

THE AFRICAN PRESENCE IN AMERICA BEFORE 1619

A SYMPOSIUM FOR A NEW NARRATIVE



Thursday, February 13, 2020

Edward Waters College

6:00 -8:00 p.m.

*Milne Auditorium
1658 Kings Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32209*

About the Symposium

The year 2019 is being celebrated as the milestone 400th anniversary of African presence in Virginia, and hence America. However, African people came to what is now the contiguous United States more than a century before 1619. To elucidate this fact, and therefore make the true importance of 1619 much clearer, this symposium will expand the narrative about 1619.

The purpose of the symposium, held during the 2020 Black History Month observance, is to “to pause, reflect upon, revisit, and reassess Black people’s presence within a historical analysis that is African centered. It explores several themes regarding people of African descent in North America including: African peoples’ origins and cultures; free and enslaved African populations; alliances with indigenous people; and resources for further inquiry in public and academic research.

The symposium is the timely vision of former Florida State Senator Tony Hill, a member of the Florida African American History Task Force. He believes that “by recognizing that the beginning of the African presence in America was in Florida that a more accurate story can be told.”

It is in that spirit that Edward Waters College has taken the charge to facilitate a panel discussion to explore several themes regarding people of African descent in America including:

- African peoples origins, cultures, survivals
- Free and enslaved African populations
- Alliances with Indigenous peoples
- Resources for further inquiry, for both public and academic research.

It is significant that this Symposium on this subject is being held during Black History Month at the first private HBCU in the state of Florida in its 154 year of existence and embodies the legacy of Edward Waters College as an institution founded to provide public education to educate the newly emancipated blacks. This symposium invites its alumni, students, faculty, administrators and the general public to “Enter to Learn and Depart to Serve.”

Knowledge is Power. Thanks to the heroic struggles of our Ancestral generations, the opportunity to learn has never been greater, as so much information which had been previously hidden has been coming to light in this dawn of a new millennium, nor has the need for service to our communities been greater than in these challenging times of resurgent divisiveness, hate, and willful ignorance, which can only be countered by a spirit of unity and love, bolstered by true knowledge of who we are, how we came to be, and our harmonious place within the universe.

The organizers of this groundbreaking Symposium are deeply grateful to all the Sponsors (please see back page), participant, and supporters without whom this program could not be a success.

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A SYMPOSIUM FOR A NEW NARRATIVE**

**EDWARD WATERS COLLEGE
FEBRUARY 13, 2020**

PROGRAM

*Presiding~ Ms. Anita Shepherd, Member, Executive Council
Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)*

Libation Invocation

Laqusha Bivins, Communications Major, Junior

Welcome

*Dr. Donna H. Oliver, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Damarius M'Mworia, Faculty Senate, Edward Waters College
Joshua Young, President, Student Government Association, Criminal Justice Major,
Graduating Senior*

Greetings

*Ms. Hazel Gillis, President James Weldon Johnson Branch
Former State Senator Tony Hill, Chair, Florida African History Task Force*

Occasion

Dr. Jacqueline Conley, Department Chair Social and Behavioral Sciences

Panel Discussion

*Mr. Rahman Johnson (Facilitator) --- Assistant Professor, Communications, Edward Waters College
Dr. David Jamison, Assistant Professor and Historian, Jacksonville Historical Society
Ms. Winifred Henry, Assistant Professor, Department of Education
Dr. Larry T. Richardson, Mental Health Service*

Commentary on Panel Questions/Answers-Audience Evaluation

Closing Prayer

Pastor Jared Williams, Director of Campus Ministries and Church Relations

Symposium Organizing Committee

Dr. Sheila Flemming-Hunter, Co-Chair

Former State Senator Tony Hill, Co-Chair

Ms. Hazel Gillis

Ms. Anita Shepherd

Dr. David Jamison

Dr. Jacqueline Conley

Dr. Stephanie G. Campbell

Sponsors

Edward Waters College (Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences)

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Former State Senator Tony Hill

Cover Images

Background image: 1584 Spanish map of *La Florida* (published 35 years before 1619), showing a portion of the whole North American territory claimed by Spain under that name.

Juan Garrido, West-African-born Spanish conquistador who landed on the Florida peninsula in 1513 with Juan Ponce de Leon. After Ponce's death Garrido would continue exploring North America and would be credited with being the first person to plant and grow wheat in the Americas.

The Ayllón Settlement. Lucas Vásquez de Ayllón led a group of 600 people, including the first enslaved Africans to be brought into North America in 1526 to establish a short-lived Spanish settlement on the coast of present-day South Carolina. **Esetevanico,** Born around 1500 in Morocco, Estevanico ("Little Stephen") landed with the Spanish Narváez expedition on the Gulf coast of Mexico and traveled as far as Tenochitlan (Mexico City), often leading the exploration as a scout who could communicate with the Indigenous peoples they encountered.

Yanga. In the present-day Mexican state of Veracruz, on the Gulf coast, the city of Yanga commemorates the enslaved African-born leader, known as *El Yanga*, of a revolt that established a Maroon settlement that was recognized by the Spanish authorities and is now known as "the first free town in the Americas."

Queen Nzinga. Although the legendary African heroine who fought valiantly against the incipient "slave trade" did not come to power until 1624, the region she ruled was Ndongo, in present-day Angola, where the first Africans to be brought into the English colony of Virginia in 1619 originated.

NOTE: The images shown, produced by European artists, are not actual portraits of the persons named above.

Program Design: Dinizulu Gene Tinnie, South Florida Branch, ASALH