



“From Roots to Resilience: Reclaiming Black Journeys, Stories, and Legacies Across Tennessee”

Friday, February 13, 2026

Tennessee State University, Avon Williams Campus

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| 8:30AM | Registration begins |
| 9:00AM | Opening Remarks
Scarlett Miles, Interim Executive Director, Metropolitan Historical Commission
Brittany Irby, Senior Director, Civic and Community Engagement, Mayor’s Office of Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County
Linda T. Wynn, conference co-founder and co-chair, Tennessee Historical Commission |
| 9:25AM | <i>Searching for the Enslaved: Research into the Enslaved Families at Sunnyside in Nashville</i> , Dr. Tara Mitchell Mielnik, Cumberland University |
| 9:50AM | <i>Stories in Stone: Documenting the Enslaved Workers at the Tennessee State Capitol</i> , Jeff Sellers, Tennessee State Museum |
| 10:15AM | BREAK |
| 10:45AM | <i>Promise Land: From the Fiery Furnace to the Promise Land</i> , Dr. Learotha Williams, Jr., Tennessee State University, and Serina Gilbert, Promise Land Heritage Association |
| 11:10AM | <i>Zora’s Sojourn in Tennessee</i> , Glenda Alvin, Tennessee State University |
| 11:35AM | Performance #1: <i>Preview Performance of Over My Head: Sacred Sounds of the American South</i> , W. Crimm Singers, ensemble-in-residence, Tennessee State University |
| 12:00PM | LUNCH |
| 1:30PM | Remarks, Dr. Samantha Morgan-Curtis, Dean of College of Liberal Arts, Tennessee State University |
| 1:35PM | <i>The Black Family Who Built America: The McKissacks, Two Centuries of Daring Pioneers</i> , Cheryl McKissack Daniel, McKissack & McKissack, and Linda T. Wynn |
| 2:00PM | <i>A White Southern Church (Mis)remembers Slavery: Truth and Fiction in the 1929 Centennial History of Christ Church</i> , Dr. Daniel Schafer, Belmont University |
| 2:25PM | Performance #2: MD and Cobalt Blue |
| 2:50PM | "Somerville, Tennessee Negro Slain": The 1942 Lynching of James Edward Person, Dr. Renatto V. Carr, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville |
| 3:15PM | <i>The Pearl High Experience: Something Money Cannot Buy</i> , Rev. Troy Merritt, presiding elder (ret.) Tennessee Conference A.M.E. Church |
| 3:40PM | Closing remarks, Dr. Learotha Williams, Jr., conference co-chair, Tennessee State University |

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Co-Founder & Co-Chair Linda T. Wynn, *Tennessee Historical Commission/formerly with Fisk University*
Department of History and Political Science

Co-Chair Dr. Learotha Williams, Jr., *Tennessee State University*

Dr. Joel Dark, *Tennessee State University*

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