

# Laura Bryant Martin

4299 NW 16th Street - Ashley Condominium #301 - Lauderhill, FL 33313

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## Goal/Objective

To be of service to my community while working with children and adults as a volunteer.

## Professional Career (a total of 60 years experience in the field of education in Broward County, FL)

Guidance Counselor - Dillard High School

Community Outreach Educator - Title I Educational Programs, Broward County

Assistant Principal - South Plantation High School

Guidance Counselor - Hollywood Hills High School

Choral Music Teacher - Blanche Ely High School

## Accomplishments/Activities/Awards

State of Florida Award for Choral Music Presentations: Superior Rating in Performance

Assistant Principal of the Year, South Plantation High School

Administrator of the Year, South Plantation High School - student recommended award

Title I Award for Cultural Arts Performances - given in the auditorium of the main library each month, four schools (elementary-high school) were presented in the cultural arts series & each student (50-80) performed and received recognition

Outstanding Community Support by the Pace Setters of Broward County - students representing 21 high schools (45-60 students) volunteered by giving service to senior citizens such as cutting lawns, washing windows, delivering groceries, driving seniors to activities, presenting holiday concerts & donating toys to nursery schools

Broward County Woman of Year - presented by actor Phillip Michael Thomas

Inducted in Broward County Hall of Fame

Eunice Thomas Merit Award given by The Charmettes, Incorporated

Mother and Son Award - The Links, Inc.

Achievers Award for Community Service - African-American Research Library, Fort Lauderdale

In training at Saint Christopher Episcopal Church as a lay-reader

Broward County Chapter AKA Soror of the Year

Historical proclamation by Broward County School Board for Longest Serving Educator - 60 years of service (2015)

2015 Distinguished Alumni Award presented by Florida A&M University

Cultural Arts Series coordinator for Capital Bank (Regions Bank) and NSU which included Maya Angelo, Margorie Vincent-Miss America & James Earl Jones

Former National President of The Charmettes, Inc. - charity organization spreading cancer awareness and raising funds for cancer research & educational scholarships (*Charter member*)

Current local chapter President for The Charmettes, Inc. (three terms) - Broward County Chapter



MIKE STOCKER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Laura Martin listens to third-grader Jesean Alexis read from the dictionary at Dillard Elementary School. Martin is Broward County's longest tenured teacher, and is retiring after 60 years.

## Longest-serving teacher caps 60 years

### TEACHER

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BY SCOTT TRAVIS  
Staff writer

On the last day of her 60-year career as a Broward County educator, Laura Martin still wasn't ready to say goodbye.

The 81-year-old guidance counselor at Dillard Elementary in Fort Lauderdale was playing a dictionary game with a group of third graders when Principal Angela Brown brought out a cake to mark the historic occasion.

Martin, Broward's longest serving educator, has taught through segregation, Civil Rights, forced busing, an immigration surge and 14 superintendents.

Her students "haven't seen the last of me," she said. She pledged to visit them the first week of school and will volunteer about once a week after that. She also plans to volunteer

### Video

See more about Laura Martin's retirement. [SunSentinel.com/dillardteacher](http://SunSentinel.com/dillardteacher)

at nearby Dillard High and Blanche Ely High in Pompano Beach, where she started her career as a music teacher in 1955.

Martin isn't giving up paid work either. She's landed a part-time job with a college in her hometown of Jacksonville, overseeing a program where seniors tutor elementary and middle school students. She plans to spend about half her year in the Jacksonville area, where she owns a home on Fleming Island, and half in South Florida.

"This is like the middle of my career," she said. "How could I retire? I love education. Every day, I try to make a difference in

the lives of children."

Her schedule will be flexible enough to swim regularly and work on projects at her church, St. Christopher Episcopal Church in Fort Lauderdale. She's also planning trips with family members to Europe and Hawaii.

"She's a dynamo. She has more energy than I do," said Dillard Elementary teacher Virginia Burrell, who is more than 20 years younger. "She's been an invaluable asset and we're really going to miss her."

This is actually Martin's second time leaving the school district. She retired in 1990 as an assistant principal at South Plantation High. But a month later, she was lured back with an offer to work at the district office. She also served as a guidance counselor at New River

Middle in Fort Lauderdale before joining Dillard Elementary in 1998.

She had planned that her 59th year would be her last, but her principal asked her at a School Board meeting in May 2014 to stay one more year. Superintendent Robert Runcie also told her that "60 sounds nicer than 59."

The round number was less important to Brown than keeping Martin as long as possible.

"I tried to get her to stay another year, but unfortunately, she made it very clear she has other plans," Brown said. "And she promised me she would come in one day a week. I couldn't be selfish as long as I get her one day a week."

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See TEACHER, 2B