



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts: Amber Hastings
amber@jarelcommunications.com
407-748-8714

Heart of Florida United Way Donates 'Know Your Place' Film to Orange County Regional History Center and Historical Society of Central Florida

ORLANDO, Fla. (June 15, 2026) – Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW) is proud to announce the donation of its award-winning documentary, "Know Your Place," to the Orange County Regional History Center & Historical Society of Central Florida. This gift to the community ensures that the film can be used for education, research and inspiration for generations to come.

"Know Your Place" is a thought-provoking film that showcases the lived experiences of prominent Black Central Floridians before the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Through firsthand accounts from leaders such as Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings, Representative Val Demings, and Judge Belvin Perry Jr., the documentary offers a powerful glimpse into a segregated past. The film captures stories of "colored-only" water fountains, restrooms, and businesses with a surprising amount of compassion and humor.

"We were honored to be trusted to tell the stories of some of Central Florida's most recognizable Black leaders, who remember living in the segregated South before the Civil Rights Act of 1964," said Jeff Hayward, president and CEO of Heart of Florida United Way. "This film is a gift to our community, serving as a powerful educational tool that sparks meaningful conversations and helps us understand our shared history. We are thrilled that the History Center will preserve this important piece of our community's story."

"Val and I were honored to participate in Know Your Place. A documentary film like this ensures that the stories of those who lived through segregation and discrimination are not lost to time. Having the Orange County Regional History Center preserve the voices helps future generations better understand our shared history and inspires continued progress toward equality and inclusion", said Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings.

To celebrate the donation, the film will screen at the Orange County Regional History Center on June 17 (11:30am-1:30pm) as part of the Orange County MLK Initiative's Juneteenth celebration event. It will also play on continuous loop throughout the day on Juneteenth in

recognition of the holiday. Admission to the History Center on June 19 will be free to all patrons thanks to the generous support of Orange County Government.

"History is most powerful when it is told through the voice of those who lived it," said Azela Santana, executive director of the Orange County Regional History Center. "We are deeply grateful to the Heart of Florida United Way for entrusting us with 'Know Your Place.' This film captures an important chapter of Central Florida's story and ensures that future generations can learn from these firsthand experiences with empathy, understanding, and reflection."

"I'm grateful to the Heart of Florida United Way for including Macbeth Studio in this important documentary film project," said Jim Hobart, the film's director. "It was an honor to help capture the stories of these exceptional individuals and record their lived experiences that subsequent generations of Central Floridians will benefit from. These recordings become more valuable as time goes on, especially when voices such as Senator Geraldine Thompson's are silenced by their passing. The ability to still see and hear them tell their stories – in their own words – it's a gift to the future."

The production received critical acclaim, earning two Silver Telly Awards for history and social impact, and a Bronze Telly Award for documentary. The film also received a Golden Brick Award from the Downtown Orlando Partnership.

For more information about "Know Your Place", visit www.KnowYourPlace.org.

About Heart of Florida United Way

Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW) stands for the education, financial stability, health and basic needs of every person in Central Florida. Since 1939, HFUW has delivered programs, invested dollars, and convened community members around important issues impacting Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties. In 2024-25, HFUW served 1 in 4 people in Central Florida through its direct service and funded programs. HFUW is home to notable community resources like the 211 Information & Referral Line; 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline; Mission United program for Veterans; Digital Horizons, an initiative bridging the digital divide; Destination Graduation at Seminole State College; the Planning Council Support program that facilitates community planning and priority setting for HIV services. United Way partners with individuals, local businesses, government, and other nonprofit agencies to open opportunities and close gaps in Central Florida. Visit www.HFUW.org for more information or call (407) 835-0900. Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn at Heart of Florida United Way and on Twitter and Instagram @hfuw.