

**AMISTAD
RESEARCH
CENTER**

**52ND
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION:**

Soundtrack of New Orleans
TELLING NEW ORLEANS' STORY THROUGH MUSIC
SEPTEMBER 28, 2018 | 6:30 P.M. | ORPHEUM THEATER

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

VERA WARREN WILLIAMS has always been passionate about the preservation and celebration of her African cultural heritage. A 1976 graduate of Mc Donogh #35 Senior High; she founded Community Book Center (CBC) in 1983 while working as a substitute teacher in the New Orleans Public School System. She observed an absence of books and other educational materials for African-American students that reflected their own experiences and the true history and contributions of people of African descent. After sharing books, puzzles and games from her personal library, she noticed the profound affect this had on students when they were exposed to positive images and narratives that mirrored them. The demand for such books grew beyond the annual Black History Month displays in mainstream bookstores in February; thus, CBC was born. As a homebased community service, CBC has grown into a business that is "More than A Bookstore". For over 30 years Vera and "Mama" Jennifer Turner have opened the doors of Community Book Center to many. CBC, a literary and cultural hub, is a local gathering place. It hosts meetings, book signings, children and youth programs, book clubs and other special events. Vera serves on numerous committees and advisory boards and is an educational consultant and public speaker. She currently holds a Bachelor's in Social Work and a Master's degree in Museum Studies both from Southern

University in New Orleans. Vera is married to Dr. Garry Williams and is the mother of one son, Ali O. Williams. They are members of Christian Unity Baptist Church.



**VERA WARREN WILLIAMS
FOUNDER, COMMUNITY BOOKCENTER**