

# Daytona Regional CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



## ADVOCACY IN ACTION

### *Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Statue Heading to Washington D.C.*

On Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune's 146th birthday anniversary and almost 5,000 miles from her beloved University in Daytona Beach, Florida, a towering 11-foot Four-ton marble statue was unveiled and blessed in Pietrasanta, Italy. The country of Italy is just the first part of the statue's historical journey; its final resting place will end in Washington D.C's., National Statuary Hall with a stop along the way at her former home in Daytona Beach, FL. Dr. Bethune will represent one of only two Florida statues in the National Statuary Hall, replacing E. Kirby Smith, a Confederate General. Dr. Bethune also has the honor of being the first Black American statue in the National Statuary Hall from any state

The statue, which Nilda Comas created, took four years to complete at the cost of around \$400,000. As it arrives in the United States, the figure will hold a temporary place of honor in the Daytona State College News-Journal Center, just down the street from where she started her School for Girls, which eventually became Bethune Cookman University.

Nancy Lohman, president of the nonprofit Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Statuary Board, said, "This is an opportunity to share with our community our beloved trailblazer."

Dr. Bethune's statue will be honored at the Daytona State College's News-Journal Center from September 2021 through January 2022 before making its final destination to Statuary Hall in February 2022. In addition to the 11-foot, Four-ton marble statue, Sculptor Comas also created a similar yet smaller bronze statue of Dr. Bethune that will permanently stand in Daytona Beach's Riverfront Park looking west toward Mary McLeod Bethune Boulevard and her beloved Bethune-Cookman University.



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