedicated to preserving and promoting local African-American history and achievements in Fort Lauderdale

- **Luncheon:** The Children's Trust, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County

The annual Day of Service took place on the King Holiday, January 21, with volunteers in Broward County joining the L.A. Lee YMCA Family Center, Broward College, the City of Fort Lauderdale Mayor Dean Trantalis, City Commissioners, and other sponsors, to improve the Sistrunk community through a number of projects. Those projects included a two-mile clean-up of the community; planting trees to beautify streetscapes; assembling and painting outdoor small free libraries; revamping outdoor meeting and reading spaces; as well as, arranging school supplies and care packages for needy youth.

In Miami, the Village of Allapattah YMCA engaged volunteers in a community clean-up that began at Moore Park in partnership with Ocean Bank and the City of Miami. Volunteers also participated in a beautification project at PACE Miami School for Girls, sponsored by FPL.

For more information about the YMCA of South Florida, MLK Inspirational Weekend events and other YMCA programs please contact the YMCA of South Florida main office at 954-334-9622.

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About the YMCA of South Florida

The Y is a leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Every day, the Y works hard to build healthy, confident, connected and secure children, adults, families and communities through over 200 afterschool, preschool, special needs, sports, camp and youth programs, family centers, and senior health outreach sites. To learn more, visit www.ymcaofsouthflorida.org, connect on Facebook or Twitter, or call a Y near you.