

Order of Service

Master of Ceremony

Dr. Bobby Jones, Bobby Jones Gospel

Processional

Libation for a Fallen African Chief
Chief Kunle Ajayi

Aare Gbadega of Ijoku-Sagamu, Ogun State, Nigeria

Poem

"Phenomenal Woman"

Patricia Warren

Tributes and Testimonials

Sympathy Resolution

Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners

Honorable Audrey M. Edmondson, Commissioner District 3

Honorable Barbara Jordan, Commissioner District 1

Testimonial

Honorable Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler,

Former Miami-Dade County Commissioner

Presentation

Jack Kardys, Director

Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department

Musical Tribute

Johnny Sanders

International Gospel Music Recording Artist

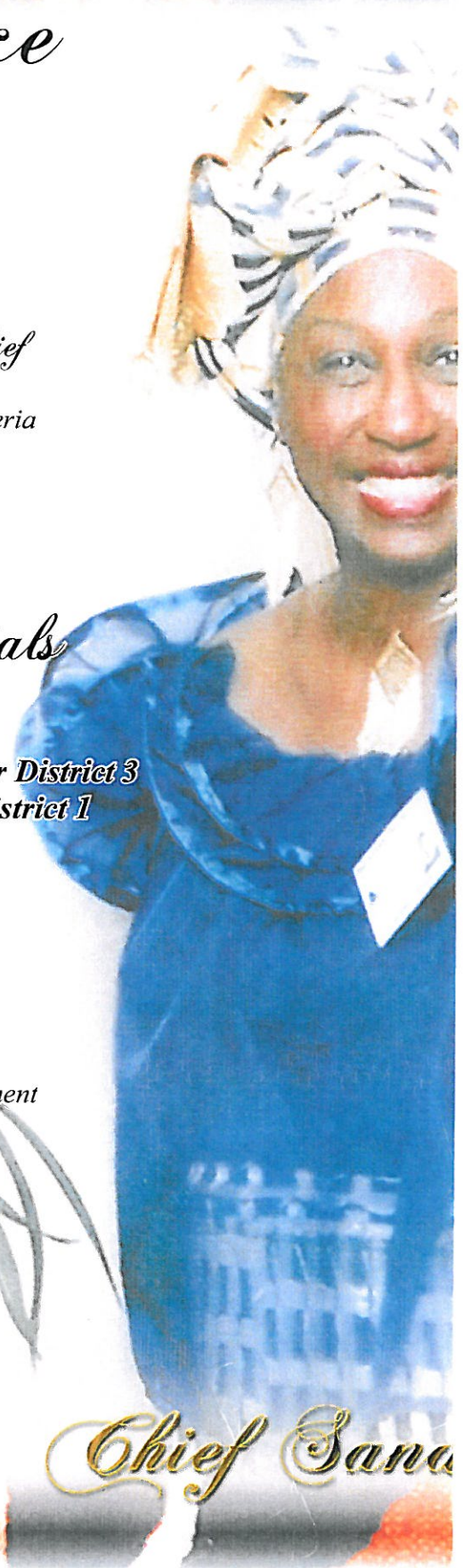
Testimonials

Miami Northwestern Class of 1965

Diaspora Arts Coalition, Inc.

Shirley Richardson, President

Chief Sana



Musical Tribute

Bobby Stringer

*Soul Man Recording Artist and Composer
and the Leader of the Special Touch Band*

Mel Dancy

Singer, Composer, Recording Artist, Lyricist, Poet and Actor

Testimonials

Sunshine Jazz Organization

Keith Valles, President

Urban League of Greater Miami

T. Willard Fair, CEO

Musical Tribute

Othello Molineaux

*Innovator of the Steel Pan Drum
Composer, Recording Artist, Author and Teacher*

Brenda Alford

*Vocalist, Recording Artist, Composer,
Actress, Storyteller and Teacher*

Testimonials

**Africa Reconnect Program, Inc.
and the African Diaspora**

Desmond Alufohai, Founding Member

Ancestral African Drumbeat

Tribute

Body Nation Dance Company, Inc.

"Untold Story"

Musical Tribute

Alice Day

*Singer, Recording Artist, Lyricist, Poet
and Radio Broadcasting Personality*

Acknowledgements and Closing Remarks
LaChandra Whitaker and Jevon Lindsey

ell Rivers



Miami-Dade County

Sandrell Rivers was truly a phenomenal woman. Her unstoppable energy, her steadfast commitment to the community, her desire for all to have access to the arts, her willingness to help wherever needed, and her sense of humor... made her phenomenal.

For 21 years, she worked for the Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department. And, during that time she was instrumental in shaping how our Department presented arts to the community. Whether it was presenting a concert in a park, coordinating a festival, managing the entertainment for the Youth Fair or the Mayor's annual picnic, or bringing international recording stars to the Joseph Caleb Auditorium, you could see Sandrell's touch on each production.

Sandrell also served as a mentor to many Parks staff and artists in the community. She took them under her wing, gave them advice and helped them advance in their careers. She was committed to excellence and was able to pull the best out of the people with whom she worked.

Maya Angelou said, "I've learned that people may forget what you said, people may forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." And while Sandrell's commitment to the arts and the community will be felt for years, it will be the lasting impression of how she made you feel that we will carry with us.

Jack Kardys
Director, Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department



Sunshine Jazz Organization



In Memory of Chief Sandrell Rivers

On January 1, 2010, Miami lost one of its greatest leaders, Chief Sandrell Rivers, Area-Wide Arts Supervisor in the Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department and Founder and President Emeritus of Diaspora Arts Coalition. Sandrell was the overseer of program development and management of the performing and visual arts in the Arts & Cultural Division of the Art. She made her mark in the world-wide arena of arts and entertainment.

China and I met Chief Rivers in 1990 and she became the dearest friend a person could have. We shared ideas, planned events and traveled everywhere together. Every month of the year our families shared birthdays of each family member including siblings and grandchildren.

One of her notes she wrote when her birthday was celebrated at my house read:

Thelma and China are my most beloved friends! Saying thanks cannot express my gratitude for your open arms and hearts. You all made my "58th" a great day to remember for years to come. Opening your home was beyond the call. It made me feel so special..... and loved. I love you dearly, and the family as well. You all are my extended family. Still, I must say thanks and I do look forward to many, more. May God forever bless you! Sandrell

Sandrell joined our jazz group, "The Sunshine Jazz Organization" (SJO), a non-profit organization which promotes jazz to enhance interest and appreciation of jazz music. Using her creativity, she integrated the SJO's programs with Metro Parks to bring jazz to youth. A series of jazz workshops and concerts were experienced by thousands of youth and families. She was dedicated and loyal to the goals and objectives of the organization and worked as a consultant for SJO for twenty years.

Sandrell has received numerous Awards for her outstanding contributions to the cultural life of Miami. Her pride rests with the fact that whatever she does, it is done out of love for her community and mankind. I know I will miss her smiling face and kindness to mankind. She will always be remembered as my dear and beloved friend.

Her Best Friend, Thelma

The Sunshine Jazz Organization, based in Miami, Florida, is committed to the idea that the measure of a society can be found in its culture. Music is of the utmost importance in the continual growth and advancement of our community, our students and our position as a cultural leader in the U.S. and the Americas. In the Greater Miami area we boast world-class jazz artists on every instrument and a variety of vocal styles. Our entire team is committed to bringing to the public performances by these great jazz artists. We invite you to enjoy most events free or at a nominal charge, and hope you will continue to go out and support live jazz, allowing us to continue to provide exciting live jazz in concert venues and local nightspots.



Diaspora Arts Coalition

To the family of Chief Sandrell Rivers, we offer our condolences for your great loss. Sandrell was of kindred spirits to those in the arts community. Her love and passion for the arts is what she brought to the table when she was selected by a group of artists to be the founding president of the newly formed Diaspora Arts Coalition (DAC). Her knowledge, vision, eloquence, strong community connections, camaraderie and unselfish time convinced us all that she was destined to lead. And that she did. She expanded our itineraries to embracing many collaborative projects such as The Heart of the City sponsored by Commissioner Barbara Carrey; Arts in the Parks sponsored by Miami-Dade Parks; The Music Month Festival; and many others.



Sandrell was the glue that held DAC together. She became that driving force behind much of the successful initiatives accomplished. She moved swiftly and was always poised for many of the challenges that confronted the organization. She was the mother and guiding spirit of the arts community-always demanding the best and nurturing the weakest. If one didn't accomplish the task fast or well enough, she'll say, "I'll do it." She was determined to see DAC accomplish its goals and become that viable entity that makes a difference in the community in which we live.

We will miss her, but her work has been accomplished and GOD has called her home. She has left the torch for us to carry and some huge shoes to fill. During her darkest moments, she was still determined to give of herself. In her frail and soft-spoken manner, she was advising and inquiring about the tasks needing completion. When asked, "Why don't you take a break?" her reply was "child, I'll be doing this until whatever happens, happen." And that she did. Rest in peace my dear friend for we will continue the work.

Shirley Richardson, President, Diaspora Arts Coalition

Condolence Messages from Board Members

Words cannot even begin to express my sorrow in the loss of a dear friend, which Sandrell Rivers was to the entire Arts Community. To me, Sandrell was more than a friend. She was like a sister that stuck by me. I will always remember and cherish the memories that we shared throughout the years. The world has lost one of the kindest, most concerned friend of the Arts. Please know that she will be missed, dearly missed. Although, it is difficult today to see beyond the sorrow, I loved Sandrell like a sister, but God loved her even more. You know, it take trust to grow a friend. This friend was a treasured gift most rare. She was the light of the Diaspora.

Arise shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. Isaiah 60:1

André Montell, Treasurer, Diaspora Arts Coalition

To Chief Sandrell Rivers and family, I thank the ancestors for bringing forth a wonderful person. I thank God for meeting Chief Rivers in 1997 while selling my African Collections. I thank you for sharing your mother and grandmother with me and my family. The love Chief Rivers had for our culture and heritage will always be a conversation from Africa to the Americas. Her inspiration touched so many lives. Thank you for your wisdom, knowledge, tenacity and love for our culture.

P. Olayinka LeConte, Diaspora Arts Coalition Board Member

Chief Sandrell was my beacon - my shooting star. She was my root and through her I learned to spring eternal branches. She's not gone just transformed higher. Together we rode to new heights and carried many others along the way. The flesh may be gone but the spirit lives in me and so many others and I will exhale her essence in each breathe I take as an artist, teacher and person.

Shamele Jenkins, Past President & Diaspora Arts Coalition Board Member

Urban League of Greater Miami



The Board, CEO and Staff of the Urban League of Greater Miami send condolences to the family of the Late Chief Sandrell Rivers. Sandrell was a highly respected, very unique Board Member and an Unsung Community Leader. Just as her life's work, community service and personal contributions are recorded in the history of this community, we have also recorded her commendable service to mankind in the historical pages of the Urban League of Greater Miami. All thanks to God and each of her family members for sharing her talent as she passed this way.



Miami Northwestern Class of 1965

Sandrell Rivers is an exceptional member of the graduating class of 1965, one of the largest classes to ever graduate from Northwestern. Her dramatic skills emerged and flourished around us during those formative years, as we considered the many possibilities for her future. With tremendous pride, we watched her commitment to numerous contributions to the arts community in Miami-Dade, in full African inspired regalia.

She was equally committed to our class and our continued involvement in the community. As our 2005-2010 alumni class vice president, her last contribution was to develop new bylaws.

We will forever honor her memory in our hearts.



Once a Bull, Always a Bull!
An Exceptional Member of the Class of 1965



Africa Reconnect, Inc.

Tribute to an African Queen

Chief Sandrell Ihinosen Rivers was a selfless and untiring advocate for all. She was always eager to listen, willing to learn and ready to act. We shall forever remember you Chief because you were not a reservoir with a limited amount of resources; you were a channel attached to unlimited divine resources. You saw a borderless world and you rekindled the spirit of mankind to the benefit of all.

Chief Rivers offered herself, her industry, her talents and her energies to action, toward reconnecting with the motherland. She was a founding member of Africa Reconnect Inc., whose mission is to educate and reconnect all peoples of African descent & Africans in the Diaspora with the motherland through arts & culture, education, international relations & exchange programs. Her passion for Africa and her advocacy for Africa were contagious. She was a quintessential African-American woman and an Ambassador for her community.

She was a Board of Trustee for the Nigerian-American Foundation (NAF), a Matron of the Gambian Association of Florida, and she attended countless events hosted by African organizations almost ritualistically. She always said that she was an African not because she was born in Africa, but because Africa was born in her. She was crowned an African Chief – “Gbesiewu of Badagry” in 2004 by His Majesty King Akran of Badagry Kingdom, Lagos, and State, Nigeria.

It was a privilege to know her and to work closely with her. On behalf of all of us from your “African constituency” we say goodbye Chief and we pray that God grant you eternal peace.

Andrew Osolase
President, Africa Reconnect Program

Desmond Alufohai
Founding Chairperson, Africa Reconnect Inc.



Chief Rivers and Johnny Saunders overlooking Park Golf Course in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

Condolence Messages from Africa

I just heard the news a few minutes ago about the passing of Chief Rivers and I immediately thought of you. I still remember meeting both of you during one of your trips to Nigeria. It only seems like yesterday when we all clicked like one family. WOW! What a great loss!

Chief Rivers was so full of life and always looking at the brighter side of things. I know this is a major blow for you, her family, and the African Diaspora. I pray that God will grant you and the entire Miami community the fortitude to bear the loss of such a great friend and confidant.

May her humorous, smiling, caring and gentle soul rest in perfect peace. I feel your pain. May almighty God bless you all.

Chief Babajide Olatunde-Agbeja, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

I convey my deepest sympathy and condolence to the Rivers family and to the entire Miami community for this great loss. I appreciate Chief Rivers contributions and assistance to me and to the people of Badagry. My visit to Miami in 2004, was in response to her invitation to participate in a program she organized to reconnect African Americans to the motherland.

May her soul rest in eternal peace.

His Majesty, The Akran of Badagry Kingdom, Lagos, Nigeria

Thank you for this information. Please extend my sympathy to her love ones and family. Chief Rivers was a great advocate for culture and business and an Ambassador for Miami-Dade during her visit to South Africa in 2007 with the ITC trade delegation.

Ms. Tongila Manly, Johannesburg, South Africa

Condolence Messages

May her soul rest in peace. Chief Rivers had charisma, compassion and a true daughter of the African Diaspora. We'll miss her greatly. Farewell Chief!

Dr. Erhabor Ighodaro, Miami-Dade County School Board

On behalf of the JEBA Companies and The Urban Theatre and Entertainment Festival, we pay tribute to Chief Sandrell Rivers who has made the world a better place from Miami to Africa. May she rest in peace.

Ed Haynes & Julia Brown

Everyday my sistah the Chief trained us to see that the world is our stage and that we should perform even if but for one giving our best and seeking nothing in return because a seed grows many branches.

Shamele Jenkins, President The Nubian Sistahood; President, Lip Tongue & Ear Poetry Productions

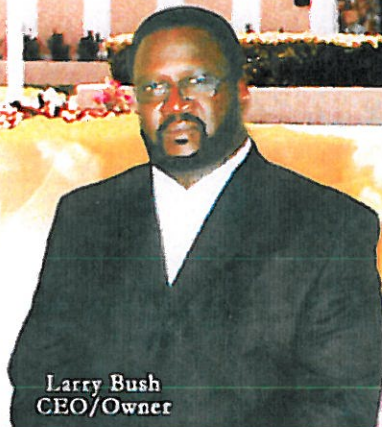
**The Rivers family has kindly requested that in lieu of flowers
financial contributions or donations be made to:
Delancy Hill, P.A., Trust Account
200 South Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2750, Miami, Fl 33131
Memo or Notation: "Chief Sandrell Rivers Memorial Fund"**

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