

# The Augusta Chronicle

## Civil Rights Institute leader to attend gala

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By Stephanie Toone  
Staff Writer  
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Gaining respect for the history on display at Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History will be the key to its continued success, said one of the speakers for the museum's upcoming fundraiser.

Dr. Lawrence J. Pijeaux Jr., CEO and president of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, will speak at the second annual Lucy Craft Laney Heritage Gala on Feb. 2. Also on the program is actor and playwright Jerome Preston Bates.

The gala will help raise money for the museum honoring innovating educator Lucy Craft Laney and other pioneering blacks. Christine Miller-Betts, executive director of the Laney museum, said \$50,000 is the event's fundraising goal.

"His museum has the same vision as ours," Mrs. Miller-Betts said about the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute that Dr. Pijeaux has led for 13 years. "We want him to share his experience and at the same time help us to convey the importance of African-American history in our community and the world at large."

Dr. Pijeaux said he hopes the gala will raise awareness about the importance of having such a museum in Augusta.

Since its inception in 1992, the Institute has benefited greatly from financial and volunteer support from those who understand the importance of chronicling the struggle of blacks, Dr. Pijeaux said.

"I hope this will be a launching pad for supporting the work that's done at Lucy Craft Laney," he said. "Once you create respect in your own communities, then it's easier to develop support based not only financially but also with volunteers."

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