



Media Contact:
Scottie Campbell
Scottie.Campbell@ocfl.net
407.836.6751

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History Center exhibition, magazine earn statewide honors

Orlando museum receives three awards at Florida Historical Society forum

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – June 2, 2026 – The Orange County Regional History Center’s 2025 special exhibition, *Orlando Collected*, and its magazine, *Reflections from Central Florida*, received three statewide awards on May 28 at the Florida Historical Society’s Public History Forum in Daytona Beach.

During an awards luncheon, Curator of Exhibitions Katie Kelley accepted the David C. Brotemarkle Award for the special exhibition *Orlando Collected*, created for the City of Orlando’s 150th anniversary.

The exhibition told the story of 150 years through 150 rarely seen objects and included community curators who selected items from the museum’s collection for display. Accepting the award from FHS Executive Editor Ben Brotemarkle, Kelley said the History Center sought to create a “celebration of the work the community does to preserve their own history—and to honor that.”

For the second year in a row, the society’s two Golden Quill awards went to History Center publications.

The first, for an outstanding magazine article, recognized Sarah M. Boye for “Crashing Into History: The Syrian American Story Orlando Forgot,” published in the Fall 2025 issue of *Reflections*. Using the little-known 1914 automobile accident of Syrian immigrant Naif Forage as an entry point, the article brings to light a community long absent from Orlando’s historical narrative and challenges readers to reconsider whose stories are preserved, commemorated, and forgotten in the public landscape.

The second Golden Quill, awarded to a series of articles, recognized the two 2025 issues of *Reflections*, which presented a variety of articles about Orlando during its 150th anniversary year. Rick Kilby and Rachel Williams, editors of the two issues, accepted the award.

Based at the Library of Florida History in Cocoa, the nonprofit Florida Historical Society is the state’s oldest cultural organization, established in 1856. Its many projects include the popular *Florida Frontiers* radio and television programs, aired across the state, and *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, an academic journal based at the University of Central Florida. Each spring, the society honors significant contributions to Florida’s history through an endowed awards program focused on books, articles, and other media. Entries are evaluated by independent panels of judges appointed by the society.

The Orange County Regional History Center, housed in a historic courthouse at 65 E. Central Blvd. in downtown Orlando, features four floors of permanent and special exhibitions. The museum is a Smithsonian Institution affiliate and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It is funded in part by Orange County Government through the Community & Family Services Department under Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings and the Board of County Commissioners. The Historical Society of Central Florida Inc. is supported by United Arts of Central Florida and sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. For more information, visit TheHistoryCenter.org.

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