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Jenna Shaw

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TERRI SCOTT: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BY JENNA SHAW
NNB Student Reporter

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Terri Scott is much more than her title of Administrative Officer for the Office of City Council gives her credit for. She is a model member of the community who has a large heart and the determination and passion to make a difference.

As a leadership project, Scott came up with the idea to make a garden behind the Carter G. Woodson Museum of African American History.

Her idea was chosen for the class project. The idea was that the garden would attract more people to the museum and allow for gatherings such as wedding parties, celebrations, and other events that would generate income for the museum as the space was rented.

The garden behind the Carter G. Woodson museum is Scott’s masterpiece and sacred place. It’s natural beauty attracts people of all backgrounds and can be a place of solitude and reflection or a place for celebration and socializing.

Shortly after the creation of the garden, Scott fell in love with it and became a member of the museum board. The garden is her favorite place in St. Petersburg, Fla.

The museum not only contains African American history, but it represents African American history as well. Like many African American communities, a highway runs straight through it. It is the only museum in St. Petersburg that has windows you can just walk up to and look through. If you think about it, the Dali, Holocaust, Museum of Fine Arts, etc., all keep their history safeguarded behind thick walls and glass cases.

You cannot go up to the window and look inside, it is for those who want badly enough to see it, to take the time to digest the information, and see the significance of each thing, who can look upon them.

The Carter G. Woodson museum provides St. Petersburg with factual information on how and who was responsible for the start of St. Petersburg and how it came to be what it is today.

A lot of St. Petersburg history is wrapped up in African American history and they won’t tell you that over at the St. Petersburg Museum of History. Carter G. Woodson African American Museum gives the St. Petersburg citizens the opportunity to see exactly what was so influential about leaders such as Perkins and Gibbs and why schools have been named after them.

Scott said students arrive at the museum on field trips, not even knowing who Carter G. Woodson is and why he is important, let alone someone their own school is named after.

Scott sees history as an important thing for youth to know and stresses it’s importance in everyday life. She says history is now, it is happening every moment all around us. Every day we wake up, we enter the lives of others and are touched by the people around us, history depends on us. We should live as though we would want to be remembered. We must make every moment count.

A former Savannah, Ga. resident, Scott has made St. Petersburg home for her and her family. Of the thirty-three years in Florida, twenty-six have been spent working for the city.
Scott has organized other events to help people of all ages such as a tea party for young girls, a breast cancer awareness event, and a winter social in the garden.

Scott wanted to make a difference in the lives of the youth in St. Petersburg. Her goal was to change the outlook of as many as possible, but she would start with a dozen.

She created the Silver Spoon Tea Party. Her and some female friends each paired up with a young girl from a local girls group. The women sponsored the girls for their tea party event. They bought the girls all new outfits including slips, fancy dresses, shoes, accessories, and satin pajamas.

The girls were picked up in a limo, taken to the hair salon, dressed up in their new outfits, learned some basic etiquette, and went to Carrabba’s Italian Grill where they met the mayor. The girls felt and were treated more important.

After dinner they all went to a nice hotel where they stayed the night. Scott said the difference in attitude and behavior was remarkable between the time the girls were picked up and the time they were dropped off. Their whole attitude changed. They went from grumpy and low-self-esteemed girls to proper ladies.

It was a culturally enhancing and enriching activity for the girls. Lessons were learned and memories were made that will last a lifetime.

November will prove to be a promising month for more events planned at the Carter G. Woodson Museum with the help of Scott.

The first Saturday there will be a fashion show featuring work from 3 different designers featuring clothing on every sized model from petite to plus. It will take place in the garden behind the Carter G. Woodson museum.

On the second Saturday, the garden will feature Jazz Under the Oaks. There will be music and drinks from 5-9 p.m.

The garden was just one of the many gifts Terri Scott gave to the community. Even though she doesn’t agree with the title of community leader, she is a voice of the people. She helps the community in whatever way possible and her contributions will continue to change the lives of others for years to come.