



State Representative James Bush who represent the Brownsville community was very involved in bringing the new Shopping Center to Brownsville participate in the ceremonies with School Board member Dr. Bob Ingram, Dade County Commissioner Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler, and other community leaders. Nations Bank is the major tenant which is the first time a major bank has open a branch office to serve the Brownsville Community.

Image. Representative James Bush III.
(Source: Florida Memory).

Image. 1988 newspaper article about the new Shopping Center in Brownsville, featuring Representative James Bush III and community leaders. (Source: The Miami Times).

State Representative James Bush III

State Representative James Bush III is a career educator, a Baptist minister, and a Florida state legislator from Brownsville. He has served as a member of the Florida House of Representatives from the 109th District for over fourteen (14) years, from 1992 – 2000, from 2008 – 2010, and from 2018 – 2022. Bush was born in Panama City, Florida on February 13, 1955, and grew up during the Civil Rights era. He was the first Black person born in Panama City to be elected to a State-wide office in the State of Florida. When Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968, Bush's father, also a Baptist minister, took him to the funeral in Atlanta, Georgia. The experience inspired Mr. Bush to train in the Kingian philosophy and he completed multiple levels of training under the guidance of Coretta Scott King,¹ and Dr. Bernard Lafayette.

State Representative Bush moved to Miami, Florida in 1972. He graduated from Miami Northwestern Senior High School in 1974. He was voted by his senior class as the "Best All Around Male" and inducted in the Miami Northwestern Hall of Fame. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Bethune-Cookman University in 1979, his Master of Science degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from Nova Southeastern University in 1984, and a Doctorate from Smith Chapel Bible College in 2004. In 1982, he began working in the Miami-Dade County Public School system and he continued working there for 32 years. He has lived in Brownsville for many decades. He is an associate minister of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Brownsville.

Bush worked and associated closely with civil rights leaders Reverend Jesse Jackson, Joseph Lowery, Coretta Scott King, Congressman John Lewis, Fred Shuttlesworth, Bernard LaFayette, Dick Gregory, Martin Luther King III, Ray Fauntroy, C. T. Vivian, and Sevell Brown. In the 1980s, Bush served as president of the local Miami-Dade chapter of Operation PUSH (People United to Serve Humanity), Jesse Jackson's national civil rights organization that was created to "improve the economic situation in Black communities across the country."² During his service in the Florida legislature, Bush introduced a successful bill to create the Florida Martin Luther King Jr Institute for Nonviolence, with the support of Coretta Scott King.³ It was the second such organization founded in the United States, after New York City.

Bush has persistently advocated for the Brownsville community throughout his political career. He was an early supporter for restoration of the

¹ State Representative James Bush III, Oral History Interview with FIU Honors College Student Mia Stevenson, November 2020, Professor Shed Boren. Videos and transcripts on file with Plusurbia.

² "Rights Unit Is Started By Jackson" The Miami Herald Sun, Dec 19, 1971 ·Page 40 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/624148990>

³ State Representative James Bush III, Oral History Interview



Image.1990 newspaper article featuring rally to save Brownsville Park. (Source: The Miami Times).

Historic Hampton House and in his role as a State legislator, he secured over \$212,000 in funds for the restoration of Georgette's Tea Room. He gathered petitions from Brownsville residents to save Jefferson Reaves Sr. Park from closure. He conducted the Brownsville Clean Up Day in 1996, and he conducted volunteer projects to clean up the historic Lincoln Memorial Park Cemetery as well. Bush worked tirelessly to restore the vibrancy of Brownsville's NW 27th Avenue. As a state legislator, he passed in the Florida House of Representatives the Brownsville Commercial Business District designation for NW 27th Avenue, he sponsored the dedication of the street for Congresswoman Carrie P. Meek, and he helped to secure the Brownsville Renaissance Shopping Mall at 2655 NW 54th Street.

Bush has served on the National Board of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)- served as Acting National President and Past Board Recording Secretary; Past President of the Miami Chapter of Operation PUSH; Past First Vice-President of People United to Lead the Struggle for Equality (PULSE) and a past member of the United Teachers of Dade, serving as a Building Steward. He also serves as the first vice-president of Brownsville Civic Neighborhood Association and he has been appointed by the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives as the Florida State Commissioner on Ethics. He continues to work to support the residents of the Miami Dade County community.⁴

⁴ Biography, Dr. James D. Bush III, Florida Commission on Ethics, [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://www.ethics.state.fl.us/Documents/AboutUs/Members/bio/bio_bush.pdf?cp=2025215](https://www.ethics.state.fl.us/Documents/AboutUs/Members/bio/bio_bush.pdf?cp=2025215) Accessed April 30, 2025.