

the Advocate

richmond heights

New Residential Opportunities in the Heights:

Royal Pointe Apartments and Villages of Richmond Heights



J.L. Brown Development founder James L. Brown (far right) pictured with Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava (center) and MDEAT Executive Director Bill Diggs, alongside the J.L. Brown Development executive team.

Richmond Heights carries its own rhythm, born from deep roots and quiet pride that shows in every corner. You can see it in the way neighbors wave or stop to talk in passing. After World War II, Black veterans came home determined to own something lasting. They built it here, and that strength has carried through the generations.

That story is still unfolding with two new developments: Royal Pointe Apartments and The Villages of Richmond Heights. Both are helping families put down roots and stay connected to the neighborhood they love.

In early September, people began gathering while the air was still soft and bright. Soon after, the groundbreaking for The Villages began. Folding chairs lined the lawn, and children ran around the crowd. J.L. Brown Development hosted the event, with Mayor Daniella Levine Cava and

Vice Chairman Kionne L. McGhee among the speakers. Each reminded residents that progress means keeping history close.

"This work is about creating opportunities, stability, and legacy," said James L. Brown, founder of J.L. Brown Development. **"We're not just putting up buildings. We're investing in the families who built this community."**

For nearly thirty years, Brown has helped shape South Dade's neighborhoods one block at a time. Plans call for roughly 125 new homes spread across Richmond Heights, Cutler Bay, and central Miami-Dade. Some lots are set for single-family homes, others for townhouses, and a few for condos meant for easier living. Several will be reserved for veterans, connecting the project to the community's early days.

New Residential Opportunities in the Heights

(CONT.)



For Brown, *“luxury at affordable prices”* means pride, safety, and design that holds up. It’s about walking into a home that feels earned. The county’s First-Time Homebuyer Program offers up to \$160,000 in help for qualified buyers working toward a down payment. For many families, that kind of support makes ownership possible.

The Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) and the Black Business Investment Fund (BBIF) are backing the effort. Both groups have spent years guiding residents and small builders toward real, lasting wealth. Their role here is to help make sure these homes remain within reach for the long haul.

A few streets over, Royal Pointe Apartments is serving families who want to stay close to home. Royal Pointe stands clean and modern, its lines simple and its spaces open. It’s built for working people who need stability while planning their next step. The design is functional and made for real life. For some, it marks a new beginning. For others, it’s a pause before the next chapter.

Local Business Spotlight

Williams Groceries

Williams Groceries has been part of Richmond Heights for a decade. The small store, located at 14660 Lincoln Boulevard, is owned by Julita Williams, who opened it in 2014 after years of selling jewelry and handbags to save money for her own business. She wanted to create a place that served the people who live in the Heights.

The store carries what neighbors need most: food, cleaning supplies, and small household items. For many residents, especially seniors and families without cars, it provides a convenient and dependable option close to home. Prices are fair, and the atmosphere is welcoming. People come in to shop, but they also stop to talk and check in on one another.

Williams is known for giving back. Every Thanksgiving she gives away turkeys or prepares meals for families who need help. In December she hands out gifts for children and small tokens for adults. She also sponsors the Richmond Giants baseball team and cheerleaders, providing uniforms and support so local kids can stay active.

In recent years, Williams partnered with Community Fridge, a program that installs public refrigerators in neighborhoods where residents can donate or take food freely. One sits outside her store and is stocked daily. *“If someone’s hungry, they can eat,”* she said.



Williams Groceries has become more than a place to buy groceries. It serves as a community hub where neighbors exchange stories and small updates about life in Richmond Heights. Children stop by after school, and regulars greet each other as if they were family.

For the people of Richmond Heights, Williams Groceries stands for consistency and care. It reflects the values that built the neighborhood: hard work, generosity, and pride in taking care of one another.

Under New Leadership

The Richmond-Perrine Optimist Club has long been a part of the story of South Miami-Dade. It began in 1971 when eighty-four men came together to fill a gap they saw in their neighborhood. At the time, there were few organized activities for children. Families needed support, and elders needed help keeping their homes safe. From those needs came a vision that has carried on for more than fifty years.

What started with youth football and cheerleading grew into a place where the community could find help and hope. Over the years, the club added tutoring programs, job training, home repairs for seniors, and



LaTeef Battle
Richmond-Perrine
Optimist Club President

food and clothing drives. It became a hub of connection, care, and opportunity for the people of Richmond Heights, Perrine, Goulds, and beyond.

Now, that legacy continues under new leadership. The club recently brought in LaTeef Battle as its new president. He

steps into the role with a clear focus on rebuilding the Sgt. Joseph Delancy Richmond Heights Park and bringing new life to a long-respected community space.

"The mission of the Richmond-Perrine Optimist Club is to uplift our community by providing resources, support, and opportunities that inspire positive change and improve the quality of life for everyone we serve," Battle said. "As president, my vision is to honor and continue the legacy established by the founders by revitalizing the park and reestablishing it as a cornerstone of community pride, youth development, and positive engagement through sports and service."

The heart of the work has always been the same: empowering young people and strengthening families through mentorship and opportunity. The football fields and classrooms connected to the club have helped



generations of children learn structure, teamwork, and confidence. Many parents say those programs keep their kids focused and out of trouble. The same

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space that once hosted games and tutoring sessions still holds that sense of belonging today.

Battle says one of his first goals is to restore the park that has been central to so many lives. He hopes to make it a gathering place again, where

families feel welcome and children can play safely. Plans also include bringing back community events and expanding athletic and educational programs that reflect the needs of today's youth.





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Get the Year Started on the Right Track

New Year, New You



You Don't Need to Start Over

People make the same promises each new year and try their best to start off right. Planners sit open on the kitchen table. Group chats fill up with people promising to do everything different this time. You can almost feel the pressure to become a brand-new person. But honestly, most of us don't need a whole new version of ourselves. We just need a few better habits and a little more grace for who we already are.

Build Habits, Not Hype

Good habits take time and grow not from rules, but from rhythm, and finding what works. Then doing it again little by little, until it becomes second nature. Some days it's just about drinking some water, stretching your arms, or stepping outside to catch your breath. It's not anything drastic but it helps. Maybe it's making your bed so the day ends on a calm note. You don't have to match anyone else's pace. What matters is what keeps you steady.

Mind Your Money, Grow Your Wisdom

Money plays a big part in all of this too. Families are figuring it out one day at a time by turning one dinner into two, taking turns watching the kids, and finding small ways to make what they have stretch a little further. If you can, take a good look at where your

money is going. Stop automatic payments that keep taking from your account when you aren't using the service. Save what you can, even if it's just a few dollars a week. Talk to younger family members about credit, debt, and saving early. Passing that kind of knowledge down is one of the best gifts you can give.

Care for Community Like Family

Community care still matters just as much as self-care. After everything we have been through, sometimes the best thing you can do is show up for somebody else. It doesn't have to be big. Call your grandmother just to hear her voice. Drop off a meal for a friend who is tired. Sit outside and laugh with a neighbor for a while. Small moments like that feed the spirit in ways money can't. They remind us that no matter how busy or tired we get, we still belong to one another. That is the kind of peace that lasts past January.

Finish Strong, Stay Steady

By the time summer gets here, most folks will have forgotten their resolutions. But those quiet, steady habits are the ones that carry you through. Keep doing what makes you feel whole. Keep showing up for yourself and for your people. That is how you start the year right and finish it even stronger.