



National Council of Negro Women

STAFFORD FREDERICKSBURG SECTION

Induction Ceremony



June 20, 2026

**William J. Howell Branch Library
806 Lyons Blvd.
Fredericksburg, VA**



Welcome

Dear Honored Guests, Members, Partners, and Friends,



It is my profound pleasure to welcome you to our 2026 New Members and Elected Officers Induction Ceremony. As I reflect on my ten years serving as President of this NCNW Section, I am filled with gratitude for the unwavering commitment, generosity, and sisterhood that continue to define our work and strengthen our impact across our Stafford-Fredericksburg community. Today we stand in the light of a woman who turned \$1.50 and a dream into a movement that still nourishes and profoundly shapes us. Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune—educator, organizer, nation-builder—left us more than institutions.

She left us a way to live. Her Ten Rules weren't just advice; they were a roadmap for rising.

Dr. McLeod Bethune Ten Guiding Principles

Be determined—because mountains move for those who keep climbing.

Have faith in God—the anchor that steadies us in every storm.

Believe in yourself—because the world will try to name you, but only you choose who you become.

Use your talents wisely—every gift is meant to lift someone else.

Be honest—integrity outlives applause.

Be loyal—to your people, your purpose, your promise.

Be strong—not in hardness, but in endurance.

Be loving—because love is the revolution that never loses power.

Be industrious—progress is built by hands that refuse to be idle.

Be patient—because change is a long road, but every step forward is victory.

Today, we don't just remember her words—we carry them. We are the continuation of the story she began. And her light... still shines brightly in us.

With gratitude and sisterly service,

Maria Barnes

Outgoing President,
NCNW Stafford-Fredericksburg Section

Induction Ceremony Officer

Dr. Brandynicole Brooks, Membership Chair

Dr. Brandynicole Brooks is a leadership strategist, trainer, and social worker specializing in trauma-informed systems, workforce wellbeing, and purpose-driven leadership. She is the founder of Dr. Brandynicole, LLC, where she partners with public agencies, courts, and human service organizations to strengthen leadership capacity, improve staff engagement, and cultivate sustainable professional practices in high-impact environments.

With a professional background spanning child welfare, policy, training, and organizational leadership, Dr. Brooks brings both lived systems experience and research-informed insight to her facilitation.

She is also the founder of Sleep Sweet Junebug, Inc., a nonprofit focused on supporting families and professionals navigating grief and loss, which deepens her expertise in compassion fatigue, emotional labor, and healing-centered approaches.



Installation Ceremony Officer

Dr. Alotta Taylor, Ph.D.

Dr. Alotta Taylor's career includes more than four decades of contributions and accomplishments at NASA. She served as a member of the Senior Executive Service, demonstrating established leadership skills in guiding personnel and in formulating and implementing policies, strategies, and programs.

Dr. Taylor has a demonstrated record of leadership and supporting the NCNW mission. She has faithfully served under six NCNW Presidents, starting with Dr. Dorothy I. Height. Her NCNW experience includes starting as a section correspondence secretary and advancing to section president. She currently chairs the Section's Resource Development Committee. She served as the NCNW National Treasurer under Dr. Dorothy Height and currently serves as a National Vice Chair and Historian, where she is leading an Archives Committee to document NCNW's rich history.



Dr. Taylor is a NCNW Legacy Life member, Bethune Achiever, member of the President's Circle and a Power of 20 sustainer. Dr. Taylor serves as a member of Mary McLeod Bethune Council House Federal Advisory Commission and on several external boards including her church trustee ministry. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, NAACP, and a life member of the National Urban League.

New Member Induction and Officer Installation Ceremony

Welcome & Opening

Call to Order..... Maria Barnes

Invocation..... Chaplain

Introduction of Installation Officer Maria Barnes

Purpose of GatheringDr. Alotta Taylor, PhD

Candle Lighting and NCNW Pledge Ceremony

Green Candle: *Heritage and Legacy* | Blue Candle: *Unity and Sisterhood*
Gold Candle: *Service and Responsibility* | Purple Candle: *Progress and Power*
White Unity Candle: *Democracy and Purpose*

Induction of New Members Dr. Brandynicole Brooks, 2nd Vice President

Presentation of the 2026–2028 Elected and Appointed Officers

Installation of 2026-2028 New Officers Dr. Alotta Taylor, PhD

Incoming President's Address Sharon Johnson-Theodore

Vision for the 2026–2028 Term

Special Presentations

Benediction Juanita Montgomery - NCNWSFS Chaplain



NCNW

Stafford-Fredericksburg Section

Section Inductees

Elizabeth Ashton
Dr. Rashida Asterilla
Theresa Coward
Pamela Edwards
Millisa Gary
Mya Grant

Shelly Hammond
Dr. Stacia Jones
Dr. Cherie Parker
Christine Phillips
Latrice Robinson
Rose Tipado

The Black Rose

Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, the visionary founder of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), often referred to young Black women as Black Roses—a powerful metaphor for their beauty, strength, and perseverance in the face of adversity.

The symbolism of the Black Rose traces back to a moment in Dr. Bethune's life when she came across a stunning black rose in Europe.

Surprised by its existence, she saw it as a reflection of Black women—rare, resilient, and flourishing despite the odds.



Candle Lighting Ceremony & Oath of Induction

Mistress of Ceremonies (MC):

Welcome to this sacred moment in the life of the Stafford-Fredericksburg Section of the National Council of Negro Women. Today, we celebrate a new beginning. You, our new members, join hands with thousands of women across the nation who are committed to service, sisterhood, and social progress. We light these candles to symbolize the values we hold dear, and the promise each of you makes today.

Green represents the enduring legacy of our founder, Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune. She believed that "the true worth of a race must be measured by the character of its womanhood" and as we induct new members, we embrace perpetual renewal.

MC: As we light the candle of Heritage, we honor the struggles and sacrifices of those who came before us and pledge to carry their vision forward.

Blue represents the light of democracy—bold, enduring, and inclusive.

MC: As we light the candle of Democracy, we affirm our commitment to uplift and support one another as sisters, together in purpose and action.

Gold reflects the richness of service. NCNW women serve not for recognition, but because it is our calling.

MC: As we light the candle of Service, we recognize the responsibility we carry to improve our communities and stand as agents of change.

Purple is the color of royalty and power—power not just to lead, but to inspire and transform.

MC: As we light the candle of Progress, we commit ourselves to action that drives equity, justice, and opportunity for all.

MC: (asks new members to raise their right hand): Do you accept the mission of the National Council of Negro Women—to lead, advocate, and empower women of African descent, their families, and communities?

New Members: I do.

MC: Do you pledge to uphold the values of service, sisterhood, and progress, and to actively support the goals of the Stafford-Fredericksburg Section?

New Members: I do.

MC: Then by the light of these candles and the strength of this sisterhood, we welcome you. You are now officially inducted as members of the NCNW Stafford-Fredericksburg, VA Section.

Finally, this central white candle represents unity—of purpose, of heart, and of spirit. NCNW is a sisterhood rooted in compassion, respect, and collective strength.

President: As we light the candle of Unity, we reaffirm our collective member pledge:

"It is our pledge to make a lasting contribution to all that is finest and best in America. To cherish and enrich her heritage of freedom and progress by working for the integration of all her people—regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin—into her spiritual, social, cultural, civic, and economic life. And thus, to aid her in achieving the glorious destiny of a true and unfettered democracy."

Closing - President:

May these lights continue to burn within you—a symbol of your commitment, your courage, and your connection to this powerful network of women. Welcome to the circle.

Installation of Officers

Elected Officers

President.....Sharon Johnson Theodore
First Vice PresidentBarbette Rollins
Second Vice PresidentDr. Brandynicole Brooks
Recording Secretary.....Kimberly Shropshire
Treasurer..... Vernetta Harris

Appointed Officers

Chaplain.....Juanita Montgomery
Parliamentarian.....Angela Smith-Mackey

Oath of Office

Administered by Induction Ceremony Officer, Dr. Alotta Taylor, PhD

I solemnly affirm that I will faithfully execute the duties of my office, uphold the mission and values of the National Council of Negro Women, and lead with integrity, transparency, and sisterhood. I pledge to serve this Section and our community with excellence and accountability.



2026-2028 Officers



Sharon Johnson-Theodore
President



Barbette Rollins
1st Vice President



Dr. Brandynicole Brooks
2nd Vice President



Vernetta Harris
Treasurer



Kimberly Shropshire
Recording Secretary



Juantia Montgomery
Chaplain



Angela Smith-Mackey
Parliamentarian

Program Design by
Angela Smith-Mackey
& Dr. Brandynicole Brooks