

## **Centennial Hall-Edward Waters College**

1658 Kings Road

Jacksonville

Built in 1916, Centennial Hall is the oldest building on the campus of Edward Waters College. The building was named to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. It reflects a long effort within the AME Church to establish itself as an independent body capable of ensuring top-quality higher education within the black community. From 1874 to 1883, Florida had no institute of higher learning for African Americans. In 1883, through the efforts of the Reverend W. W. Sampson, East Florida Conference High School was established in Jacksonville. The school expanded rapidly, and in 1885 its name was changed to Florida Normal and Divinity School. On March 12, 1892, the school was renamed Edward Waters College, after the third bishop of the AME Church. Today the college is the culmination of a long history of educational work for African Americans. [CA 5/4/76, 76000589]