



**STANDING LEFT TO RIGHT:** Ms. Kenya Cox, Commissioner; Dr. Myron Pope, Treasurer; Mr. Hannibal Johnson, Commissioner; Superintendent Terry Brown, Commissioner; Superintendent Lewis Rogers, Commissioner

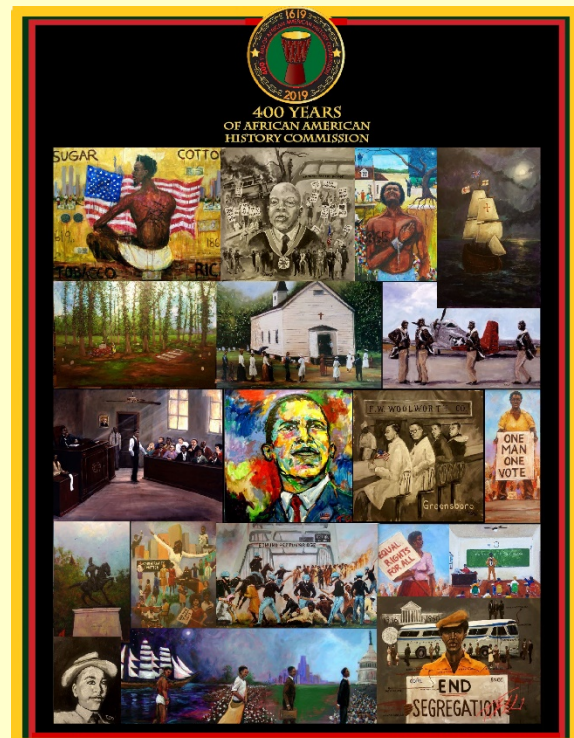
**SEATED LEFT TO RIGHT:** Mr. Ron Carson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair; Mr. Ted Ellis, Vice Chair; Dr. Rex Ellis, Chair; Ms. Addie Richburg, Executive Director; Prophet Anyanwu Cox, Commissioner.

### SOME NEW DEVELOPMENTS AT-A-GLANCE

**October 1, 2019** — Effective today per Public Law (PL) 115-102, Ms. Addie L. Richburg has been officially appointed to serve as Executive Director of the 400 Years of African American History Commission (400 YAAHC) following several months of service in an interim capacity.

**November 1, 2019** – Pursuant to authority granted to the 400 YAAHC to conduct annual elections (PL 115-102), new executive leadership began service. (See final page of this newsletter).

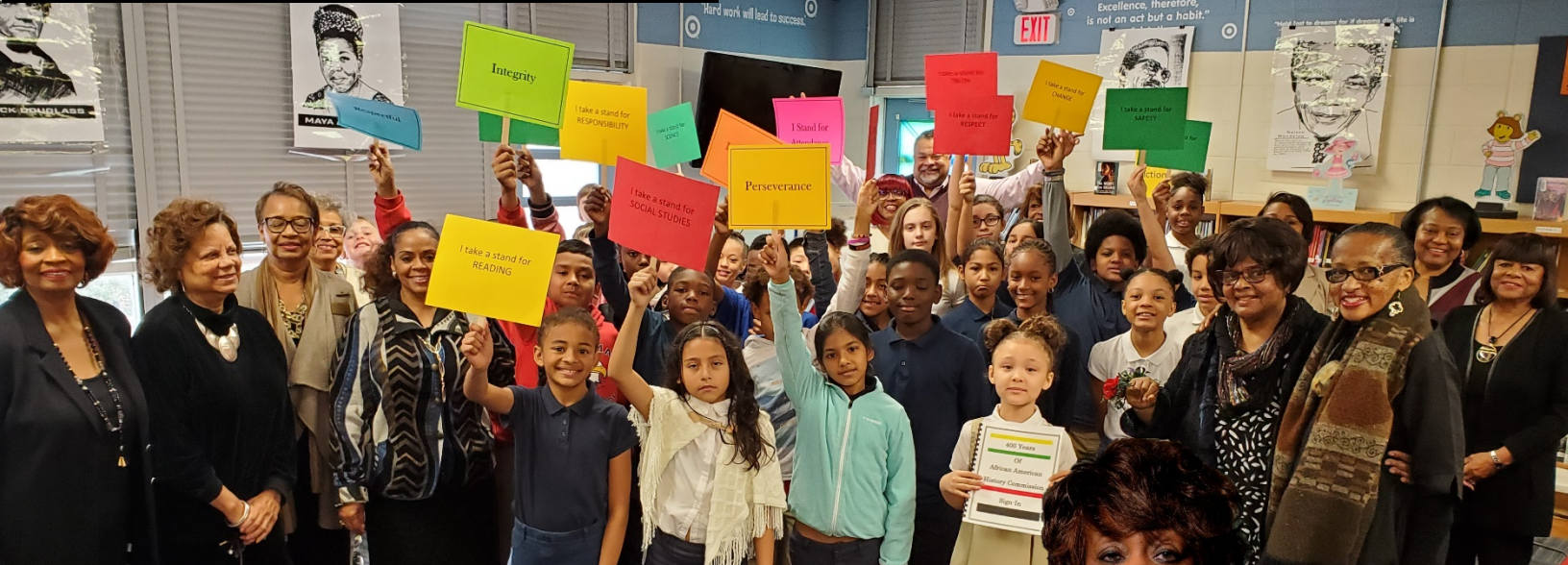
**December 2019** – Pursuant to passage of federal government funding bills of FY20, Section Nine (9) of PL 115-102 has been amended to provide a \$3.3 million appropriation and a one-year extension (July 1, 2021) to further the work of the 400 YAAHC.



Tell us about your work and apply to use the logo of the 400 YAAHC at [www.yaahc.com](http://www.yaahc.com).



# Let's Talk About Our Dream



## Let's Talk About John T. Hartman Elementary A 400 YAAHC Designated Education Ambassador

On **November 4, 2019**, **Principal Jessie Kirksey**, students, and staff of **John T. Hartman Elementary School**, a Kansas City, Missouri public school, was joined by **Commissioner Kenya Cox**, 400 YAAHC Education Advisory Committee Chair, and **Addie Richburg**, 400 YAAHC Executive Director to launch *"Let's Talk About Our Dream"* in the city. The launch marked the designation of Hartman as one of the 400 National Education Ambassadors. Of three thematic choices, students chose the theme, *"Stand Up To Keep A Seat,"* to present their historic and current-day parallels

The designation of Hartman Elementary and other schools across the nation ensures intergenerational and academic engagement with priorities of the 400 YAAHC among which are (1) to recognize and highlight the resilience and contributions of African- Americans 1619; (2) to educate the public about the arrival of Africans in the United States; and (3) to encourage educational (among other organizations) throughout the U.S. to organize and participate in anniversary activities to expand understanding and appreciation.

**Dr. Janice M. Cade** (*far left and pictured right above*), is the first appointee to the **400 YAAHC Education Advisory Committee**. She served as coordinator of launches in Kansas City.

Dr. Janice M. Cade



On September 25, 2019, the **400 YAAHC** and partners launched the continuum of *"Let's Talk About Our Dream,"* a nationwide opportunity to become one of 400 schools over the 2019-20 academic year to be designated by the Commission as National Education Ambassadors of African American history. Interested schools can download details and register by visiting the website of the Commission, [www.400yaahc.com](http://www.400yaahc.com),



## Let's Talk About African-Centered College Preparatory Academy

A 400 YAAHC Designated Education  
Ambassador

Using the theme, *400 Years of Breaking Barriers* to write new history, on **November 4, 2019, African-Centered College Preparatory Academy** became the second of two Kansas City, Missouri public schools to launch *Let's Talk About Our Dream* and receive designation as **400 National Education Ambassadors** by the 400 YAAHC. With parents, local elected leaders, educators, and guests in attendance, Principal/Professor Claire Thornton-Poke and students of all grades presented an exciting array of stage and audio-visual presentations to include oratory, musical performances, cultural dances, drumming, and other well-coordinated programming.



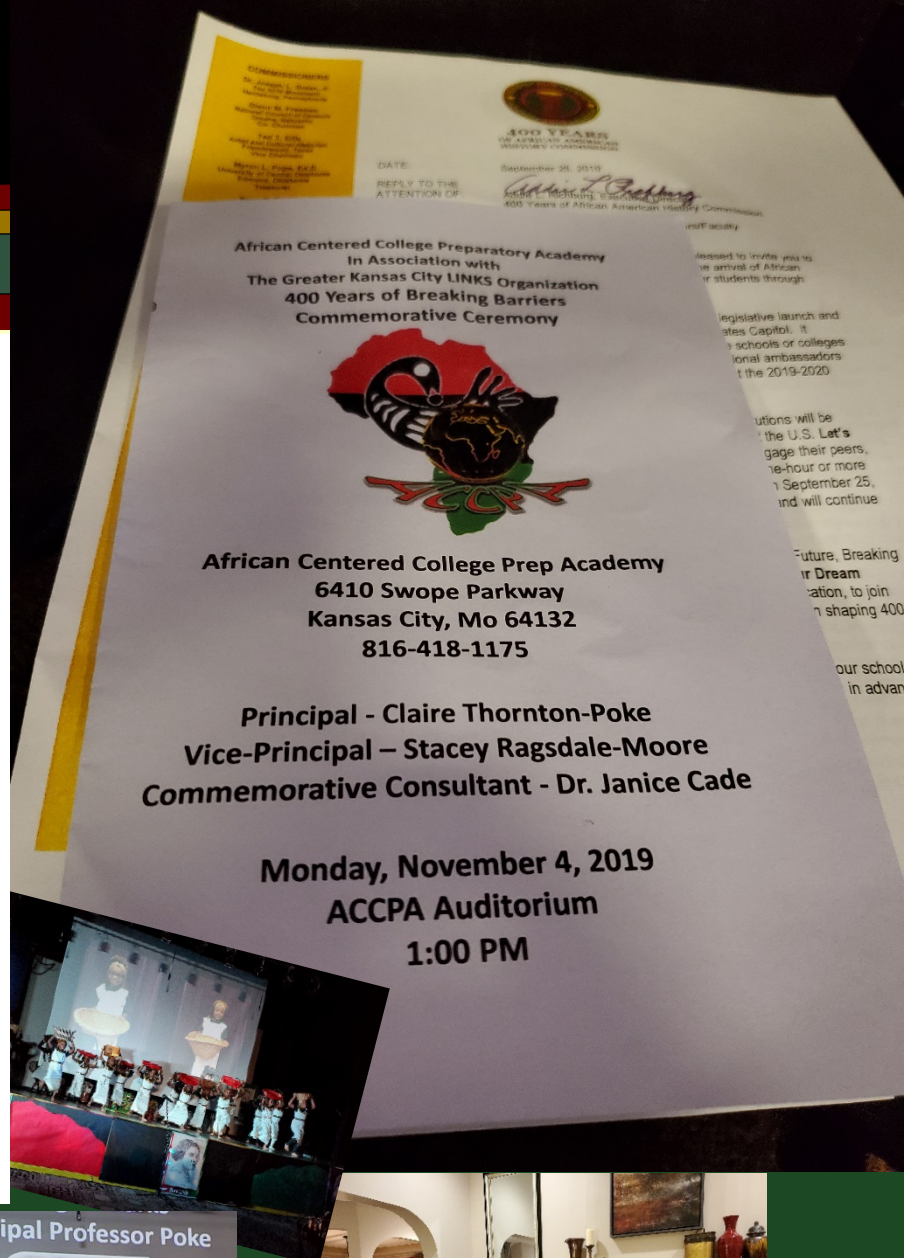
To recognize the school's engagement in honoring 400 years of African American history and its designation, a proclamation was presented to Principal Poke by **City Councilman Brandon Ellington**, 3<sup>rd</sup> District-At-Large.



On hand to congratulate the principal and students for their designation as National Education Ambassadors was **Dr. Mark T. Bedell**, Superintendent of Kansas City Public Schools, and other senior district officials.



On Sunday evening, November 3, **Dr. Mildred Edwards**, host and member of the **Greater Kansas City Chapter of Links**, welcomed members of **Jackson County Chapter of Links**, elected and higher education officials, faith leaders, and representatives of neighboring school districts to learn more about the path forward of the 400 YAAHC and how other students and organizations might become involved.







*"The bittersweet story of Tulsa's historic Greenwood District, once considered "The Negro Wall Street," is a tale of tragedy and triumph, oppression and opportunity, despair and dignity. It is a real-life human drama, set in a city dubbed the "Oil Capital of the World," starring a cast of African American heroes whose courage, ingenuity, and faith sustained them through life's highest peaks and lowest valleys."*


**Mr. Hannibal B. Johnson, Author/Attorney**  
Black Wall Street  
Commissioner, 400 YAAHC

Among priorities outlined in the Public Law 115-102, the 400 YAAHC will recognize and highlight the resilience and contributions of African Americans since 1619 and acknowledge the impact that slavery and laws that enforced racial discrimination had on the United States.



Three days of study and exchange in Tulsa, Oklahoma was made possible for the 400 YAAHC by invitation and support from the **George Kaiser Family Foundation (GKFF)**. The experience was coordinated by **Mr. Phil Armstrong** (left), 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission Project Director; 400 YAAHC **Commissioner Mr. Hannibal B. Johnson** (middle); and **Mr. Brandon Oldham** (right), Program Associate GKFF.





When the Old West was new, you found us everywhere.

We were Buffalo Soldiers and cattle punchers, rodeo legends and frontier lawmen. One out of every three cowboys who drove the herds of cattle up the trail from Texas was either African American or Hispanic.

We came to Oklahoma from all across the country, thousands of us . . . on foot, in wagons, or on horseback. Making the Run of '89, staking out farms and ranches, building new lives. Nor was that all.

By 1907, when Oklahoma became a state, we had established more than two dozen all-black towns. At Langston, we founded a university. And here, in Tulsa, we built an African American multiracial community like no other, with two newspapers and more than a half dozen hotels, two theaters and fifteen churches, dozens of restaurants and grocery stores, even a Madame C.J. Walker Beauty School.

Out of grit and hard work, brick and mortar, we built our own piece of the American Dream.

We called it Greenwood.

*The lessons of this fragment of American history are legion. Few are more compelling and relevant than the realization that the human spirit may bend, but it need not break. Under the most severe of life's tests, in our darkest hours, faith and hope and fortitude work minor miracles . . .*

The Tulsa race riot (also referred to as the Tulsa massacre, Greenwood Massacre, or the Black Wall Street Massacre of 1921 occurred on May 31 and June 1, 1921, when mobs of white residents attacked black residents and businesses of the Greenwood District in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It has been called "the single worst incident of racial violence in American history. The attack, carried out on the ground and from private aircraft, destroyed more than 35 square blocks of the district. At that time, they were considered the wealthiest black community in the United States, known as "Black Wall Street" of the district.





## Looking Back Moving Forward



On Friday, December 13, 2019, the 400 YAAHC met and provided technical recommendations to the **1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission**. The discussion was led by **Oklahoma Senator Kevin Matthews** (above)

The Commission is positioned to leverage the rich history surrounding the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre by facilitating actions, activities, and events that commemorate and educate all citizens. The projects of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission will educate Oklahomans and Americans about the Race Massacre and its impact on the state and Nation; remember its victims and survivors; and create an environment conducive to fostering sustainable entrepreneurship and heritage tourism within the Greenwood District specifically, and North Tulsa generally.



# Honoring History



On **Saturday, December 14, 2019**, the 400 YAAHC toured the grounds to study interpretive kiosks and memorials at **John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park** in Tulsa.

Reconciliation Park is the long-awaited result of the 2001 Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921. It memorializes the Tulsa Race Riot, called the worst civic disturbance in American history. The Park also tells the story of African Americans' role in building Oklahoma and thus begins the long-delayed rendering of the full account of Oklahoma's history.



During 2019, we take a moment to acknowledge the passing of numerous notable African Americans whose efforts have shaped history

Irving Burgie  
Edna Smith Primus

Rev. Clay Evans  
Rev. George Clements

Barbara Hillary  
Harrison Dillard

Charles Rogers  
Bernard J. Tyson

Ernest Gaines  
John Conyers

Willie Brown  
Elijah Cummings

Jessye Norman  
LaShawn Daniels

Pernell Whitaker

Phil Freelon  
Bushwick Bill

Dr. Patricia Bath  
John Singleton

Nipsey Hussle  
Andre Williams

Frank Robinson  
Kristoff St. John

Dr. Frank James  
Diahann Carroll

John Lyle  
John Witherspoon

Toni Morrison  
James Ingram





The 400 YAAHC was hosted by **Mr. Anthony Cherry**, Social Studies teacher (center), his class, and core students to launch *Let's Talk About Our Dream* and become one of 400 YAAHC National Education Ambassadors.

## Writing New History In Tulsa

**Booker T. Washington High School** was founded in 1913, with a class of 14 students and a staff of two teachers. Principal E.W. Woods, a native of Louisville, Mississippi, had just moved to Tulsa from Memphis, Tennessee. According to legend, Woods had walked all the way from Tennessee to Oklahoma when he learned the new school was advertising for a principal. One hundred six (106) years and over 2000 students later, BTW High has been recognized nationally for its academic superiority and in history for its forerunning in school desegregation in Tulsa.



# Engaging the Public



The 400 YAAHC convened one of three official public meetings as required by PL 115-102 in Tulsa on Thursday, December 12, 2019. Local citizens, organizational members, municipal officials and others gathered at the Aaronson Auditorium of the Central Library (above). The meeting, the first to occur for the Commission in the midwestern part of the country, afforded the opportunity to share the projected path forward for the Commission and to envision how the rich history of diverse citizens of Tulsa folds into the national story of 400 years of African American history.

A further opportunity was provided for exchange with media representatives, to include meeting with the Editorial Board of the Tulsa World, the daily newspaper for the city of Tulsa, and primary newspaper for the northeastern and eastern portions of Oklahoma.

## JHF's 'unadulterated truth' goal of panel

Rex Ellis, associate director for curatorial affairs at the National Museum of African American History and Culture and chairman of the 400 Years of African American History Commission, addresses a crowd at the Tulsa City-County Library System's Central Library on



400 Years of African American History Commission nods to John Hope Franklin

By Randy Krehbiel  
Tulsa World

It was no surprise that the name of the John Hope Franklin was invoked during the 400 Years of African American History Commission's presentation at Tulsa's Central Library on Thursday night.

Franklin, who grew up in Tulsa and is arguably its most decorated scholar, pioneered the entire field of African American history. He is still revered for his academic rigor, insight into the American experience, and integrity.

## History: Commission to visit local groups

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"I remember when he was chair of the scholarly advisory board at the National Museum of African American History and Culture," said for curatorial affairs, Rex Ellis. "His watchword to us was that we must tell the unadulterated truth. He agonized over half-truths that had been told about our history, either to make it presentable to certain constituents or to puff up special donors or just relying on somebody relying on shoddy and inaccurate history."

"He constantly reminded us that the history our museum tells had to be the unadulterated truth," said Ellis. "It had to be free from political influence. It had to be free from historical gerrymandering."

"Gerrymandering" might describe the telling of a lot of history. As an old saying of uncertain origin goes, winners write the history, and in more cases than not it's written to their advantage.



Attendees listen during a presentation by the 400 Years of African American History Commission at Tulsa's Central Library on Thursday. (IAN MAULE/Tulsa World)

The 400 Years of African American History Commission, of which Tulsa Hannibal Johnson is a member, was authorized by Congress in 1993 to observe the anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in the English colonies. Their arrival in 1619 is generally considered the beginning of African American history.

The commission members are spending Friday and Saturday with

local groups, touring the city and conducting a commission business meeting.

Among the events planned is a breakfast conference with the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission.

On Thursday night, however, the focus was on African history in general and African American history in particular.

"African American history is quintessential American history," said Ellis.

"This is not a black and white conversation," said Terry Brown, superintendent of the Fort Monroe National Monument, which is on the site where the first boatload of enslaved people came ashore in Virginia. "It's a human conversation. ... The art of the deal is convincing you that what I'm saying is relevant to you regardless of what your skin color is."

Randy Krehbiel 918-581-8365  
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Twitter: @rkrehbiel



# Commission Highlights

## Recognizing and highlighting the resilience and contributions of African Americans since 1619

On October 7, 2019, the 400 YAAHC was invited by the **Virginia Municipal League** to provide a briefing to mayors and other municipal leaders during the annual luncheon of the **National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials** convened in Roanoke, Virginia. The Commission was represented by Mr. Ron Carson and Ms. Addie Richburg.



## Acknowledging the impact that slavery and laws that enforced racial discrimination had on the United States



In a social studies class dialogue presenting analogies about the impact of slavery and conditions during the civil rights movement which have current impact, diverse students at **Long International Middle School** in St. Louis, Missouri, engaged enthusiastically and with curiosity on November 5, 2019. Presenters were **Julie Northrip**, National Park Service Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, and Addie Richburg, 400 YAAHC.

The program was coordinated by **Ms. Linda Mackey**, Director of Family Resources and Community Connections along with **Ms. Lequita Pang**, Social Studies teacher.

## UPDATES

**JUSTICE SUNDAY.** The 400 YAAHC is pleased to invite you to join with us during your regular, already planned, and special commemorative or institution services in recognizing Sunday, January 19, as JUSTICE SUNDAY.

### Video Overview File

You can use the following link to retrieve your file:

<https://www.sendspace.com/pro/dl/xz692i>

Feel free to contact us for more details or to learn about known observances which may be in your area. [400yaah@gmail.com](mailto:400yaah@gmail.com)

**GRANTS.** Though appropriations have been allocated for FY20 to support the work of the 400 YAAHC, we still await specific budgetary procedures which must occur before we are able to open solicitations. Please continue to monitor announcements on our website. You will find us at [www.400yaahc.com](http://www.400yaahc.com). We thank you for your patience!

**ANNUAL JUSTICE SUNDAY 2020 NATIONAL CONTINUUM**

**1619 JOURNAL OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY COMMISSION**

**Justice Matters**

**AN OBSERVANCE OF JUSTICE**

**SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Four principles are equity, access, participation, and rights – each remain a goal for the betterment of society.

**IMPACT OF THE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Nearly one in two adults in the U.S. have or have had an immediate family member in jail or prison. The impact is disproportionately felt by people of color, particularly African Americans who are three times as likely to be incarcerated. A priority of service factoring this impact is mentoring of youth who are impacted and to reduce the likelihood of justice involvement.

**A JOURNEY TO JUSTICE**

The 55th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 will occur in 2020. It was enacted to ensure African Americans enjoyed the voting rights guaranteed to all in the Constitution. Despite these measures, justice and equality remain challenged.

The words "Justice" and "Sunday" are symbols of faith, fairness, and freedom, all of which were core values of selfless service rendered by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and countless others who committed their time, talents, and lives to a movement of change.

The weekend of Justice Sunday serves as a symbolic call to action before and beyond the MLK Day of Service. It reminds us of the responsibility we each have, in our own way, to serve this present age.

A strategic theme for its path forward, "Writing A New History," the 400 Years of African American History Commission will salute the pursuit of justice by partnering with the National Alliance of Faith and Justice and the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice to encourage a continuum of service and knowledge.

**ALLIANCE OF FAITH, JUSTICE AND JUSTICE**

*A Charge To Keep We Have To Serve This Present Age*

[www.nafi.org](http://www.nafi.org)  
[www.400yaahc.com](http://www.400yaahc.com)  
[www.nabci.org](http://www.nabci.org)



## LEADERSHIP TEAM

*Effective November 1, 2019*

**Dr. Rex M. Ellis**

National Museum of African American  
History and Culture (Retired)  
Williamsburg, Virginia  
Chairman

**Mr. Ted T. Ellis**

Artist and Cultural Historian Friendswood,  
Texas  
Vice Chairman

**Mr. Ron Carson**

Carson Black Lung Centers  
Pennington Gap, Virginia  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair

**Myron L. Pope, Ed.D** Oklahoma Dept. of  
Human Services  
Edmond, Oklahoma  
Treasurer

**Ms. Addie L Richburg**

Executive Director

## IMMEDIATE PAST OFFICERS

**Dr. Joseph L. Green, Jr.**

The 2019 Movement Harrisburg,  
Pennsylvania

**Mr. Glenn M. Freeman**

National Council of Censors  
Omaha, Nebraska

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

**Superintendent Terry E. Brown**

Ft. Monroe National Park Service  
Ft. Monroe, Virginia

## COMMISSIONERS

**Mr. Lonnie G. Bunch III**

Secretary  
Smithsonian Institutions  
Washington, DC

**Ms. Kenya Cox**

Kansas African American Affairs  
Commission Topeka, Kansas

**Prophet N. Anyanwu Cox M.Ed**

Reconciliation Min. w/o Walls  
Wichita, Kansas

**Mr. Hannibal B. Johnson, Esq.**

Author, Attorney and Consultant Tulsa,  
Oklahoma

**Mr. Kenneth S. Johnson**

Johnson Marketing, Inc  
Richmond, Virginia

**Mr. George K. Martin**

McGuireWoods LLC Richmond,  
Virginia

**Dr.H. Patrick Swygert**

President Emeritus  
Howard University  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Mr. Bob Kendrick**

Negro Leagues Baseball Museum  
Kansas City, Missouri

## ALTERNATE

**Superintendent Lewis H. Rogers Jr.**

Petersburg National Battlefield  
National Park Service  
Petersburg, Virginia





## 400 Years African American History Commission

c/o

National Alliance of Faith and  
Justice/400 YAAHC

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Writing A New History