

“Sons & Daughters of Africa in the Civil War: A Cultural Celebration” commemorates the contribution of the African-Americans - Sons/Daughters of Africa - to the United States Civil War. The war lasted from 1861 to 1865.

Grand Rapids has Sister City relations with five cities: Ga District, Ghana, Africa; Omihachiman, Japan; Perugia, Italy; Bielski, Poland and Zapapon, Mexico. Through the Grand Rapids Sister Cities International - Ga Committee, the city maintains ties with the Ga District East and Ga District West Sister Cities in Ghana. Tonight’s program also takes note of Ghana’s fight for independence that was occurring at the same time as the Civil War.

This program honors — through their descendents — those who fought for the freedom of Africans in this country, and in particular, those who were Michigan and Kent County contributors. Records show that at least thirty men mustered out of Kent County to join the hundreds who made up the 102nd Colored Troops of Michigan and the thousands who came from other parts of the country. Listed below in bold type are their names and the names of their descendents (in italics).

Honorees

Thomas Cross

Jim Cross

Alfred White

Robert Smith

James Battle

Wenda Fore

William S. Copley

David Butler

Calvin Copley

John Dungle

Stuart Brown

James H. Ford

Eli Hailstock

Elijah Sanders

Peter Sanders

Hamilton Sanders

Jason J. Sanders

Jefferson Anderson

Maurice W. Sanders

Sojourner Truth

Burl McLiechy

Levi Figuers

Cynthia Smith Keys

Samuel Lett

Peggy Williams

Henry Letts

John Letts, Jr.

Littleberry Stewart

James M. Stewart

John Edward Stewart

George W. Stewart

Ashbury Ash

Carolyn Tate

Thomas Jefferson Sunday

Don Newton

William Judge

Benjamin Judge

Amos Clark

Clay Clark

Leroy Edmond Family

Robert Smith

George Smith

Alexander Smith

Samuel Smith

Candice Chivis

Isaac Bailey

Mary Edmond

Robert Smith

Alexander Smith

Ronald Smith

Stephen Todd

Elijah Reed

Alvin Reed

Harris Harden

Ken Todd

Benjamin Guy

Elijah Guy

Shirley Pritchett