



THE PENDULUM

Summer 2026

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the summer issue of The Pendulum. This edition arrives in a meaningful year, as communities across Maryland and the nation reflect on Juneteenth and commemorate America's 250th anniversary.

Juneteenth reminds us that freedom has never been a single day or a simple declaration. It has always required struggle, courage, and community. This issue also looks back to the Revolutionary War era, highlighting Black patriots whose service helped shape the nation even as the promise of freedom remained painfully incomplete.

Among them is Thomas Carney, a Black soldier from Maryland who fought in the Revolutionary War. His story helps us remember that African Americans were present at the founding, not as observers, but as participants, defenders, builders, and claimants of the very ideals the new nation professed.

As America marks 250 years, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture has an important role to play. We are here to help ensure that African American contributions are not treated as a side note to the American story, but as central to it. Black Marylanders have helped shape the meaning and promise of this country.

I hope this issue invites you to read, reflect, and celebrate with pride and curiosity. Please share

The Pendulum widely, and join us in lifting up the histories that help all Marylanders better understand who we are and what we owe to one another.

With appreciation and resolve,

Dr. Kali-Ahset Amen

Chair, Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the Summer 2026 issue of The Pendulum. In recognition of the 250th Anniversary of America's birth each issue gives added focus to Maryland's African Americans contributions, to building America. This issue highlights Juneteenth celebrations around the state and America 250 celebrations. This is a packed issue leaning into our year of celebrating 100 Years of Black History!



We are not a DEI Program: We are Defenders of Freedom and Democracy

A STATEMENT FROM THE MARYLAND COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

Today, the hunt is on to root out “DEI” and so-called “divisive ideologies” from classrooms, libraries, museums, and public institutions across the country. In statehouses and school boards, from Florida to Texas and beyond, diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are being defunded, dismantled, or recast as threats to national unity. At the heart of this backlash lies a deliberate mischaracterization: that the study of race and the preservation of Black history, women’s history, and other marginalized narratives are somehow ideological, rather than factual and foundational.

The term DEI, originally emerging from workplace diversity initiatives and later expanded to include systemic barriers to equity and access, has been weaponized by right-leaning political movements and figures seeking to conflate racial reckoning with partisan activism. So too has the term ideology, which in truth means any system of ideas and values – but is now used selectively to suggest that only those who champion equity hold a worldview, while those who oppose it are neutral or apolitical. Yet this framing masks a deeper reality: the very effort to suppress African American history reflects an ideology of exclusion – one that prioritizes a narrow version of American identity while denying the plurality of stories that shape our national life.

The work of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) is not a subsidiary DEI initiative, nor is it an expression of partisan ideology. It is the official, state-mandated effort to document, preserve, and elevate the central role that African Americans have played in shaping Maryland and the nation. Established in 1969 through the visionary leadership of Senator Verda Welcome and the scholarly foundation laid by Dr. Benjamin Quarles, the Commission was conceived as a vital public-interest institution from the start.

Our work is not peripheral or ephemeral – it is constitutional, civic, and essential. We do not teach grievance; we preserve historical fact. We do not promote division; we advance understanding. Through research, public education, cultural preservation, and grantmaking, the Commission fulfills Maryland’s obligation to confront its past honestly and ensure that African American stories, sites, and contributions are safeguarded for future generations. To call our work ‘ideological’ is to distort both our mandate and our mission. We are not promoting a political agenda. We are upholding a democratic promise.

Continued --->



Our work is grounded not in recent political trends but in the unfulfilled potential of the **13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments** – the cornerstone civil rights amendments that redefined American democracy in the aftermath of the Civil War. Through these constitutional provisions, African Americans were guaranteed equal protection under the law, the right to vote, and a new vision of political and civic participation. The MCAAHC serves as a steward of that legacy: chronicling it, protecting it, and ensuring that future generations understand the cost and the value of freedom.

To suppress or defund the telling of this history is not neutral, but an act of erasure that weakens our shared democratic fabric. The Commission's work fosters civic literacy, community resilience, and a deeper understanding of what it truly means to pursue a "more perfect union."

Continued state support is vital, even in times of fiscal strain.

Maryland, like many states, faces a significant budget deficit. Federal uncertainty, particularly in the realms of university, workforce, and cultural funding, adds further strain. But it is precisely in such moments of national and fiscal crisis that we must double down on our civic commitments.

The MCAAHC is not a luxury budget item. It is an educational and cultural institution essential to the health of our democracy. We serve the people of Maryland through four pillars:

- Supporting **curriculum and teacher training** aligned with Maryland's educational standards.
- Strengthening **museums and heritage sites** across the state, which serve as economic engines and cultural anchors in their communities.
- Promoting **cultural entrepreneurship and local storytelling**, often in underserved regions, through our grant support to community-based organizations.
- Providing a **model for civic engagement** at the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum that promotes informed citizenship.

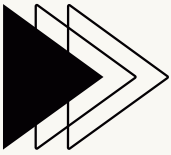
When Maryland supports MCAAHC, it is not just funding a program. It is making a constitutional claim: that the state will uphold the right of its people to know their history, speak their truth, and participate fully in civic life. The Commission's work is a guardrail against authoritarian erasure, and a platform for democratic renewal.

We also say to Maryland's corporate, institutional, and philanthropic communities: now is your moment to step into the breach. Supporting the MCAAHC and similar institutions is not charity work; it is strategic democracy work. History is infrastructure. Just as roads and bridges hold up our physical society, archives, exhibits, and community education hold up our civic consciousness. At a time when truth itself is under attack, philanthropic support for the MCAAHC helps ensure that:

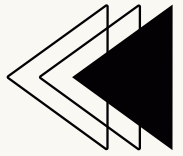
- **Free speech is protected** through robust public dialogue about the past.
- **Civil rights are preserved** by amplifying the stories of those who fought for them.
- **Democratic culture endures** by empowering communities to see themselves as part of the American story.

We believe that Black heritage work must not be defined or dismissed by those who seek to marginalize it by assigning terms like "DEI" or divisive ideology. Instead, we must reclaim the language and reframe the narrative about what we do for the public as vital, pro-democracy work rooted in a commitment to historical truth-telling, civil and social rights, and the protection of constitutional liberties.

This is a call to action: Make your values visible. Help us hold the line. Join us in ensuring that the promise of American democracy is not abandoned, but fulfilled.



The Tribute: Black Patriot Monument



By Commissioner Walter Gill



Stephen Xavier Lee

In honor of the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the Maryland monument to African Americans who fought in the Revolutionary War will be unveiled on Saturday, August 29, 2026, Maryland State House at 10:00 am.

The idea of a monument was inspired by *The Story of Thomas Carney: A Maryland Patriot of the Revolutionary War* by Steven X. Lee, a former MCAAHC Commissioner, as a way to recognize the lost legacy of Maryland's many free Black sons who chose to enlist and fight in the War for Independence. Lee's proposal became a revolutionary monument project that was adopted by the Maryland State House Trust and the Maryland State Arts Council, and championed by then Speaker of the House, Adrienne Jones. After a nationwide search, the Black Patriot Monument Advisory Committee chose Branly Cadet's concept design. Cadet divides his time between Oakland, California, and New York City. He has completed large scale commissions to include The Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Memorial at the New York State Office Building in New York City. Cadet titled his work "Black Patriots: The Pursuit of Transcendent Liberty." The monument is the State House Trust's contribution to the State's celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

It was the summer of 1776, more than a year after the fight for independence began, that the first group of Black soldiers were organized in Maryland for military service. Similar to other state militias and the Continental Army, most Blacks and indigenous people served alongside their white counterparts and received the same pay, provisions, clothing, and equipment. It was not unusual for families to accompany the army as "camp followers," and sold supplies to the army. They were also cooks, washerwomen, seamstresses, domestic servants, caregivers, and nurses. Sometimes, white officers from Maryland were accompanied by their enslaved servants. No officers were Black and most Black men in the Army were privates. There was a spattering of corporals, a rarity for it would indicate that a Black holding this rank would have authority over white soldiers. For the most part, Black men served longer than white men. Race was not listed on enlistment records, and it is believed that more than 100 Black men from Maryland served during the eight-year war.



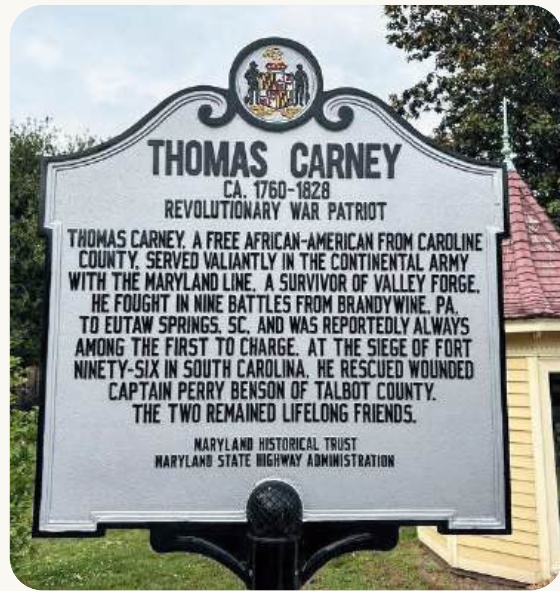
THE TRIBUTE: BLACK PATRIOT MONUMENT (CONT'D)

Throughout the course of the war, Maryland was unlike any other state regarding recruitment of Blacks for the war effort. In a letter to Governor Thomas Lee, an Army recruiter from St. Mary's County wrote, "The greatest part of those that have enlisted are free Negroes and Mulattoes." It was the only Southern State that authorized slave enlistments, and enlisted enslaved people who could serve as substitutes for white men that had been drafted. In May 1780, the Maryland legislature pondered the idea of forming a regiment of 750 slaves. It seemed likely of passage until the enslavers feared their economic loss and pushed for its rejection. As such, Maryland took slave soldiers in limited numbers. Captured loyalist slaves became public property, and at other times were taken as private booty. Maryland's Court of Admiralty ruled that three Negroes taken on a British privateer could be sold and the proceeds go to the captors.

"This monument finally gives form and place to the African American soldiers who fought for an American freedom that was not yet their own. This event takes place at the very heart of Maryland's State House grounds, and it is my hope that every Marylander who stands before it will see these Patriots not at the margins of the Revolution, but at its center."

Chanel Compton Johnson, Member, Black Patriot Monument Advisory Committee

There is no way to accurately determine the number of Black soldiers in the Revolutionary War since race was seldom recorded. Of the approximate 250,000 in the war, about 5,000 were Black Patriot troops. It is estimated that 20,000 enslaved joined the British cause who early on in the war promised freedom.



Thomas Carney MDOT Roadside Marker

A quota of eight regiments were assigned to Maryland in 1777, which were reduced to five in 1781. During this time, a regiment consisted of 750 officers and men, with a small percentage of Blacks in all the units. There were no major battles in Maryland during the war. The units fought with distinction in the key battles in the North (Trenton, Princeton, Brandy, and Cowpens), and the Southern Campaign (Camden, South Carolina and the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina). The Black troops, free and enslaved, that fought during the War for Independence realized they were fighting for two freedoms: the colonies from England and their own. Black participation and awareness during this wartime would set the tone for all future wartime engagements by Blacks in a fight for the Country's principles and for individual freedom, justice, and equality.

"In creating this monument, the imperative I felt compelled me to address what distinguished the Black Patriots who fought in the American Revolutionary War from their white brothers in arms. In war, all soldiers face the threat of death, but during the Revolutionary War, Black Patriots had to bear the burden of that threat with the added



THE TRIBUTE: BLACK PATRIOT MONUMENT (CONT'D)

“Uncertainty about their status at the war’s conclusion. Would Black Patriots be free like their white comrades or would their liberty be denied or constrained by the new nation? I hope the monument successfully captures some of these issues and inspires viewers to learn more about that era and how some of these issues may affect us all now.”

Branly Cadet, Artist

Commissioned by the Black Patriot Monument Advisory Committee

The Story of Mr. Thomas Carney is the first book written about a Black soldier from Maryland who fought in the War for Independence. Carney was born free in Caroline County on the Eastern Shore. While in his early twenties, he joined the Maryland militia and later enlisted in the 5th Maryland Regiment. He was transferred to the 7th Maryland Regiment and promoted to corporal. Carney fought in nine battles and grew to legendary status when he helped save the life of Captain Perry Benson after he was wounded at the Siege of Ninety Six in South Carolina. Benson and Carney became lifetime friends.

Steven X. Lee has performed enactments of colonial times that include free Blacks at the Chestertown Tea Party Festival. Lee is an adjunct professor at Stevenson University and has been the Program Director of the Heritage Museum since 2014. He was the founding director of the Benjamin Banneker Museum in Baltimore County. Lee, an independent historian, continues to research lost and marginalized history on free African Americans who lived in pre-colonial and colonial times, during the War for Independence, and The War of 1812. Francis Lee, Steven’s father, was a World War II veteran with commendations from the Japanese occupation, and Asiatic and European deployments.

Steven X. Lee reminds us: ***“The purpose of the monument project, like the book, “The Story of Thomas Carney,” was to establish prominent representation and foster further study of Maryland free black Revolutionary War patriots, who have traditionally been omitted and misprized in Maryland public art and education.”***

And now to all and for all, finally, The Tribute!



Branly Cadet's sculpture of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. sits at the New York State Office Building in Harlem, New York.



JUNETEENTH AROUND MARYLAND



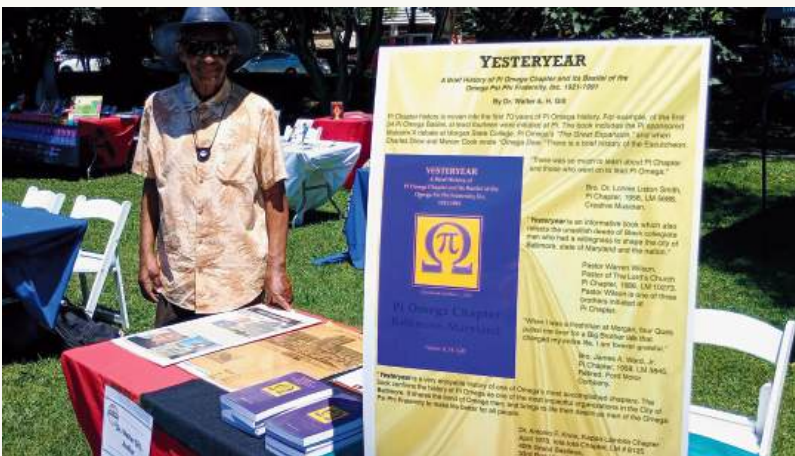
Commissioners Chrissy Thornton and Brian Morrison flank Executive Director Chanel Compton Johnson at the Afro Charities Juneteenth Awards Breakfast where Director Johnson was recognized for her outstanding work leading the Banneker Douglass Tubman Museum.



Commissioner Morrison leads a post-film discussion of Justice and Reconciliation at The Lewis Museum's Juneteenth celebration with the film's creator Xavier Frink, historian Dr. Ada Jones and Rev. Alvin Hathaway.



Executive Director Chanel Compton Johnson accepts Afro Charities award for outstanding service from Afro-American Newspaper Publisher Frances "Toni" Draper (R) and Commissioner Chrissy Thornton, Associated Black Charities Director (L)



Commissioner Walter Gill offering a glimpse into the history of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity at the Kensington, MD Juneteenth celebration.

JUNETEENTH AROUND MARYLAND



Vice Chair Jaelon T. Moaney reading the Declaration of Independence in Chestertown as part of Spirit of America initiative.



Kensington Juneteenth Celebration - Washington Community Revels.



Silver Spring Black Business Expo at Veterans Plaza - BNI Alliance



Howard County Office of Human Rights and Equity, the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center, and the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks hosted the Howard County Juneteenth Community Day and Block Party at the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center in Columbia.

JUNETEENTH AROUND MARYLAND



Vice Chair Moaney pictured with descendants of Nathaniel Hopkins and representatives of Scotts United Methodist Church delivering Governor's citations during Easton's Juneteenth celebrations.



Berlin Town Council honors the Grandfather of Gospel Music, Dr. Charles Albert Tindley with his descendants on June 22, 2026.

Eastern Shore Juneteenth Festival and Parade June 2026 was held in downtown Salisbury, MD. Its goal is to bring together to celebrate Black culture and achievement; to provide community education on Black history and the ongoing struggle for civil rights; and to create a safe space for Black creativity and expression. Commissioner Jaelon T. Moaney pictured with Eastern Shore Juneteenth Founder, Makya Purnell.



On June 17th Vice Chair Moaney gave a presentation in support of Vaulted Memories: An Undergraduate Public Archaeology Project. representing a delegation including the Northeast Towson Improvement Association, Goucher College Staff, and a Washington College Young Historians' Conference alumna.



Vice Chair Moaney pictured at the Harriet Tubman Museum and Educational Center Grand Reopening in Cambridge Maryland on June 13th after it suffered severe water damage. Unfortunately, the museum was vandalized shortly after the re-opening and is accepting donations.

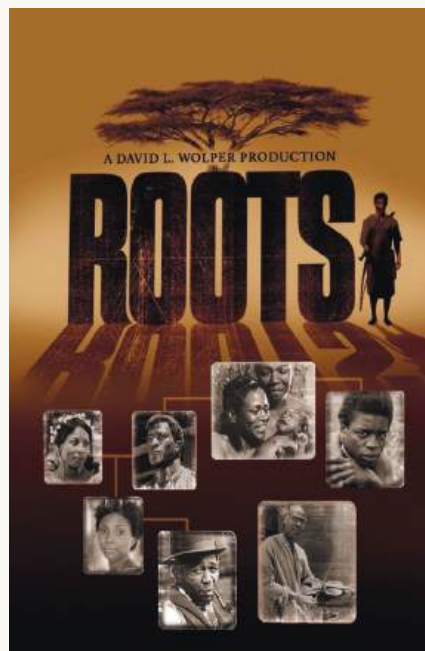
Roots 50 Years Later

By Chris Haley, Nephew of Alex Haley and Maryland State Archivist

I don't know if my uncle realized when he began his interview with Malcolm X in 1963 for *Playboy* magazine, that their exchange of ideas would ultimately result in *ROOTS*. Alexander Murray Palmer Haley was there to do a job. The goal was to prod the Nation of Islam's controversial leader to share his brutally honest views, perceived by many as incendiary, on the condition of Black Americans to a curious, somewhat desensitized nation. In the no holds barred conversation, the honorable minister and lieutenant to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad stirred not only Uncle Alex' interest, but his nostalgic memories of stories told to him by his grandmother

Cynthia and other female aunts about an African ancestor who was kidnapped and shipped to 'Napolis, Maryland. 50 years after the novel was published in August of 1976, the specific and implied messages of this family rooted story resound just as emphatically.

Coming near the end of the Blaxploitation period in Hollywood, *ROOTS* stood out not only as a novelized condemnation of historical racism, but as a love letter to the strength, perseverance, and humanity of the Black family. Movies and television programs like *Shaft*, *Slaughter*, and *Get Christie Love!* represented heroic super people who physically and intellectually defied perceptions of African Americans as weak and criminal. Blaxploitation was not always viewed well by our black community, but ultimately, African Americans just wanted to be seen. Even if it was someone as hot-headed as George Jefferson or as silly as hell JJ Evans, at least, we were out there. While such movies and television series served as



We believe not in death, but in life, and there is no object more valuable than a man's life."
- Kitango, *Roots*

wild and spirited releases for black people, *ROOTS* maintained that its heroes were people just like everyone else and always had been. I watched the 8-part miniseries torn between my natural impulses which hoped Kunta Kinte would escape and a rational understanding that the main character's successful self-emancipation would mean that I would no longer exist.

Today, I find myself fighting again between similar opposites. I angrily watch the innumerable efforts to erase and diminish any and all symbols and references to Black people. However, I also acknowledge that such battles undeniably reinforce the necessity for black studies and discoveries to be preserved and defended. The temporary banning of *ROOTS* in my uncle's last home town in Tennessee demonstrated how strong, virulent, and bold, anti-minority sentiments have become in some pockets of our country. The ban's subsequent defeat and several celebrations of my family's 50 year old saga remind us how the battle, while bloody and difficult, can still be won.



The Jackson Family Rodeo

Q&A

The Jacksons of Upper Marlboro, Maryland are a nationally renowned crew of fifth-generation Black cowboys and cowgirls led by parents Corey and Robyn. Their children, Dylan, Nic, twins Reagan and

Ryan, and Robert each epitomize the rodeo lifestyle and compete with great success. In an interview with MCAAHC Vice Chair, Jaelon Moaney, the Jackson family reflected on the legacy inherited as well as the one they are collectively shaping.



The Jackson Family

1. The Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo holds a special place in your heart and story. Please, describe the generational legacies that are daily sources of inspiration and the cherished culture that shapes your lives.

Yes the BPIR does hold a very special place in our hearts, that's where Robyn and I first met. In the following years we would continue to attend the BPIR every September during their finals rodeo. Next our kids competed in the BPIR! The western lifestyle is a culture that we hold close and are thankful that we get to live this life over the past 5 generations. Our history as share choppers continue to drive us to be our best, to prepare, and to perform at a high level because our ancestors didn't have these opportunities.

2. From Jordan Peele's Nope to Beyoncé's Cowboy Carter diverse creatives have invested heavily in reclaiming narratives by centering Blackness. Do these efforts resonate? If so, explain their gravity.

These projects absolutely bring about awareness from a creative perspective and that awareness drives most interest. Now I would like to see a push for the non-fiction stories of real-life Black Cowboys, Frontiersmen, and Settlers told. Then I would like those stories to transition to the present-day stories of real Black Cowboys/Cowgirls, farmers, and Black people that live the western lifestyle.

3. Maryland has more horses per square mile than any other state and, currently, hosts four National Heritage Areas. While traveling, how does the Jackson family paint a picture of what home is to those who are unfamiliar?

A lot of people are not very certain of where Maryland is from a geographical perspective and are even more surprised that Maryland (Northeastern United States) has rodeo, Cowboys, and people that enjoy and live the western lifestyle. So we have served as representatives of Maryland and the northeastern United States in this culture, and that we live this lifestyle just the same as they do.

4. In which ways can the full breadth of the African American experience in Maryland, particularly among rural regions, be represented as we reflect on 250 years of African American history?

As a family of fifth generation Cowboys that came from sharecroppers of southern Maryland (Croom), I feel that this story should be represented by it being told. It would add a very unique perspective to the sharecropper experience as this family has come full circle. Once enslaved people of South Maryland, then sharecroppers under Jim Crow and the civil rights era, now rodeo champions!



Commissioner SPOTLIGHTS



Commissioner Jyoti Mohan, PhD
Baltimore County



My belief that all people can better appreciate and plan their present and future only by first knowing their pasts drives my passion for participating in the different tasks taken on by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. I am overjoyed to be part of such a vital heritage mission and look forward to many fruitful projects!



Commissioner Ura Bailey, PhD
Montgomery County

I am honored to accept Governor Moore's appointment to the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. As a third generation descendant of Enslaved African Americans, a product of the Jim Crow South (Louisiana) and active participant in the Civil Rights movement, I am deeply committed to the preservation and dissemination of African American History, especially to current and future generations.

I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to work alongside fellow Commission members and community partners. Together, we can honor the past, enrich the present, and inspire a more inclusive and informed future for all Marylanders.



JOIN THE COMMISSION



The MCAAHC is seeking new Commissioners, especially from underrepresented counties in eastern, western, and southern Maryland. Applicants should have a record of service and commitment to preserving and advancing African American history and culture. Self-nominations are welcome.

As a Commissioner, you join a distinguished body entrusted with a vital mission: to interpret, document, and celebrate the contributions of African Americans to the state's heritage. Your expertise and dedication will play a pivotal role in shaping the Commission's work and ensuring its continued success.

Responsibilities for Commissioners include:

- Attending and hosting public meetings and hearings
- Serving on committees
- Representing the Commission at community events
- Meeting with local leaders to advocate for key initiatives
- Supporting the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum

Questions? Contact Executive Director Chanel C. Johnson, chanel.compton@maryland.gov. Apply today at govappointments.maryland.gov.

APPLY TODAY



FY2027 MCAAHC Commissioners

Chair Kali-Ahset Amen, PhD (Baltimore City)

Vice Chair Jaelon T. Moaney (Talbot County)

Commissioner Rachelle Adams

(Anne Arundel County)

Commissioner Jean Bailey (Montgomery County)

Commissioner Marcus Nicks

(Anne Arundel County)

Commissioner Walter Gill, PhD (Baltimore City)

Commissioner Mark Glaze (Howard County)

Commissioner Dina Daly (Talbot County)

Commissioner LaToya Jenkins (P.G. County)

Commissioner Gina Marie Lewis (P.G. County)

Commissioner Jyoti Mohan, PhD

(Baltimore County)

Commissioner Brian Morrison, PhD (Baltimore City)

Commissioner Robert J. Patterson, PhD

(P.G. County)

Commissioner Ada Pinkston (Baltimore City)

Commissioner Bridgett Jones Smith

(Washington County)

Commissioner Alethea Smith-Withers, DMin

(P. G. County)

Commissioner Peter Spann (Howard County)

Commissioner Chrissy Thornton

(Baltimore County)

Commissioner Hakeem Tijani, PhD

(Baltimore County)

Commissioner Wesley C. Wood (Baltimore City)



Commission Updates

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Public Relations and Historical Research Committee (PR&HR) serves as the vehicle for communicating the Maryland Commission for African American History and Culture's work with general public. The committee conducts research to inform and support state agencies, the general public, elected officials and others about the history and culture of Maryland's African Americans. Publication of The Pendulum, our quarterly "newsletter," is one tool we produce to inform all about the Commission's work. We also support individuals and organizations in their efforts to preserve, research and promote Maryland's African American history and culture through letters of support and public testimony.



The PR&HR Committee in partnership with the Maryland Department of Transportation is undergoing a multi-year project to review and update the state's roadside markers to ensure they are historically accurate and use appropriate language. On June 24th, the Belvoir Plantation updated marker was unveiled at a ceremony held at the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum.



**CLICK TO SHARE
YOUR EVENTS**



Commission Updates

African American Historical Preservation Program Committee

The AAHP Committee Congratulates the FY26 African American History and Preservation Grant awardees. We appreciate the work they are doing to achieve our shared goal of preserving Black history and culture. As we prepare for the FY27 cycle, we offer our sincerest congratulations to:

- Pennsylvania Avenue Black Arts and Entertainment District for the “Sanaa Center Project” (Baltimore City)
- The Women’s Housing Coalition, Inc. for the “Margaret Jenkins House” (Baltimore City)
- The Havre de Grace Colored School Museum and Cultural Center, Inc. for the “The Havre de Grace Colored School Museum and Cultural Center” (Harford County)
- Donna Nelson and Eric Ashley Bey for the “Point of Rocks Colored Cemetery” (Frederick County)
- Pomonkey High School Alumni Association for the “Old Pomonkey High School” (Charles County)
- The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F. & A.M. of Maryland & Its Jurisdiction, Inc. for the “American Hall” (Washington County)
- Maryland Department of Juvenile Services for the “Boys' Village of Maryland Cemetery” (Prince George’s County)
- Chews Memorial United Methodist Church for the “Chew's Memorial Church and Cemetery” (Anne Arrundel County)
- Bailey-Groce Family Foundation for the “Anna Murray Douglass Heritage & Visitor Center” (Caroline County)
- Cumberland Historic Cemetery Organization, Inc. for the “Sumner Cemetery” (Allegany County)
- Hopkins United Methodist Church for the “Hopkins Educational/Community Building” (Howard County)
- Raising the Foundation at St. James Free Methodist Church for the “St. James Free Methodist Church” (Wicomico County)
- Liza Gijanto/St. Mary's College of Maryland for the “Galilee United Methodist Cemetery” (St. Mary’s County)
- Union Street United Methodist Church for the “Union Street United Methodist Church” (Carroll County)
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Park Service for the “John Howard House” (Montgomery County)
- Mt. Pleasant Heritage Preservation, Inc. for the “Mt. Pleasant Acres Farms” (Caroline County)
- St. James AME Church of Gravel Hill Road, Inc. for the “St. James AME Church Gravel Hill” (Harford County)



Commission Updates

African American Historical Preservation Program Committee

- West Liberty United Methodist Church for the “West Liberty United Methodist Church” (Howard County)
- Alexandria United Methodist Church for the “Alexandria (Alexander) Chapel United Methodist Church Cemetery” (Charles County)
- Greater Baltimore Urban League for the “Orchard Street Church” (Baltimore City)
- Catoctin Furnace Friends Group for the “Catoctin Furnace African American Cemetery” (Frederick County)
- Brewer Hill Cemetery Association Inc. for the “Brewer Hill Cemetery” (Anne Arundel County)
- Mander House Museum for the “Mander House Museum” (Kent County)
- Town of Highland Beach for the “Frederick Douglass Summer House” (Anne Arundel County)
- Beautification Club of Sandy Spring for the “Ash Memorial Cemetery” (Montgomery County)
- Goshen Farm Preservation Society, Inc. for the “Goshen Farm” (Anne Arundel County)
- GAR Post 25 Inc. for the “Charles Sumner Lodge No. 25, GAR” (Kent County)
- American Legion Mannie Scott Post 193 for the “American Legion Mannie Scott Post 193” (Caroline County)
- Chesapeake Lodge #48 and Jessie J. Shanks Lodge #137, 6th Masonic District for the “Chesapeake Lodge Number 48 / Jessie J. Shanks Lodge Number 137 (Harford County)



Blandair, Slave Quarters



Coulbourne and Jewitt House



BANNEKER-DOUGLASS-TUBMAN MUSEUM EXHIBITION SPOTLIGHT

She Too, Reasoned this out in her mind

By Martina Dodd, Curator of Collections & Exhibitions, Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum



She Speaks Gallery Installation View featuring "Pointing Towards Justice" and "Keep Your Head to the Sky" by Ada Pinkston.

"I had reasoned this out in my mind; there was one of two things I had the right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other, for no man should take me alive; I should fight for my liberty as long as my strength lasted..." -

Harriet Tubman, 1886

The Banneker-Douglass-Tubman's year-long exhibition, *She Speaks: Black Women Artists and the Power of Historical Memory*, centers the voices, visions, and histories of Black women who have shaped the United States. Often working beyond the margins of official historical records and without recognition, Black women have preserved knowledge, carried stories across generations, and left an indelible imprint on the nation's history and imagination. From the Revolutionary era to the present, Black women have contributed not only to the survival of their communities, but to the ongoing redefinition of American identity itself.

Like Harriet Tubman, countless Black women resolved that the pursuit of freedom, justice, and truth would define their lives through both extraordinary acts of resistance and the quiet, everyday labor of survival. Their courage and determination are honored in this exhibition through the work of seventeen Black women artists whose deeply personal and politically engaged artworks reveal both the historical significance and enduring influence of Black women in shaping this nation. Acting as historians, archivists, and storytellers, these artists draw upon archival records, lived experience, and inherited memory to challenge, reinterpret, and expand dominant narratives of American history.

"On many plantations, it was harder for Black women to escape because of family obligations and gendered divisions of labor." *She Speaks* exhibiting artist Jessica Valoris shares. "And when Black women did escape, or resist, they were more severely punished than their male counterparts. Even so, enslaved Black women were often helping others escape: leaving food and provisions in the woods, passing along critical intel and information, procuring supplies, harboring fugitives, and more. Through my artwork I hope to elevate these stories, and lift up both the heroic and quotidian resistance of Black women." In her "Lost and Found" series, Valoris explores liberation, healing, and



She Too, Reasoned this out in her mind (cont'd)

resistance rooted in the unresolved legacies of slavery and genocide that continue to shape the United States. These works ask whether repair is possible and what it will take to confront the historical ruptures that continue to shape Black life. Drawing from fugitive slave advertisements published in Montgomery County, Maryland, the artist reconfigures their language, rupturing these documents of surveillance and control into “lost and found” love poems. Each poem is dedicated to the individual named in the original ad, restoring dignity and humanity denied by the archive. This work honors the heroic and everyday acts of resistance enacted by Black women, including those who sustained networks of escape and survival.



"Pointing Towards Justice" by Ada Pinkston (b. 1983)

While Valoris reclaims histories embedded within archival documents, She Speaks exhibiting artist and MCHAACH Commissioner Ada Pinkston interrogates the ways history is constructed in public space. Her ongoing “Landmarked” series examines the historical residue of slavery and the Civil War by reconsidering monuments, memorials, and commemorative landscapes through the lens of Black memory and presence. “Stone, Bronze, Plaster, Marble, Cement, Steel. Monuments are places and spaces that carry significant weight to the social architecture of a place.” The artist explains. “They are oftentimes large and foreboding, overlooking the spectator with eyes of reverence. The spectator is overcome, completely surrounded and encapsulated by the form that is the monument. That is, if people stop to look.”

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center’s 2025 Whose Heritage? report, more than 2,000 Confederate symbols remain in public spaces across the United States, including 685 Confederate monuments, alongside plaques, schools, parks, and military properties bearing names tied to the Confederacy.

Confederate monuments were largely erected decades after the Civil War, particularly during the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights Movement, not as neutral markers of history, but as instruments of propaganda to rationalize racial hierarchy and sustain systems of exclusion. While challenges to Confederate symbols have occurred for decades, public scrutiny intensified in 2015 following the racially motivated killings at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC and again in 2020 after the murder of George Floyd, when nationwide protests led to the removal of hundreds of Confederate monuments. In Baltimore, this national reckoning prompted the city to reevaluate its Confederate monuments. Within three years, four statues had been removed, leaving empty plinths that continue to function as unresolved sites of public memory. Through workshops, site-specific installations, and performances at former monument locations, Pinkston reimagines these pedestals not as sites of reverence, but as sites of embodied memory and counter-narrative, centering Black women’s presence where symbols of white supremacy once stood.

She Too, Reasoned this out in her mind (cont'd)

As the nation marks the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, She Speaks joins a broader national reflection on the stories that define the American experience. Through the work of Black women artists, the exhibition expands how history is remembered, interpreted, and shared, demonstrating that the nation's past cannot be fully understood without the voices, labor, creativity, and resistance of Black women. Rather than existing at the margins of history, these artists affirm that Black women have always been central to the making—and continual reimagining—of America.



Detail shot of "The Lost and Found Poem for Caroline" by Jessica Valoris (b. 1985)

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BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY
Bowie, MD

MEET THE SUMMER 2026 INTERNS

By Tahja Cropper

This summer, the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum (BDTM) hosted three interns in the Marketing and Communications Department. In this role, the interns gained experience in content creation and social media management, event management/support through museum events and MCAAHC public meetings, and interfacing with various stakeholders, including agency/museum staff, commissioners, elected officials, and the public.



L to R: Aasya Freeland & Nathan Desta

Aasya Freeland, a native of southern Maryland, is a senior at Towson University majoring in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. Her passion for communications, storytelling, and community engagement led her to pursue an internship at the BDTM to gain hands-on experience in communications while learning more about preserving and promoting African American history and culture. As an intern interested in a career in marketing and communications, she developed skills in content creation for social media, public outreach, and audience engagement/analytics while contributing to meaningful work that helps share important stories with the community.

Nathan Desta joined us as a summer Louis Carr Foundation (LCF) intern. LCF provides internships in communications to undergraduate students of color during the summer. Nathan is a native of Alexandria, VA, and is a rising senior at George Washington University studying Communication and Theatre. He is striving to pursue a career in digital media and brand strategy from a cultural perspective.

During his internship experience, Nathan helped share stories that make BDTM a standout cultural experience in Maryland and strengthened his communication skills by creating content for social media platforms and newsletters, and assisting with events. His BDTM experience allowed him to explore how cultural institutions manage to preserve their history and legacy in the modern world, while strengthening his ability to tell meaningful stories filled with a rich sense of culture and identity.

Helen Getachew is a native of Richmond, VA with a degree in history. As an intern at BDTM, Helen had the opportunity to strengthen her skills by supporting projects in both the Marketing and Communications and the Collections and Exhibitions Departments. She has contributed photography skills, created content for digital use and for print, and is working on assisting with preparation for the updating of BDTM's permanent exhibit.

Helen has previous experience in film production and marketing. As an intern, she sought to strengthen her skillset by experiencing what a marketing career looks like daily and to work as a museum professional in the future. Previously, Helen was an intern at Agecroft Hall and Gardens and has volunteered at the Virginia Holocaust Museum.



Helen Getachew



A GRAND COMMUNITY SEND-OFF TO SENEGAL

BY COMMISSIONER WALTER GILL

The Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum Youth Arts & Leadership Program and Blacks of the Chesapeake (BoCF) held a grand send-off for the group of travelers to Senegal, West Africa, on Saturday, June 27th. The Ni Dembaya African Drum and Dance Ensemble kicked off the program with a high energy performance that included audience participation. Sabriyah Hassan-Ismail, Director of Programs, welcomed the guests to the occasion. Pokuaa "PK" Owusu-Acheaw, Executive Office of the Governor, gave all the travelers Governor Citation Certificates. Two highlights were remarks by Gerald Ringgold, of



Courtesy photo

The Mack Family Foundation, and Dee Dee Strum, the Chief Executive Officer of BoCF, and included a slide presentation. After closing remarks by Hassin-Ismail, a smorgasbord of Senegalese cuisine, which had been prepared by Chef Dior, awaited the attendees. And because of the varieties offered by Happy Monday Ice Cream, everyone left the event with "a sweet taste in their mouth."

In a separate interview, Strum stated: ***"This July's expedition to Senegal represents far more than an international journey -it is a transformative opportunity for Annapolis middle school students, parents, civic leaders, and elected officials to experience firsthand the history, resilience, innovation, and maritime traditions that forever shaped the Chesapeake Bay. BoCF is also preparing for the Pirogue's historic December 2027 departure from Goree Island, passing through the infamous 'Door of No Return' to retrace the Transatlantic Slave Route across the Atlantic Ocean with stops in Brazil, Jamaica, Williamsburg, Virginia and into the port of Annapolis, arriving in May 2028. This project is a living classroom, connecting young people to their shared global heritage and enduring legacy of the African men and women whose maritime knowledge helped build the Chesapeake and America itself."***

Kwame Abney, who will be going to the ninth grade at Annapolis High School, is one of the students taking the trip to Senegal. He said, ***"I am excited to go to learn about Africa in Senegal before colonialization. I am interested in the agriculture, the geography, and how different they are from our modern life. This will be my first trip out of the U. S. and my second trip on an airplane."***

The travelers will leave for Senegal on July 10th and return July 17th. They are: Chanel Compton Johnson, Kwame Abney, Chermire Gladden, Jazzlyn Gladden, Maleke Glee, Sabriyah Hassan-Ismail, Zarian Lovelle, Tinesha McNeil, Demonte Smith, Keyonna Williams, Khalee Williams, Khaleece Williams, and BoCF's Phillip Harrison and Greg Gwaltney.

"We go quickly where we are sent when we take interest in the journey."
Senegalese proverb



MCAAHC AUGUST 2026 PUBLIC MEETING



Date: Monday August 3, 2026

Time: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Location: Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum
84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Join us for the MCAAHC Public Meeting to learn about upcoming initiatives, and to hear from engaging speakers in the heritage and preservation community!

To register for the public meeting, visit <https://bit.ly/MCAAHCAugust2026PublicMeeting>, click the button below, or scan the QR code!

REGISTER



COMMUNITY EVENTS

August/September

Thursdays at 5:00 PM, The Enoch Sankofa 2026 Film Series: “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever,” July 23; “The Nichel Boys,” August 20; “The Piano Lesson,” September 23; “Black Orpheus,” October 17. Enoch Pratt Library, 400 Cathedral St., Baltimore. **Free.**

Saturday, August 1, 11:00 AM. Howard County Black Authors Expo. This is an interactive community gathering and vendor marketplace celebrating African American regional African American authors and their works. Harriet Tubman Cultural Center, 8045 Harriet Tubman Lane, Columbia. **Free.**

Saturday, August 1, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Story Tellers Book Festival for Children’s Weekend Event. This will be an exclusive evening dedicated to fostering connections and celebrating the future of African American storytelling for children. St Francis Neighborhood Center, 2405 Linden Ave., Baltimore. **Free.**

Saturday, August 8, 11:00 AM. ROOTS XYO ATO Pop-Up Experience. Discover African designers, shop curated fashion and experience culture at a luxury marketplace. Yolk Photo Studio, 5600 Tuxedo Rd., Hyattsville. **Free.**

Saturday, August 22, 2:00 PM. Souls at Sea Ceremony. The Universal Sailing Club in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, is hosting the 12th Annual Souls at Sea Ceremony which pays homage to captured Africans that did not survive the middle passage. CBMM, 213 N. Talbot St., St. Michaels. **Free.**

Saturday, August 29. Black Patriot Monument Unveiling, Maryland State House, Southeast façade. The Maryland monument to honor African American Patriots of the Revolutionary War will be unveiled. **Free.**



COMMUNITY EVENTS



Donations can be made to printed issues of The Pendulum through the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum Foundation, a non-profit 501 (c) (3) Corporation. The Pendulum is dedicated to documenting, interpreting, and preserving Maryland's African American history. Donations are fully tax deductible. To donate by mail, send a check to:

Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum
Foundation
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Saturday, August 29, 12 noon to 9:00 PM. 6th Annual African American Heritage Festival. This is the DMV's largest family-friendly African American cultural festival. Laurel Park Racetrack, 198 Laurel Track Park Rd, Laurel. **Free with RSVP.**

Saturday, September 19, from 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM. 30th Annual Baltimore County African American Cultural Festival. This is a family event that celebrates African American culture, and community. Live performance by DJ Tent. Patriot Plaza, 400 Washington Ave., Towson. **Free.**

Sunday, October 11, from 12 noon – 9:00 PM. African Diaspora Festival. Veterans Plaza, Downtown Silver Spring. This high energy event features a celebration of culture, art, and unity. Come enjoy the rhythms from Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. **Free.**



THE ROOTS LEGACY TOUR

Join us for a high-profile, three-day journey commemorating the enduring legacy of Roots and its author, Alex Haley. Traveling from Annapolis, Maryland to Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania, Virginia, this immersive experience marks 50 years of cultural impact through storytelling, dialogue, and community engagement. Info: <https://roots50.org/>

Thursday, October 1 – Saturday, October 3. “The Aesthetic Inheritance: Art, Archives, and American Life.” The conference will convene scholars, artists, and cultural workers to discuss African American art, archives, memory, and historical documentation. Opening Plenary is at the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum. October 2-3 is at Bowie State University. **Free.**

Saturday, October 17. The Benjamin Banneker Park and Museum has been designated the recipient of a Liberty Tree for planting on the grounds of the Park and Museum by the Daughters of the American Revolution. A Banneker descendant, Air Force Lt. Colonel John Hicks in dress uniform, will represent the Banneker family. **Free.**



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LETTERS TO THE PENDULUM

"I want to give a huge shout out to MCAAHC for the amazing spring edition of The Pendulum newsletter. I was especially pleased to see the section that highlighted "Youth Takeover" because we really need to focus our energy on our youth so they can be aware of what our ancestors sacrificed to allow us the freedoms we have and are fighting for today."

Lisa Hunt, born in Baltimore and now a resident of Charlotte, North Carolina

"Thank you for giving my son Karon the opportunity to share his poem, "Humanity," at MCAAHC's virtual meeting during Black History Month. He was excited and talked about it a lot and loves that he was featured in The Pendulum."

Nicole Spencer, Boyd-Booth Community, Baltimore

"I have been raising my grandson, Amir, because his mother passed last year. I thank God for the opportunity he was given to share his poem at the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture's public program during Black History Month. This is my grandson's second time sharing with MCAAHC."

Yvette Lankford, Penrose-Fayette Community, Baltimore

"The Pendulum newsletter does an outstanding job of sharing stories, historical milestones, and community events highlighting Maryland's African American history. For me, the most interesting article was about the Pullman Porters. Specifically, how it delved into Thurgood Marshall's father and how his experiences as a Pullman Porter inspired Thurgood's civil rights career."

Franklin Jackson, Silver Spring

"I have always admired Benjamin Banneker and especially considering the colonial times in which he lived. Benjamin Franklin was like Banneker in that both were geniuses. But Banneker - mathematician, surveyor, astrologer, almanac, author, and clock - he was a Renaissance Man before the Renaissance."

Ron Wilson, Hoe's Heights, Baltimore

Please send your comments to: urbanprofessor@aol.com

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PUBLIC RELATIONS AND HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Thank you for reading this quarter's issue!

Commissioner Brian Morrison, PhD
Committee Chair

MCAAHC Chair Kali-Ahset Amen, PhD
Commissioner Walter Gill, PhD
Commissioner Mark Glaze
Commissioner Jyoti Mohan, PhD
Sharita Thompson

Tahja Cropper, BDTM Marketing Coordinator
Jan F. Lee, BDTM Chief Operating Officer
Commissioner Alethea Roselyn Smith-
Withers, DMin
Commissioner Wesley Wood

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Illustration by Dale Wilson from The American Revolution Experience, <https://american-revolution-experience.battlefields.org/people/thomas-carney#carney-obit>

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