

## ON THE ROAD AGAIN



BY RICH POLLACK

## JM Family Enterprises honors African-American achievers

**Automotive legend Jim Moran** was a man of vision.

Decades ago, he saw the potential impact that Japanese imports could have on U.S. market and created Southeast Toyota Distributors,

But Moran's vision far exceeded the automotive industry. It extended into the community, where he and his family's charitable contributions have had a powerful impact on helping people in need.

Moran, who died in 2007, also recognized a need to honor the efforts of those in the community who were making significant contributions but were flying below the radar, if you will.

That vision led to the creation of the African-American Achievers awards, an honor that 22 years later is growing stronger and more prestigious with every passing year.

"The premise that led Mr. Moran to create this program 22 years ago is still relevant today," says Kim Bentley, assistant vice president of Corporate Philanthropy at Deerfield Beach-based JM Family Enterprises, parent company to Southeast Toyota. "There are people in the community doing great things who may not have received the recognition they deserve."

Earlier this week, the tradition created by Moran continued as JM Family Enter-

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prises again recognized the accomplishments of four African-American South Floridians who are making outstanding community contributions.



**Award winners: James F. Griffin II, Estella Pyfrom, Marshall Davis, and Barbara Sharief**

In addition, The Jim Moran Foundation, in partnership with Florida State University, selects a high school senior each year for the Jerome Edmund Gray Youth Achiever award. The award is a needs-based, four-year scholarship to FSU presented by The Foundation with funding provided through the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship at FSU. This year, that award went to Kenny Alexis of Blanche Ely High School in Pompano Beach.

The 2014 African-American Achievers are:

## **Arts & culture: Marshall Davis**

For the past 30 years, Davis has served as managing director for the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center where he helps residents experience history through unique educational programs.

## **Business & entrepreneurship: Barbara Sharief**

Sharief, founder of South Florida Pediatric Homecare, which employs 600 professionals and is regarded as one of the area's most respected home health care operations, is now serving as Broward County's mayor.

## **Community service: Estella Pyfrom**

Using a large portion of her pension fund, earned while working for the Palm Beach County School District, Pyfrom founded Estella's Brilliant Bus, a one-of-a-kind mobile learning center that travels to economically disadvantaged areas that has helped more than 20,000 students achieve their academic potential.

## **Education: James F. Griffin II**

As a teacher and a principal in Broward County, Griffin has created innovative

programs to help students learn and become successful. Using the latest technology available, he has transformed classrooms into international hubs where local students can connect with students around the world.

In addition to providing the recognition, JM Family Enterprises, Southeast Toyota Distributors and JM Lexus will make a charitable contribution of \$40,000 – \$10,000 for each category – to the charity or charities of the honorees' choice. Including the contributions to be made this year,

Those receiving awards were selected from more than 200 nominees, one of the largest groups in the event's history.

"The word is out that this is a prestigious award and that it opens doors for our achievers to connect with others in the community so they can continue with the work they're doing," Bentley said.

Earlier this year, Bentley said, JM Family invited all of the current and past African-American Achievers to a reception, which offered an opportunity for networking and potential future collaborations.

As it has grown and evolved, the African-American Achievers awards have become a gathering point for community members and community leaders who want to recognize the efforts of those who quietly do their work in the community without seeking any recognition. This year more than 1,000 people were on hand for the ceremonies.

After 22 years, Jim Moran's vision of recognizing those making a difference in the community remains stronger than ever.

*On the Road Again is written by Rich Pollack, an independent writer for Delray Beach-based Pollack Communications.*