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# Legacy Mural Project Brief



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## PROJECT TITLE INTRODUCTION

The Sgt. Cornel Young, Jr. & Charlotte Woods Elementary School (Young Woods) at the B. Jae Clanton Educational Complex in collaboration with community partners would like to commission a local artist to paint murals that include portraits, symbols and images that best portray Sgt. Cornel Young Jr., Charlotte Woods and B. Jae Clanton, all of whom fought for social and civil equity for the people of South Providence. These murals are meant to promote Social Justice and Civil Rights for all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, while engaging and strengthening our connection with our youth and community. Our goal is to work collaboratively with the community in the development and implementation of this project. We want to ensure that the mural captures and represents the history, pride, and culture of our community. In addition, social justice, and antiracist lessons will be developed, aligned to the school curriculum, to engage students throughout the project and beyond. Our hope is that this project will serve as a bridge between our school community and our surrounding community.

## BRIEF

The Young Woods team is proposing a Community Mural that depicts Sgt. Cornel Young, Jr., Charlotte Woods, and B. Jae Clanton, all for whom the school was named. The mural's key themes revolve around civil rights, social justice, cultural identity, equity, and respect and honor to the black and Indigenous people of color in our community and beyond. Our community has produced many leaders, who fought for equity, and social justice. We want our children to be reminded of this daily, and inspire them to be the next generation of social justice crusaders. The art is intended to be a life-like portrayal of each individual with background images that promote diversity, civil rights, and our community as a whole.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

### Address:

Sgt. Cornel Young & Charlotte Woods Elementary School  
At the B. Jae Clanton Complex  
674 Prairie Ave. Providence, RI 02905



\*wall facing Ocean Street and Recreation Center

## Design Aesthetics:

Preference: Realistic

### The significance of a mural at this location:

In 2001, our school was named after Sgt. Cornel Young, Jr., Charlotte Woods, and B. Jae Clanton. Sgt. Young, Jr. was a proud Providence Police Officer, having followed in father's steps. On January 28th, 2000 Sgt. Young was off duty and wearing regular clothes, while eating dinner at Fidas Restaurant. He saw a man with a gun approaching 2 of his fellow on-duty police officers. Young drew his gun, which he was carrying as required by department rules, and told the man to freeze. The other officers apparently did not recognize Young in plainclothes, told him to drop his weapon multiple times, and opened fire when he did not comply; he was shot six times. Young had apparently not realized they were talking to him. The officers then realized they had shot a fellow police officer and transferred him to a hospital; Young was pronounced dead a short time later. Many believe that this shooting was a result of Racial Profiling and Sgt. Young being a Black man ([Cornel Young Jr.](#)).

B. Jae Clanton, was a Civil Rights Leader and former head of the Rhode Island Urban League. Clanton led the state Urban League from 1985 to 1997. The group helps teen parents, the homeless, and the mentally ill. Under her, the agency's annual budget grew from \$500,000 to \$3 million. She was awarded the American Civil Liberties Union Rhode Island Chapter Civil Libertarian of the Year Award in 1994.

Charlotte Woods, was a well-beloved community and Civil Rights Activist in the South Providence neighborhood where our school resides. Her dedication to our community was admirable. She supported families and individuals garnering the love and respect of all that knew her.

At Young Woods we strive to Honor Sgt. Young, Jr., B. Jae Clanton, and Charlotte Woods's legacies by being committed to learning, teaching, and promoting Anti-Racist practices as well

as standing with our community in the fight for Social Justice and Civil Rights for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. This mural is a bridge to our community showing them that we are allies.

### ***Honoring Charlotte Woods: A Trailblazer for South Providence***

Charlotte E. Buchanan Woods was born in Providence, Rhode Island, on June 17, 1930. She grew up in the city and went to public schools here. In the 1960s, she raised three sons on her own while living in public housing. Even though life was hard, she stayed strong and worked to help her family and others in her community.

Charlotte spent her whole life helping people. She cared deeply about making things better for families. She worked to improve housing, health care, schools, and jobs. Because of her efforts, the city received money to fix homes and help people find better opportunities.

She helped run programs at local schools like Fogarty and Flynn. She started tutoring programs, teen drop-in centers, and food banks. She also created the Roger Williams Day Care Center, which became a model for great childcare all over the country.

Charlotte Woods was a trailblazer—someone who leads the way and breaks barriers. She was one of the first Black women in Providence to lead big community groups. She led the Roger Williams Tenants Association, served as a commissioner for the Providence Public Housing Authority, and was the first Black woman to run for City Council in Providence. She also helped lead the Democratic Committee in the city.

Charlotte worked with many important organizations, including Head Start, the NAACP, the Urban League of Rhode Island, and the South Providence Ministries Alliance. She helped create a center for senior citizens and served on boards that helped families and children across the city. Charlotte Woods showed love, strength, and leadership in everything she did. She inspired others and created real change in South Providence.

The Senate of the State of Rhode Island honored Charlotte Woods for her extraordinary leadership, dedication, and love for the South Providence community. She leaves a lasting legacy of service, family devotion, and belief in the human spirit — an “everyday” mom who made an extraordinary difference.

That’s why our school is named Charlotte Woods Elementary School —to remember the amazing things she did and to honor the difference she made in so many people’s lives.



## *Celebrating B. Jae Clanton: A Community Leader*

B. Jae Clanton was a remarkable woman who made a big difference in Rhode Island. She was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and moved to Providence in 1956 with just a suitcase and a teaching certificate. Even though she didn't know anyone in the city, she was determined to help others.

She started working at the John Hope Settlement House, a place that supports families and children. Later, she earned a master's degree in social work from the University of Connecticut. She married Melvin Clanton, and together they became active members of their community.

Throughout her life, B. Jae worked hard to help people. She was a social worker, helping families in need. She also worked in schools, supporting students with emotional and mental health challenges. In 1973, she became the first woman and the first Black person to lead Family Service, Inc., an organization that assists families.

In 1985, B. Jae became the leader of the Urban League of Rhode Island. Under her guidance, the organization expanded its services to include education programs, job training, housing assistance, and support for young parents. She believed in creating opportunities for everyone.

B. Jae received many awards for her work, including the ACLU Civil Libertarian of the Year Award and the National Urban League's Eastern Region Executive of the Year. She also served on several important boards, like Butler Hospital and the Rhode Island Foundation.

To honor her, the B. Jae Clanton Complex in Providence was named after her. It includes Sgt. Cornel Young Jr. & Charlotte Woods Elementary School, where students learn and grow in her memory.

B. Jae Clanton's life teaches us about the importance of helping others, standing up for what's right, and making our communities better places for everyone.



***Honoring Sergeant Cornel Young Jr.: A Brave Leader from Providence***

Sergeant Cornel Young Jr. was a proud lifelong resident of Providence, Rhode Island. He went to school here and graduated from Classical High School. He always dreamed of helping others and followed in the footsteps of his father, Major Cornel Young Sr., who led the department's community police officers.

In December 1996, Cornel Young Jr. joined the 57th Providence Police Academy and graduated in May 1997. He worked hard and was known for being smart, kind, and

brave. Just a few months later, on September 29, 1997, he officially became a probationary police officer in the Providence Police Department's Patrol Bureau.

But being a police officer wasn't the only way Sergeant Young served the community. He also spent many hours helping children and families at churches across the city. He especially cared about children living in neighborhoods that needed more support, and he gave his time to talk with them, listen, and offer guidance.

People who knew Sergeant Young said he was "friendly, warm, and caring." He was the kind of person who would help anyone, anytime, even if it meant making a personal sacrifice. His dedication to others made a big difference in many lives. Sergeant Young was honored for his courage and service. He received the Medal of Valor and the Purple Ribbon, both awards given to officers who show extraordinary bravery while doing their job.

Tragically, Sergeant Cornel Young Jr. lost his life on January 28, 2000. He was off duty and eating at a diner when he saw someone with a gun threatening two police officers. Sergeant Young, who was wearing regular clothes, stepped in to help—but a terrible mistake was made, and he was shot. He was taken to the hospital but sadly passed away soon after. His death was a devastating loss that deeply affected the entire city.

To honor him, the school now known as Sgt. Cornel Young Jr. & Charlotte Woods Elementary School was named in his memory. Sergeant Cornel Young Jr.'s life teaches us about bravery, kindness, and standing up for others. He showed what it means to care deeply about your community and to give your best, even when it's hard. His legacy lives on in the students who walk the halls of the school named for him.









