

Meet the Nominees for the South Florida Council of African Elders

Seven Elders with 499 Years of Lived Experience Provide Hope and Lead Healing

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA, USA, July 11, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The South Florida Council of African Elders](#),

a grassroots group that seeks to restore the wellness of the South Florida African (descent) community by reclaiming the guidance of elder wisdom for the good of the present and the future, has received its first seven nominees. Elder Councils, which historically governed pre-colonial African communities, maintained order and wellbeing which largely eliminated the need for other bodies that

enforced rules and laws. Even today, community members and government officials in many countries utilize the wisdom of Elder Councils in ways that promote natural solutions and non-violent healing and growth among people.

Elder Council nominees, Dr. Judith Ann, Shango Ra (Julian Garvin), Margaret Watson, Rique Kofi

(Orville Rique-Kofi Ennis), Dr. Valerie Hendrix, Jonathan Anderson and Edner A. Jean have a combined 499 years of lived experience to gift to the healing of the African (descent) community in South Florida. The nominees, all of whom have a lifetime of activism and service to the community, come from backgrounds as educators, clergy, social service workers, counselors, military experts, and more. Each nomination is reviewed by a committee composed of community members of all ages. If the nominating committee raises no concerns, the candidates begin their journey toward the required Rite of Eldership, a process similar to those that mark passages held at other life crossings such as birth, adulthood and marriage, with

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Sonia Bailey



the support the Unity Ambassadors. The Rite, which is closed to the public, assists the Elders in preparing for the role ahead through an examination of the community's current plights, strengths and needs, as well as the personal and combined wisdom and strength that will promote progress and healing.

One example of community power and Elder guidance, according to Sonia Bailey, one of the Mabalazi Wa Umoja (a Kiswahili term meaning Unity Ambassadors), the support entity for the Council, comes from an incident in another community. Bailey recounts, "A child stole a laptop computer from a local businessman who was about to begin a contract in the child's community. The child sold the device for \$60. On the verge of reporting the incident to the local police, the owner instead called for the child's parents, grandparents and other elders. By the time the community's intervention was complete, the child had learned that his theft of the laptop had cost his community more than 20 jobs. All of the data that the employer needed to carry out the contract was gone, so he was no longer able to hire those people. The child learned a valuable lesson about how his theft and simple gratification of \$60 had cost people he knew and cared about to lose the ability to feed their families and keep roofs over their heads for months to come. The stolen computer was valued at well over \$1,000, so according to law enforcement standards, the child could have acquired a grand theft charge just like that. His future would have changed forever because of the criminal record. Instead, through the intervention of elders, the group helped build a citizen who is aware of and concerned about the impact each of his actions have on the world around him. This example embodies the core tenet of the Cultural Wellness movement: The Culture has the Cure. This means that the solution for the complex problems facing people of [African descent](#) lie within the group."

The Council, having completed the Rite of Eldership, will be formally installed on August 20, 2023, at 1:00 pm at Blue Oasis, a private venue in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. If you'd like to attend, call or text (754) 777-0806.

Find out more about the Cultural Wellness Movement or get involved. Visit www.theculturehasthecure.com, email theculturehasthecure@fireforgedrecovery.com, or text/call (754) 777-0806 for more information.

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