

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Scottsboro Boys-CEOTA Civil Rights Museum In Decatur To Be Announced At Gala

Decatur, AL (October 14, 2019) – On November 14, 2019, the CEOTA (Celebrating Early Old Town with Art) Board will be announcing the Scottsboro Boys-CEOTA Museum at the group's 5th Anniversary Gala at the Ingalls Pavilion in Decatur, AL. The multi-million development will be Decatur's newest and boldest step forward in civil rights history and recognition.

The primary goal of the museum is to house, display and demonstrate the CEOTA collection and to depict Decatur's role in the historic trial of the Scottsboro Boys, reflecting the civil rights struggles and victories during that era.

The Scottsboro Boys were nine African American young men, ages 13 to 20, falsely accused in Alabama of raping two white women on a train in 1931. The landmark set of legal cases from this incident dealt with racism and the right to a fair trial. It is commonly cited as an example of a gross miscarriage of justice in the United States legal system. The Scottsboro Boys spent the two years between their first trials and the second round, that begin in March 1933 in Decatur, in the deplorable conditions of Depression-Era Alabama prisons. The story of the Scottsboro Boys lives on through the efforts of artists, historians and scholars. This commitment is what feeds CEOTA's passion to perpetuate the awareness of the story.

The guest speaker for the gala will be Thom Gossom, Jr., an internationally known actor, speaker, author, and communication consultant.

You've seen him in top grossing television series such as In **The Heat of the Night**, **NYPD Blue**, and **CSI**. Recent appearances include the **Oprah Winfrey Network's**, **Love Is...**, and **BET's**, **The Quad**. He has written **Walk-On My Reluctant Journey to Integration at Auburn University**, and **The Slice of Life** short story collection. The documentary, **Quiet Courage: The James Curtis Owens Story**, is also written, directed and produced by him. He has shattered barriers during his lifetime and guest will be encouraged and enriched by his exciting speech. (Speaker's bio and photo attached)

The invitation only event starts with a reception from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm followed by dinner and the presentation.

CEOTA Advisory Board

Frances D. Tate- Artist and Founder

John Allison – County Archivist, Morgan County, Alabama, since 2006.

Peggy Allen Towns –Local historian, lecturer and published author.

Dorothy B. Gordon – Well-known community activist.

David Breland - Director of Historic Resources and Events for the City of Decatur and Director of the Old State Bank since January 2013.

Danielle Gibson - President/CEO of the Decatur Morgan County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Wylheme H. Ragland - retired United Methodist Clergy, benefactor, free-lance writer, and historian.

Gerald G. Ginwright- Founder and Managing Member of Mainstream Financial Group.