

2019

MARYLAND
COMMISSION ON
AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY & CULTURE
ANNUAL REPORT

MCAAHC
ANNUAL REPORT

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ABOUT **THE MCAAHC**



Since its founding in 1969, by Senator Verda Freeman Welcome, the nation's first African American female State Senator and Dr. Benjamin Arthur Quarles, renowned African American Historian and Morgan State University Professor of History, the MCAAHC has been committed to discovering, documenting, preserving, collecting, and promoting Maryland's African American heritage. The key roles of the 21-seat Governor appointed statewide Commission is the operation of The Banneker Douglass Museum, the state's official museum on African American History and Culture, to jointly administer the state's \$1-million African American Heritage Preservation Grant Program and to provide technical assistance to institutions and organizations around the state. We invite you to visit the Banneker-Douglass Museum and join us in the many celebratory events this year.

Photos, left to right: Benjamin Quarles and Verda Welcome, founders of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture

STATE OF MARYLAND

MESSAGE FROM
THE GOVERNOR

Larry Hogan



Dear Marylanders,

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. For half a century, this commission has been a pioneer in discovering, documenting, preserving, collecting, and promoting Maryland's African American heritage.

As the nation's first state ethnic commission, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture continues to set the standard for education and preservation projects in Maryland. It is with that in mind that I proudly join the commission in presenting the 2019 annual report.

...[T]he Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture continues to set the standard for education and preservation projects in Maryland.

In 2019, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture presided over more than 30 community events and oversaw

the distribution of \$1 million in funds for preservation projects throughout the state.

In 2019, the [MCAAHC] presided over more than 30 community events and oversaw the distribution of \$1 million in funds for preservation projects throughout the state.

As we commemorate the achievements of this great commission and its 50th anniversary, I am confident the commission will continue to foster more avenues for recognition and a greater appreciation of the African American heritage and culture in Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Larry" and last name "Hogan" clearly distinguishable.

LARRY HOGAN
Governor, State of Maryland



CHANGING
Maryland
FOR THE BETTER

STATE OF MARYLAND

MESSAGE FROM **THE GOVERNOR'S
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

Steven J. McAdams



Dear Friends,

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to present the 2019 Annual Report of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC). I would like to take this moment and recognize our devoted commissioners, as well as the enthusiastic team members of the Banneker-Douglass Museum (BDM) and its foundation.

The BDM continues to serve as a beacon of light by presenting, promoting, enlightening, and educating...

Through many great strides and hard work, we have reverently honored and do highly esteem the foundation of African American history and culture in the State of Maryland; Senator Verda Freeman, the country's first African American woman State Senator; Dr. Benjamin Arthur Quarles, an intellectual and professional advisor to many for two generations of African American scholars; Mr. Benjamin Banneker, the first African American man of science and mathematics; and Mr. Frederick Douglass, the first African American internationally distinguished social crusader who was designated to be a candidate for Vice President of the United States.

This report chronicles the many achievements made by the commission representing their designated counties. We treasure our dedicated commissioners who have devoted themselves to working with various community leaders and citizens to educate and enlighten future generations of leaders as we seek to preserve Maryland's African American communities in Maryland.

The BDM continues to serve as a beacon of light by presenting, promoting, enlightening, and educating through their programs and events which share the rich legacy and history of Maryland's African Americans. I ask that you continue to support their various initiatives and look forward to working with you as we continue to change Maryland for the better.

STEPHEN J. MCADAMS

Executive Director, GOCI



MARYLAND COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY & CULTURE

MESSAGE FROM THE
CHAIR, MCAAHC

Rev. Dr. Tamara E. Wilson



Greetings,

It is indeed my honor to serve as the Chair of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) at this moment in its 50 year history.

When the Late State Senator Verda Freeman Welcome, the nation's first African American female state senator, authored its legislation in 1969 an ethnic commission was unheard of anywhere in the country. Yet, that was

Truly, Senator Welcome's groundbreaking legislation has withstood the test of time and continues to stand as a testament to her legacy.

not a deterrent to Senator Welcome. Now, here we are, 50 years later and the commission that she envisioned is a 21-seat statewide commission that provides oversight of the Banneker Douglass Museum, the state's official repository of African American history and culture; and administers the state's \$1 million African American Heritage Preservation Grant. The Commission was the first of its kind and today is only one of nine such commissions in the country.

Truly, Senator Welcome's groundbreaking legislation has withstood the test of time and continues to stand as a testament to her legacy.

I hope that you are inspired to join me and my fellow Commissioners in ensuring that the richness of African American history and culture continues to be celebrated and preserved for generations to come.

This 50th Anniversary celebration began under the administration of our former Chair, Professor Dale Green. It is his shoulders, and those of the Chairs who have come before, upon which we stand celebrating 50 years of documenting, preserving, collecting, and promoting Maryland's African American heritage. As you celebrate with us this year, I hope that you are inspired to join me and my fellow Commissioners in ensuring that the richness of African American history and culture continues to be celebrated and preserved for generations to come.

Remember, We Rise!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tamara Wilson".

REV. DR. TAMARA E. WILSON
Chair, MCAAHC



MARYLAND COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY & CULTURE
MESSAGE FROM **THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, BDM & MCAAHC**

Chanel Compton



Greetings,

Every day, when I walk through the doors of the Banneker-Douglass Museum, I am inspired. I think how lucky I am to work in a place where giants such as Frederick Douglass, Rosa Parks, Alex Haley, and Senator Verda Freeman Welcome, once stood. Our museum was once Mt. Moriah AME Church, built in 1874, just 10 years after emancipation, by free African Americans. Today, 84 Franklin Street, continues to be a space for healing, education, cultural expression, and activism. The history of this museum itself is a story of true triumph.

Today, 84 Franklin Street, continues to be a space for healing, education, cultural expression, and activism.

In 1972, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) and community leaders saved Mt. Moriah from demolition and opened as the Banneker-Douglass Museum in 1984. For 35 years, the museum has been dedicated to preserving and presenting African American history and culture in Maryland. The goal of the Commission and museum is to uplift and inspire Marylanders and its visitors to explore our state history and

build a better sense of community along with social consciousness. This goal is accomplished through our stellar exhibitions, youth and community programs, and statewide initiatives.

The goal of the Commission and museum is to uplift and inspire Marylanders and its visitors to explore our state history and build a better sense of community along with social consciousness.

On behalf of the Commission and the Banneker-Douglass Museum, we thank Governor Larry Hogan and his administration for supporting our efforts and valuing African American historic preservation. I also thank the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives for their guidance and leadership. To the many volunteers, commissioners, and our staff that bring our mission to life, thank you! Together, we are uplifting African American heritage for the next 50 years and beyond!

Sincerely,

CHANEL COMPTON
Executive Director, MCAAHC & BDM



BANNEKER-DOUGLASS MUSEUM FOUNDATION

MESSAGE FROM **THE CHAIR,**
BDM FOUNDATION

Beryle Hall



Dear Friends,

As Chair of the Banneker-Douglass Museum, Foundation, Inc. I am so proud of the work of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture; 50 years is a tremendous milestone. As a foundation, our mission is to benefit the Banneker-Douglass Museum. The Foundation was started in 1976 to support the Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture in establishing

and

The Foundation was started in 1976 to support the Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture in establishing and maintaining the Banneker-Douglass Museum...

maintaining the Banneker-Douglass Museum as the State of Maryland repository of African American History and Culture. We are also proud to announce that 2019, marks the 35th anniversary of our beloved Banneker-Douglass Museum.

As a namesake to the Banneker-Douglass Museum, we are committed to honoring and promoting the legacy of the Maryland Commission on African

...[W]e are committed to honoring and promoting the legacy of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture...

American History and Culture for young children, families, and the greater community. As an educator myself, I know intrinsically how motivating and inspirational this history can be to young people. We thank our sponsors and supporters and we look forward to the many great works to come from the Banneker-Douglass Museum.

Sincerely,

BERYLE HALL
*Chair, Banneker-Douglass
Museum Foundation, Inc.*

COMMISSIONERS AT WORK

THE COMMISSIONERS

Leadership

REV. DR. TAMARA E. WILSON

Chair

Rev. Dr. Tamara England Wilson is the pastor of Nu Season Nu Day Church & Ministries. She is also the found of Journey Ministries, Inc., which provides programming to empower women to embrace their authentic selves in order to fulfill their purpose and achieve their personal best. The author of *The Journey To Self: Who Knows What A Woman Can Be When She is Free To Be Herself*, Rev. Wilson holds degrees from the University of Maryland at College Park, St. Mary's Seminary and University, and United Theological Seminary. She is a very passionate advocate for the preservation, strengthening, and empowering of the African American community and devotes much of her time working with various community and civic organizations.



RUSSELL FRISBY, JR., ESQ.

Vice Chair



Commissioner Frisby is an attorney and partner in the Stinson Leonard Street firm in its Washington, DC location. His focus is on regulatory and corporate matters affecting entities in the communications, energy and technology areas.

Long involved in civic affairs in Maryland and a member of the Pepco Board, Commissioner Frisby has a familial connection to the Banneker-Douglass Museum. Commissioner Frisby's grandfather, Dr. Herbert M. Frisby, donated his historic collection of Arctic artifacts to the Banneker-Douglass Museum and the third floor of the building is named after Dr. Frisby.

Newly Appointed Commissioners



KWEISI MFUME, BALTIMORE CITY

Representative Kweisi Mfume is a U.S. Congressman representing Maryland's 7th District. Born and raised in Baltimore, MD, Mfume is an alumnus of Morgan State University. He was first elected to the U.S. Congress in 1986, vacating his seat ten years later to become President and CEO of the NAACP. Mfume returned to Congress in 2020 after winning a special election to fill the remainder of the term after Congressman Elijah Cummings died in office.

Rep. Kweisi Mfume continues to advocate for his constituents as a new Commissioner on the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture.



ANTHONY J. SPENCER, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Anthony J. Spencer was born, raised, and educated in Anne Arundel County. He obtained both a Bachelor of Arts (1997) and Master's in Public Administration degrees (2011) from Sojourner/Douglass College in Baltimore, Maryland.

Spencer is a practicing visual artist and community advocate. Mr. Spencer is also affiliated with the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority; Black Artist of D. C., Maryland Federation of Art, Northern Arundel Cultural Preservation Society, Inc., August Wilson Society, and the Toni Morrison Society.



DR. BARBARA PACA, O.B.E, TALBOT COUNTY

Dr. Barbara Paca's professional work involves the thirty-year operation of a landscape architectural firm in New York City, Oxford, Maryland and Paris, working globally to develop a new aesthetic, promoting the use of native plants, environmental conservation, historic preservation, accessibility, and community building.

Dr. Paca is also an art historian and was a Trustee to the Maryland Historic Trust in 2018 in recognition of her work in preservation and documenting the legacies of early African American families.

Returning Commissioners

Iris Leigh Barnes, Ph. D. – Harford County

- Curator of Lillie Carroll Jackson Civil Rights Museum in Baltimore
- Two-time Diversity Fellow for National Trust for Historical Preservation

Maya Davis – Prince George’s County

- Senior Research Archivist with Legacy of Slavery Archives at Maryland State Archives
- Former Interim Director of MCAAHC & BDM

Janice Curtis Greene – Baltimore County

- President and Life Member of National Association of Black Storytellers
- Life Member and Past President of the Griots' Circle of Maryland

Marilyn Hatza – Baltimore City

- Program Office for Grants and Strategic Partnerships at Maryland Humanities

Edwin T. Johnson – Baltimore City

- Associate Adjunct Professor at University of Maryland University College, teaching African American and U.S. History
- Assistant University Archivist and University Historian at Morgan State University

Melvin Kelly – Anne Arundel County

- Chairman of Fairfield Outreach and Sponsors Association, a nationwide organization that fundraises for the Fairfield Children’s Home at the United Methodist Mission at Old Mutare in Zimbabwe

Steven X. Lee – Baltimore County

- Founding Director for Benjamin Banneker Historical Park & Museum in Oella, Maryland

Lopez D. Matthews, Jr., PhD – Baltimore County

- Digital Production Librarian for Howard University Libraries and the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center
- Adjunct professor at Coppin State University, teaching courses in the U.S., African American, and World histories

Cheryl A. McLeod – Howard County

- Mediator for Maryland Commission on Human Rights
- Election Observer, providing voter rights protection in many states throughout the country

Elinor L. Thompson – Anne Arundel County

- Author of *In the 8th District: Our African-American Church Communities in Southern Anne Arundel County*
- Author of *Nelson's Rest: Documenting the History and Heritage of Asbury Broadneck Annapolis Church Communities and the Historic Burial Grounds*

Reggie Turner – Washington County

- Founder and President of Turner Wealth Management
- President of Doleman Black Heritage Museum in Hagerstown, Maryland



Photos, right page: Commissioners and audience members at the MCAAHC Legacy Symposium

COMMISSION RETREAT

On Saturday, June 27th, MCAAHC held an all day retreat at the Banneker-Douglass Museum. The theme, “If you Want to Go Fast, Go Alone, if You want to Go Far, Go Together”, inspired commissioners to think of committee work and igniting MCAAHC’s vision of increasing the visibility of the museum and commission work throughout Maryland.

- 2020 Goals
- 50th Anniversary Gala (Raise funds to support BDM 2020 programs) by selling tickets and soliciting donations/sponsorships
 - Activating MCAAHC Committees to support BDM programs/initiatives
 - Preparing for legislation

COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

DATE	TYPE OF MEETING	LOCATION	COUNTY
2/4/19	MCAAHC Annual Meeting	Banneker-Douglass Museum	Anne Arundel County
4/1/19	MCAAHC Public Meeing	Morgan State University	Baltimore City
6/3/19	MCAAHC Public Meeting	Historic Asbury United Methodist Church	Talbot County
8/5/19	MCAAHC Public Meeting	College Park Airport	Prince George's County
10/7/19	MCAAHC Public Meeting	Washington Museum of Fine Art	Washington County
12/2/19	MCAAHC Public Meeting	Harriet Tubman High School	Howard County

COMMISSIONERS IN THE COMMUNITY

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
2/4/19	MCAAHC Annual Meeting	BDM
2/5/19	MCAAHC 50th Anniversary Meeting	BDM
2/12/19	Governor's Black History Month Celebration	Governor's Mansion
4/11/19	African American Heritage Preservation Governor's Workshop	Hagerstown, MD
6/3/19	MCAAHC Public Meeting	The Historic United Methodist Church
6/24/19	MCAAHC Special Meeting	The Historic United Methodist Church
7/24/19	Funeral of Smith Price	Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church
8/5/19	MCAAHC Public Meeting	College Park Airport
8/23/19	UNESCO International Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition	Virtual
9/5/19	Four Rivers Heritage Areas's Decolonizing Museums Workshop	Four Rivers Heritage Area
9/6/19	MCAAHC 50th Anniversary Meeting	BDM
9/7/19	Lynching Memorial Ceremony	Asbury Methodist Church
9/7/19	Race Relations Workshop	Asbury Methodist Church
10/7/19	Opens Meeting Act Training	Virtual
10/7/19	MCAAHC Public Meeting	Washington Museum of Fine Arts
11/1/19	Burial of Smith Price	Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church
11/14/19	Baltimore Museum of Industry Fundraiser	Baltimore Museum of Industry
12/2/19	MCAAHC Special Meeting	BDM
12/12/19	Kwanzaa Celebration	BDM
12/14/19	Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation Meeting	BDM

AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE
PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Overview

The African American Heritage Preservation Program (AAHPP) is a grant program administered as a joint partnership between the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) and the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT).

The goal of the AAHPP is to identify and preserve buildings, communities, and sites of historical and cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland. The program offers assistance to non-profit organizations, local jurisdictions, business entities, and private citizens in their sponsorship of successful acquisition, construction, or improvement of African American heritage projects.

This competitive program, offered once per year, is supported through an annual appropriation from the Maryland General Assembly. The amount available for the grant award is not known until the General Assembly adopts the State budget in early April.

Workshop Dates

In partnership with MHT, the MCAAHC conducted six workshops for potential applicants in locations across the state:

WHEN	WHERE
3/21/19	Delmarva Discovery Museum
4/4/19	Historic St. Mary's Visitor Center
4/9/19	Havre de Grace Colored School
4/11/19	Hagerstown Public Library
4/16/19	Towson Public Library
4/18/19	Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center

Awardees



SOTTERLY SLAVE PLANTATION: SLAVE CABIN - HOLLYWOOD, ST. MARY'S COUNTY

Sotterley Plantation is a 1703 Tidewater plantation with more than 20 original buildings still standing. After its restoration, the 1830s slave cabin was dedicated to Agnes Kane Callum, a Baltimore resident whose great-grandfather was born enslaved at Sotterley, and who was instrumental in telling the story of Sotterley's enslaved community. The grant project will include repairs to the cabin as well as accessibility improvements to the paths leading to it.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$78,000



FAIRMOUNT HEIGHTS WORD WAR II MONUMENT - FAIRMOUNT HEIGHTS, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

The Fairmount Heights World War II Monument was built in 1946 to honor local citizens who served in the armed forces during World War II. The grant project will include repairs to the monument and site improvements within the park.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$12,250



LIBERTY GRACE CHURCH OF GOD: BOWLING ALLEY - BALTIMORE CITY

Liberty Grace Church of God was built in 1922 and has an early 20th century bowling alley in its basement. This historic bowling alley will be restored to working order. [Read more about the bowling alley in Maryland Historical Trust's blog post!](#)

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$100,000



BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH - CAMBRIDGE, DORCHESTER COUNTY

The Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church was constructed in 1903 and is the oldest African American church still standing in Cambridge. This grant will fund structural repairs to the church, as well as repairs to windows and doors.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$100,000



EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH: TUNNELS - CUMBERLAND, ALLEGANY COUNTY

Emmanuel Episcopal Church was built atop the remains of Fort Cumberland, forming a series of tunnels beneath the church that eventually came to be used as shelter by African Americans escaping slavery on the Underground Railroad. Local oral traditions describe a quilt panel with a cross on a hill representing Emmanuel Episcopal Church as a stop on the road to freedom. This project will improve lighting and ventilation in the tunnels, as well as improve accessibility for visitors touring the tunnels.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$100,000



WARREN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND MARTINSBURG NEGRO SCHOOL - DICKERSON, MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The Warren Historic Site is likely the last in Maryland where the traditional triad of buildings constructed in most post-Emancipation African American communities – the church, school, and lodge hall – still exist. The grant project will include roof and foundation repairs on the church, as well as roof, foundation, and floor repairs on the school.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$100,000



MCCONCHIE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL - LA PLATA, CHARLES COUNTY

The McConchie School was constructed around 1912 to serve African American children in central Charles County. The school was closed in 1952, was converted to a residence, and had been abandoned by 1980. The Charles County Fair purchased and moved the building to the fairgrounds in 1990. The grant project will include structural repairs so that the school can continue to be used as a museum.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$99,000



ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - FEDERALSBURG, CAROLINE COUNTY

Zion Methodist Episcopal Church was built in 1931 and features stained glass windows and ornamental woodwork on its tower. The grant will fund accessibility and drainage improvements to the site, as well as structural repairs to the building.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$100,000



ROBERT W. JOHNSON COMMUNITY CENTER: SWIMMING POOL - HAGERSTOWN, WASHINGTON COUNTY

In 1959, the North Street Swimming Pool was constructed as part of the Robert W. Johnson Community Center in Hagerstown's Jonathan Street Neighborhood. It was the only pool in the city where African Americans could swim, and the pool itself is relatively unchanged since it was built. The grant project will repair the swimming pool so that it can be returned to community use.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$100,000



ELLSWORTH CEMETERY – WESTMINSTER, CARROLL COUNTY

Six African American Union Army veterans established the Ellsworth Cemetery in 1876 to provide a burial place for the African American residents of Westminster. The grant project will include mapping of the cemetery and conservation of grave markers.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$65,000



ASBURY M.E. CHURCH – EASTON, TALBOT COUNTY

Asbury M.E. Church was dedicated by Frederick Douglass in 1878. The church also served as a temporary high school for Black students in the 1930s and is now both an active church and a community center. Grant funding will be used to make structural repairs and accessibility upgrades to the fellowship hall within the church.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$100,000



FRUITLAND COMMUNITY CENTER – FRUITLAND, WICOMICO COUNTY

In 1912 local community members built the Morris Street Colored School, now known as the Fruitland Community Center, for Wicomico County's African American children. The building is still used for educational purposes, with summer and after school programs for children as well as an archive. The grant project will include roof replacement, accessibility improvements, and upgrades to the electrical and mechanical systems of the building.

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$44,000

"WE RISE!" GALA



MCAAHC celebrated its 50th anniversary Saturday night during the “We Rise!” Gala at the Banneker-Douglass Museum (BDM) in Annapolis, Md.; this year also marked the 35th anniversary of the museum. More than 200 people, including community leaders, elected officials, educators, members of the BDM Foundation Inc., and the Friends of BDM, joined the event and welcomed the newly-elected leadership and members of the commission: Chair Reverend Dr. Tamara England Wilson; Vice Chair Mr. H. Russell Frisby, Jr., Esq.; the Honorable Kweisi Mfume, a former state congressman; and Mr. Anthony J. Spencer, the great-great-grandson of James Spencer who founded Freetown in Anne Arundel County. The attendees participated in a moment of silence for and poetic tribute to the late Senator Elijah Cummings.

Photo: (Left to right) Chanel Compton, Kweli Zukeri, Mary Sue Welcome, Representative Kweisi Mfume, and Rev. Dr. Tamara E. Wilson pose at the "We Rise!" Gala.

MISSION

As the State of Maryland’s official museum of African American heritage, the Banneker-Douglass Museum serves to document, to interpret, and to promote African American history and culture (particularly in Maryland) through exhibitions, programs, and projects in order to improve the understanding and appreciation of America’s rich cultural diversity for all.

The Banneker-Douglass Museum is a component of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, which is a unit of the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives — an executive-department agency, whose mandate to coordinate outreach efforts to communities, organizations, and local governments across Maryland serves as a unifying principle for all its departments.

MUSEUM HISTORY

The Banneker-Douglass Museum (BDM), named for Benjamin Banneker and Frederick Douglass, was dedicated on February 24, 1984. The original museum was housed within the former Mount Moriah African Methodist Episcopal Church in the heart of historic Annapolis. The Victorian-Gothic structure was included in the Annapolis Historic District in 1971 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Thanks to a community-led effort to transform the former Mt. Moriah AME Church building into a museum, the BDM opened on February 24, 1984. In light of this legacy, the BDM focuses on a community-based approach to building collections and exhibitions and in providing tours, public programs, and other services.

As the State of Maryland’s official museum of African American heritage, the BDM is committed to discovering, documenting, preserving, collecting, and promoting Maryland’s African American heritage through exhibitions, programs, and projects in order to improve the understanding and appreciating of America’s rich cultural diversity for all.

MUSEUM STAFF



CHANEL COMPTON

Executive Director

- Responsible for leading the programmatic plans and operations for the Banneker-Douglass Museum, a component of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture
- M.A., Arts Management



SABRIYAH HASSAN

Director of Programs

- Develops and implements educational and public programs throughout the State of Maryland
- Awarded the National Institute of Out of School Time & National Writing Project Fellowship
- Over 10 years experience in academic and nonprofit administration
- M.Ed. Educational Leadership



LERONN HERBERT

Administrative Manager & Special Assistant to MCAAHC

- Manages BDM's volunteer programs, site rentals, and museum tours
- Provides administrative support to both BDM and MCAAHC
- MBA in Industrial Management



SCHILLICA HOWARD

Curator of Collections

- Creates diverse, accessible, and culturally relevant museum spaces through collections management, exhibition design, and educational and public programs
- M.A., Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies
- M.A., American Studies



ROBERT JAMES

Director of Marketing & Communications

- Responsible for the BDM and MCAAHC's marketing, media relations, public affairs, and communications
- Bachelor's Degree in History & Education
- Over 10 years experience in Marketing & Public Relations

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Overview

The Banneker-Douglass Museum's docents and volunteers create a safe and engaging space of thought and insight on Maryland's African American history. Our docents share that African American history is truly American history for all to learn and enjoy. These leaders continually give unyieldingly of themselves sharing their passion and significance for every person they speak with.

This year, the BDM was favored with the U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen and other new volunteers. These individuals rolled up their sleeves, gave tremendously of their time and talent to help support the BDM Staff as we continue to provide excellent programming and events for the public.

To volunteer, please contact LeRonn Herbert at (410) 216-6180, leronn.herbert@maryland.gov, or bannekerdouglassmuseum@gmail.com!

Volunteer Service At-A-Glance

1,124

Tours to Individuals

381

Hours of
Community Service

46

Docent-led Guided
Tours to the Public

\$8,525

Generated in Service
Hours to BDM

EXHIBITS DEPARTMENT

Songs of the Caged Bird

Inspired by the late Maya Angelou's *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*, group exhibition *Songs of the Caged Bird* urged visitors to reflect on the beauty of unbound personal expression. This abstract art show celebrated Maryland-based African-American artists and depicted the artistry at springs forth from creativity and exploration.

Banneker-Douglass Museum (BDM) presented *Songs of the Caged Bird* as part of a series celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC). Established in 1969, MCAAHC was the first ethnic commission in the United States, born out of a desire to preserve and promote African American voices in Maryland. *Songs of the Caged Bird* poetically expressed the dynamic power and impact of this legacy.



Photo: Artist Greta Chapin-McGill poses with her art on display in the "Songs of the Caged Bird" exhibit during the opening reception

Featured Artists: Daniel Brooking, Lilian Thomas Burwell, Greta Chapin-McGill, Joseph Edwards, Diane Small English, Aziza Gibson-Hunter, T.H. Gomillion, David Allen Harris, Esther Iverem, Ulysses Marshall, Ida Mitchell, Betty Murchison, Magruder Murray, Rufus Norman, Amber Robles-Gordon, Tony J. Spencer, Kamala Subramanian



Laurence Hurst
Pyramid Series No. Fifteen, 1978
Pastel, watercolor, and ink on paper
Copyright Laurence Hurst 1978

Laurence Hurst Anniversary Show

In celebration of the museum's 35th anniversary, this exhibition features artwork spanning 50 years by Mr. Hurst – BDM's first artist-in-resident. Curated from his personal collection, Mr. Hurst puts his talent on full display while weaving in the history of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture.

Verda's Place: An Homage to a Valiant Woman

In 1962, Verda Freeman Welcome became the first Black woman elected to a State Senate. Seven years later, she became the legislative backer for the United States’ first ethnic commission, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC). This exhibition told her story in celebration of the MCAAHC’s 50th Anniversary.

Verda F. Welcome was born in 1907 to a North Carolina farming family. Her passion for education, equality, and hard work were a direct result of her upbringing. For eleven years, Welcome taught in Baltimore City’s segregated school system where she saw the impact of racial discrimination on her students and their parents firsthand. Leaving the classroom and moving into the community as an activist was critical in her formation as a politician. Welcome actively mobilized Black women to become informed voters and often tapped on them to run for office during her legislative career. Her “Valiant Women” would change the political tides of Baltimore, the State of Maryland, and the entire nation as Welcome was elected into Maryland’s House of Delegates (1958) and Senate (1962).



A Black woman legislator during the Civil Rights Movement, Verda Welcome faced difficulties from all sides. She persevered and enacted change in Maryland that resulted in laws providing equal pay for women, protection from racial discrimination, and increased gun control. Welcome passed away in 1990 in Baltimore, Maryland after spending 25 years in Maryland’s legislature.

"I was scared, no doubt about it, but I...was fighting for my people, and there were black people in the struggle getting hurt a lot worse than I."
- Senator Verda Welcome discussing her assassination attempt.

Senator Verda Welcome remains a beloved figure in the State of Maryland and at the Banneker-Douglass Museum. This cafe-themed exhibition was a direct response to places where Welcome was unwelcome: the bars and nightclubs where the male legislator parlayed after leaving their offices. Through memorabilia, photographs, and archival documents, Verda’s Place encouraged interaction and participation to move beyond the exhibition space and into the communities that visitors represented.

Special thanks to the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation, Inc., and Mary Sue Welcome.

Photo: Verda Welcome and her “Welcome Wagon” celebrating her House of Delegates win, 1958
Courtesy of Mary Sue Welcome

Doing the Work: : Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Maryland Commission on African American History & Culture

In 1969, Senate Bill #185 established the Commission on Negro History and Culture “...to conduct a study of all proposals to create a better understanding and knowledge of Negro history and culture and...make a recommendation to the Governor...[regarding] the legislative enactments which would be necessary to carry out such proposals”. The creation of the Commission was initiated by Senator Verda F. Welcome and historian Dr. Benjamin Quarles, and it became the first ethnic commission in the country.

Fifty years later, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC), has surpassed the original instructive. The MCAAHC’s current mission to discover, document, preserve, collect, and promote Maryland’s African American heritage is demonstrated through its commitment to education, advocacy and promotion, and preservation.

This exhibit showcased ephemera, photographs, archival documents, and artifacts to detail the history and impact of MCAAHC within the greater context of African American history. Doing the Work invited visitors to learn about the Commission’s impact on their local communities and consider their personal role in preserving Maryland’s African American heritage.



Photo: Commission members and members of the Leon Bridges Architectural Firm at Mt. Moriah Church prior to renovations, 1978
Banneker-Douglass Museum Photographic Archives, Banneker-Douglass Museum

COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Funding from the IMLS

In November 2018, Chanel Compton, Executive Director, and Schillica Howard, Curator of Collections, submitted a grant application to the Institute of Museum and Library Services's (IMLS) Museum Grants for African American History and Culture program requesting funds to purchase proper storage for BDM's Fine Art and African Art collections. The IMLS awarded BDM \$50,000 to complete this project. BDM ended the year with finalized plans for a completed renovated collections storage on-site. Installation begins in 2020!

Collections Volunteers

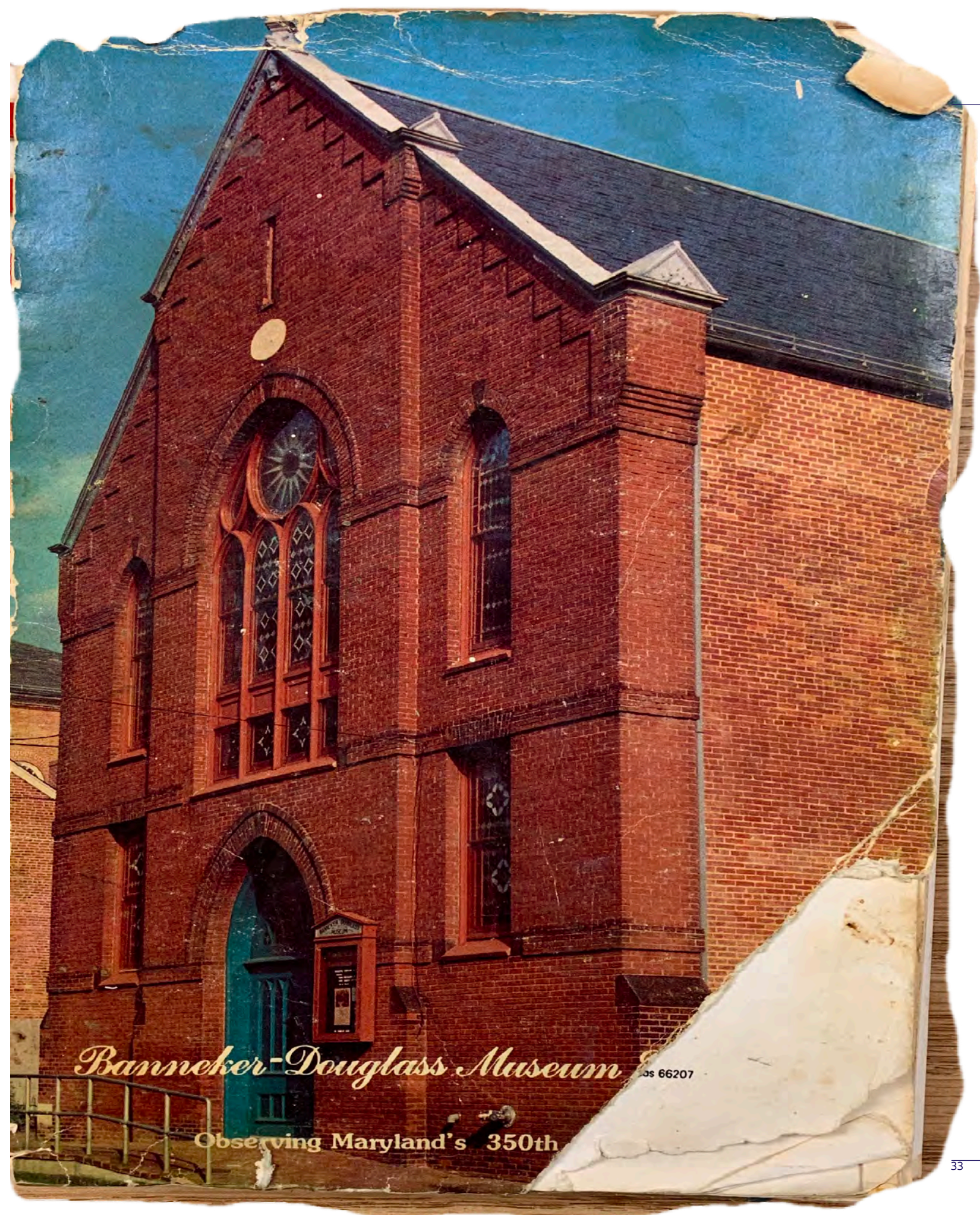
In 2019 the Banneker-Douglass Museum was able to secure volunteers to assist us with the robust collections department. The volunteers were community members who approached the museum with a heightened interest in learning more about the curatorial work being done. With items both on and off site, additional help is always needed in keeping the archives up to date. During their time with the museum volunteers were responsible for assisting the museum's curator with developing, planning, and executing various exhibitions, and reorganizing the Sylvia Gaither Garrison Library.

Donations

Thanks to a donation by Aris T. Allen, Jr., BDM's Aris T. Allen collection grew! The collection of books included an original 1984 cookbook published by the Banneker-Douglass Museum in celebration of Maryland's 350th birthday (pictured).

Photo, left page:

A cookbook published in 1984 by the Banneker-Douglass Museum in celebration of Maryland's 350th birthday, from BDM's Collection



PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT

[Educational & Community Partnerships](#)

For the Banneker-Douglass Museum, 2019 was a year of flourishing program partnerships. Collaborative efforts with local and national partners helped to increase museum visibility and public engagement. Program partners included:

- University of Maryland College Park Black Alumni Association
- Maryland Hall
- Anne Arundel County Public Libraries
- Baltimore City Public Schools (Forest Park High School)
- Baltimore Read Aloud
- Griots Circle of Maryland
- Well Read Book Club
- Culture Queen

["We Rise: Youth Photojournalism Project"](#)

The Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation, Inc. supported the Banneker-Douglass Museum staff and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture to present, "We Rise: Celebrating Maryland's African American History Youth Project". In conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC), BDM worked with art instructors and community partners to implement the "We Rise" youth project that directly impacted young people in Baltimore City.

Through the "We Rise" youth project, young people from Forest Park High School created a visual arts exhibit that encompassed photography and videography. The exhibit debuted at the "We Rise Youth Conference". The goal of the project was for young people to connect their own family and community history to profound moments in Maryland African American history, such as Maryland Emancipation, the 1964 Civil Rights Bill, and the Baltimore Uprising.

Photo, right:

A student snaps a photo for the "We Rise: Youth Photojournalism Project".



Public Programs

Laurence Hurst Anniversary Show and Songs of the Caged Bird Exhibit Opening Reception
Saturday, January 12th, 3 pm- 5 pm

MLK National Day of Service with the University of MD Black Alumni Association
Monday, January 21st, 10 am-2 pm

Lillian Burwell Book Signing
Saturday, January 26th, 2 pm-4 pm



Verda's Place: An Homage to a Valiant Woman Opening Reception
Friday, March 8th, 6 pm- 8 pm

Encouraging Women of Color to Seek Legislative Roles Program
Thursday, March 28th, 6 pm- 8pm



We Rise: Bicentennial Celebration
Saturday, February 9th, 6 pm-10 pm

Professor John Stauffer Frederick Douglass History Talk w/Maryland Hall
Tuesday, February 11th , 6 pm-8 pm

Black History Program with Anne Arundel County Public Library (Museum on the Move)
Monday, February 18th, 3 pm- 4 pm



We Rise: BDM Youth Conference
Friday, June 28th, 10 am- 4 pm

Valiant Women Book Club Series: Finding Our Stories, Discovering Ourselves
Saturday, July 27th, 11 am-12:30 pm

Harambee Storytime: Ready, Set, Let's Go Back to School
Saturday, August 17th, 11:30 am-1 pm

Banneker Douglass Museum Community Feedback Forum
Saturday, September 14th, 11 am- 1pm



Harambee Storytime with Baltimore Read Aloud and the Griots Circle of Maryland
Saturday, September 21st, 12 pm-2 pm

Henrietta Lacks Discussion: Difficult Conversations about Race w/Nekose Wills
Saturday, August 3rd, 1 pm-3 pm

We Rise: 50th Anniversary Commision Gala
Saturday, November 2nd, 6 pm-11 pm

Annual Kwanzaa Celebration
Saturday, December 14th, 12 pm- 4 pm

Photos left page. From left to right, top to bottom:

Visitor admiring artwork at the "Songs of the Caged Bird" Opening Reception

Banneker-Douglass Museum Staff pose with Gov. Larry Hogan at the "We Rise: Bicentennial Celebration"

A visitor explores the exhibiton "Verda's Place" during the opening reception

Photos from top to bottom:

"We Rise: Youth Conference" participants and speakers pose after a sucessful conference

Annual Kwanzaa Celebration at the Banneker-Douglass Museum

MARKETING &
COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT

Description of Marketing Director

An engaging and detail oriented communications and marketing professional with more than 15 years of experience. Additionally, Robert brings a wealth of knowledge as it relates to government liaising, event planning, organizational management, office management, and member relations. Robert joined the staff of Banneker-Douglass Museum in 2018. (His previous post was the Director of Communications at The Governor’s Office of Crime Control and Prevention) He has since proven an an invaluable asset to the team.

Benchmarks in Visitation

For the first time in it's history, the Banneker-Douglass
Museum welcomed over **10,000 Visitors!**

Press Coverage

Roots & Tides Byway produced a video highlighting attractions in Maryland. BDM was featured in a promotional video which highlighted the Deep Roots, Rising waters permanent exhibit and “Doing The Work” which featured 50 years of the MCAAHC.

Annapolis Home Magazine featured the staff of BDM in thier “Faces of Annapolis” edition. This special edition highlighted the staff as the “Faces of African American History” in both the print and online versions.



THE BANNEKER-DOUGLASS MUSEUM

As the State of Maryland’s official museum of African American heritage, the Banneker-Douglass Museum serves to document, to interpret, and to promote African American history and culture (particularly in Maryland) through exhibitions, programs, and projects in order to improve the understanding and appreciation of America’s rich cultural diversity for all. With over 12,000 items in our collections database, and the “Sylvia Gaither Garrison Library”, Banneker-Douglass Museum serves as an indispensable resource for anyone looking to research African American history in Maryland.

Under Governor Larry Hogan’s leadership, the museum received a grant from the State for important preservation projects that protect and restore the historic Mt. Moriah Church (which now houses Banneker-Douglass Museum), as well as other historic sites around Maryland. Governor Hogan also issued a proclamation establishing the commemorative year in observation of the bicentennial of the

birth of Frederick Douglass whom the museum is named after and encouraged Marylanders to visit the museum as part of the administration’s effort to preserve African American history, culture, and heritage.

The permanent exhibit, “Deep Roots, Rising Waters” provides an overview of African American history in Maryland from 1633 through present day. Come learn about Frederick Douglass, Benjamin Banneker, Harriett Tubman, Matthew Henson, and see how African Americans throughout Maryland have made lasting changes for all Americans.

THE BANNEKER-DOUGLASS MUSEUM

84 FRANKLIN STREET, ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401
410.216.6180 | BDMUSEUM.MARYLAND.GOV

“*The Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation thanks its donors for the support throughout the year. Thank you!*”

SCHOLAR LEVEL (\$2,000+)

- Rev. Dr. Tamara E. Wilson, Chair of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture



TRAILBLAZER LEVEL (\$1,000)

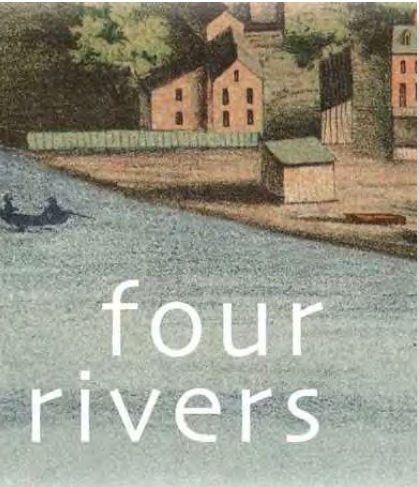
- Eddie C. and Sylvia Brown Family Foundation
- Lisa Smith

EDUCATOR LEVEL (\$500)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brown Advisory Group• Donna Jones - Cypress & Family• Carroll Hynson Foundation, Inc.• Theodore & Betty Mack | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends of the Maryland State Archives• Iris and Daniel Barnes• Eastern Shore Network for Change, Inc. |
|---|--|

STEWARD LEVEL (\$300)

- Friends of the Banneker-Douglass Museum
- Grace Matthews, BDM Foundation, Inc.
- George Williams, BDM Foundation, Inc.
- Olivia Jacobson
- Liberty Grace Church of God, Inc.



WHAT'S NEXT FOR 2020

THE BLACK VOTE

MURAL PROJECT

BANNEKER-DOUGLASS MUSEUM



15TH AMENDMENT
1870



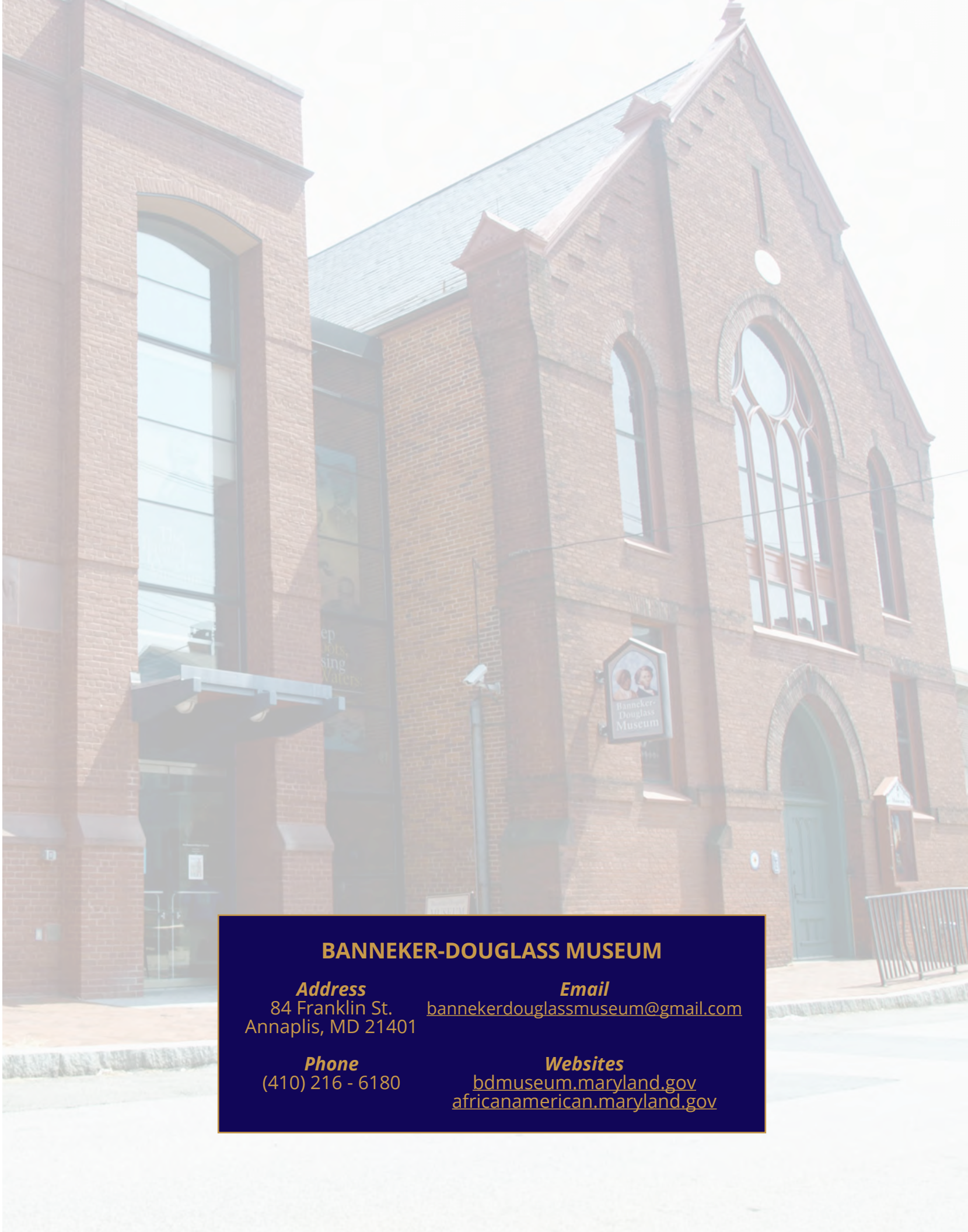
19TH AMENDMENT
1920



TODAY
2020

Opening Reception: Saturday, Feb. 15th
Vip Reception: 2pm Public Reception: 3pm

A public arts project that will transform the interior galleries of the Banneker-Douglass Museum into 16+ murals that interpret the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) 2020 theme: African Americans and the Vote.



BANNEKER-DOUGLASS MUSEUM

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