

# Legacy

PALM BEACH

INTRODUCING SOUTH FLORIDA'S

## 25 MOST POWERFUL AND INFLUENTIAL BLACK BUSINESS LEADERS OF 2012

6 AN INDEPENDENT SUPPLEMENT BY MIA MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS GROUP INC. TO THE PALM BEACH POST • MONDAY, MAY 28, 2012

### ENTERPRISE

## Curator seeking new 'doll house' for museum

Since 1999, Lori J. Durante has served as Executive Director and Curator of the Museum of Lifestyle & Fashion History. The museum is a nonprofit organization that this Delray Beach native founded.

Lori received her BFA in fashion marketing from American InterContinental University in Atlanta. From 1995 to 2004, she served as the fashion consultant for *Boca Raton Magazine*. At 28, she was the youngest person ever to serve on the Morikami Museum & Japanese Gardens Board of Trustees.

Since founding the Museum of Lifestyle & Fashion History, Lori has curated numerous exhibits that offer retrospective and anthropological insights by showcasing popular cultures and fashions for specific eras. These have allowed her to display historic items from other museums.



Lori Durante has curated numerous exhibits that showcase popular cultures and fashions for specific eras.

Partnerships have included the Louis Vuitton Museum in Asnières, France; and the Historical Museum of Southern

Florida (aka History Miami).

In fact, the inspiration for the Museum of Lifestyle & Fashion History was the

phenomenally successful, popular-culture and retrospective exhibit "40 Years of the Barbie® Doll" in celebration of Women's History Month, March 1999.

More than 20,000 visitors from around the world visited this exhibit through September 2000. Lori's exuberance about Barbie® would seem uncanny if you weren't so impressed and drawn into her exegesis of the doll's iconic relevance to African-American history.

"In the 1960s, Mattel debuted African-American friends of Barbie®. One was Julia, named after the 1968 show *Julia* starring Diahann Carroll." Considering that little-known black-history fact, Lori Durante's excitement about "a white doll" is not as perplexing.

In the winter of 2009, the museum opened in a donated 8,000-square-foot facility in-

side the Boynton Beach Mall. Unfortunately, according to Durante, "The Boynton Beach Mall wrongfully forced MLFH to move to make way for a tenant that can pay market rate."

Nevertheless, she wanted to stress to the public that while donations and funding are being sought for a new home for the museum, the popular culinary bus and walking tours to diverse restaurants in Delray Beach, Boynton Beach and Lantana/Lake Worth continue. "We regularly sell out on some of the Saturdays we have these tours," she proudly proclaimed.

Lori Durante's zeal for integrating fashion and history — and educating the public about their cultural significance — still radiates as the Museum of Lifestyle & Fashion History mobilizes to remain vibrant in Palm Beach County.