

# Rufus Lewis, Nat'L Black Golf Hall of Fame Inductee

Rufus Lewis, a retired Tampa Police Sergeant, was inducted into the Black Golfers hall of Fame in Winston Salem, NC in 1995. Mr. Lewis is a devoted husband of fifty-three years to Cynthia Lewis, father of three children, grandfather of four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. Lewis is a native of St. Petersburg Florida, and is a life-long Tampa Bay area resident. He is a former graduate from Gibbs High School, Gibbs Junior College, Hillsborough Community College, and soon after, he continued his education at the University

of South Florida and University of Tampa.

From 1979 to 1981, Mr. Lewis dominated the Sunshine State Amateur Golfers Association, winning forty tournaments, and two SSAGA state championships. Because of his love for golf: he petitioned, and is responsible for the Willie Black Monument being built near the 10th hole at Rogers Park. Some sixty (60) years ago Willie Black had a vision for a place for African Americans to play golf; Willie and hundreds of African American hands joined together, and cleared land that was full of shrubbery, tree stumps, tangled foliage, and weeds and smoothed

the sand with hoes and rakes, five years later in 1948 Rogers Park was born. Mr. Lewis was not going to let anyone forget who paved the way for Blacks to play golf at their own public golf course. Mr. Lewis is also a prominent figure responsible for renaming a section of 30th Street after Willie Black, who founded the 18th hole public course.

In 1974, Mr. Lewis was one of the four courageous black police officers who filed a joint complaint to the Equal Opportunity Commission against the City of Tampa Department for Discrimination. The EOC's investigation was completed in 1976, and the City of Tampa was cited for numerous discrimination violations. This became a historic moment for black officers in Tampa, as well as the City of Tampa employees, opening the doors of progress for many.

**In 1985 Rufus was awarded the Willie Black Award for his efforts in promoting golf among children and adults. In 1994 he was appointed the Sunshine State Amateur Golfer's Association Junior Golf Program Chairman**

**and he held that position for five (5) years.**

**Mr. Lewis's community involvement and accomplishments are extensive. Some of them include him being involved with the NAACP, United Negro College Fundd, Zeta Phi Beta 2009 Humanitarian, 2011 Gibbs Junior College Hall of Fame Inductee, Jefferson High School Boys Golf Coach, North Tampa Chamber of**

**Commerce Officer, Orchid Social Club, FAMU West Coast Rattler Quarterback Club, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Officers, Loretta Ingraham Community Center Mentoring Program for Youth Director, 1st Flight and the 2003-Jefferson High School Ida S. Baker Distinguished Minority Educator of the**

**Year Award.**