

Award Winner Bios

Legacy Keeper Award - Eryn Naomi Reid

Eryn Naomi Reid, dual enrolled high school sophomore and first year college student at Catonsville Community College Baltimore County, loves music, history and is an avid reader. Eryn Naomi has been a member of the Growing Griots Literacy Learning Program since 2017 and has been a youth docent at the National Great Blacks In Wax Museum since 2020. Eryn Naomi is a recipient of the National Association of Black Storytellers Baba Jamal Koran Harambee Youth Award 2021, the Youth Empowerment Group and Witness Change Leadership Award 2023, and the 2022 Folklife Apprenticeship Award along with her storytelling mentor Janice Curtis Greene, the official griot for the state of Maryland. After graduation, Eryn Naomi plans to study Early Elementary Education and continue their professional storytelling career.

Legacy Keeper Award - Xavier Reid

Xavier Reid, a dual enrolled high school senior and first year college student at Catonsville Community College Baltimore County, has been a member of various National Great Blacks In Wax Museum programs since 2017, including the Growing Griot Literacy Learning Program (2017 - 2021), Virtual Motor Coach docent training (2020), and has been a youth docent at The National Great Blacks In Wax Museum since 2020. Xavier has also received The National Association of Blackstorytellers Baba Jamal Koran Harambee Youth Award (2021), Leadership Award from the Youth Empowerment Group and Witness Change (2023), and the Arundel Homeschool Group Gold Level Science Fair Award (2023). An avid reader and gamer, after graduation Xavier plans to study Finance at Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD.

Freedom Bound Public Service Award – Senator Cory McCray

Cory V. McCray is the senator of Maryland's 45th Legislative District. Born and raised in Baltimore, he attended Fairmount-Harford High School in East Baltimore. By the tender age of 20, he had not only acquired his first home but has also invested in multiple rental properties, revitalizing the very neighborhoods where he had grown up. After completing a rigorous five-year apprenticeship with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Cory's thirst for knowledge led him to Baltimore City Community College, where he proudly earned his Associate's degree in Business Administration. During his tenure in the legislature, he has spearheaded the successful passage of over sixty bill proposals with broad subjects such as raising the minimum wage, transportation funding, protecting the environment, increasing snap benefits for families, and greater access to public libraries. He cherishes every moment with his loving wife and four children in Northeast Baltimore.

Freedom Bound Community Activism Award – Dr. Marie J. Washington

Dr. Marie J. Washington has worked throughout the Baltimore Metropolitan Community promoting the integration of Educational and Economic development with human capital enhancement. She holds a BS Degree in History, a Master's Degree in Social Work and Planning, A Master's and Doctorial Degree in Public Health Administration. Dr Washington directs development projects under East Baltimore Enterprise Incorporated (EBEI).

Dr. Washington's projects include: the East Baltimore Medical Plan (EBMP), a 55,000 square foot full-service health facility and the development of 372 Garden Town Homes known as Ashland Mews. This development has served as the anchor for expanded home ownership in the Baltimore area.

Dr. Washington worked on the redevelopment of the 200-300 block of Gay Street. The first stage of the plan focused on the redevelopment of 301 North Gay Street, a 52,000 square foot Human Service's facility. Dr. Washington has completed the restoration of the 200 block of North Gay Street into a retail, office and commercial location.

In conjunction with Pennrose Properties, EBEI developed Chapel Green, a 32 unit garden apartment building and 31 newly constructed and rehabbed townhouses located in the Johns Hopkins Biotechnology Park.

Past and present professional affiliations include: Chair – Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center Advisory Board, Board Member – Family League of Baltimore City, Inc., Board Member – National Great Blacks In Wax Museum, Board Member – Baltimore Rising, Board Member of the Morgan State University/Montebello Planning Task Force, Vice President of the Board of Directors of Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (the organization leading the re-development of East Baltimore's Empowerment Zone area); Board Member, Executive Board of Johns Hopkins Urban Institute, The Lyric Foundation and the Advisory Board and Chairperson for East Baltimore Medical Plan of the Johns Hopkins Health System. She is a former Chair Person to the Boards of the Coldspring New Town Community Association and Treasurer of the Southeast Baltimore Credit Union. Dr. Washington is a member of various Gubernatorial and Mayoral Advisory Committees and Tasks Forces such as HUD Section 3 Task Force, Mayor Committees on Syphilis Elimination, Region V Planning Council, Mayor's Board on Prison Overcrowding, Maryland MTA Fare Box Recovery Task Force, Enterprise Foundation Network Board and Leadership Maryland Class of 98, etc. Dr. Washington presented on workforce Development at the Migration Committee of the European Parliament.

Freedom Bound Helping Tradition Award – Deborah Pierce-Fakunle

Dr. Mama Deborah Pierce-Fakunle

Afropella Griot

Sister Pierce's Daughter

Black Mother of Black Doctors

"I am because we are and because we are I am."

My Doctors Martin -- "Doc" and "Jo"-- are my "Say it loud, I'm black and I'm proud" parents, teachers, and mentors. Continuously, I appreciate and share the lessons, the learnings, and the Black Extended Family Love you give.

Thank you for allowing me to "DiscoverME/RecoverME" and to rear "our children" within Baltimore's prominent institution: the National Great Blacks In Wax Museum. And because we are, I remain Grateful, Hopeful, and Helpful.

"The eye never forgets what the heart has seen." (African Proverb)

Freedom Bound Lift as We Climb Award – Dr. Tiffany Mfume

Tiffany Beth Mfume, DrPH is the Associate Vice Provost for Student Success and Retention Initiatives. Mfume is responsible for expanding collaborations to implement a systems-thinking approach to student success. She supports, develops, leads, and coordinates efforts that make it possible for students to thrive, with attention to the needs of first-generation, limited-income, international, and underrepresented students. Mfume's portfolio includes Student Data Analytics, Success Coaching and Academic Advising (SCAA), First-generation and Limited Income (FLI), Johns Hopkins Underserved in the Medical Professions (JUMP), Student Outreach and Support (SOS), and the Center for Student Success (CSS). With 24+ years of experience in higher education, she has implemented and led the adoption of numerous student success technologies such as EAB Navigate, Starfish, and Degree Works. She has served on numerous national committees including the NASPA Advising Technology Working Group, the College Board Colloquium Planning Committee, the EDUCAUSE Program Committee, EAB's Student Success Innovation Council, the Executive Committee for the Commission on Information, Measurement, and Analysis (CIMA) of Association of Public and Land Grant Universities, and the USA Funds Advisory Council. Dr. Mfume is a frequent contributor and speaker at higher education conferences and author of the nationally recognized books, *The College Completion Glass—Half-Full or Half-Empty? Exploring the Value of Postsecondary Education* (2019) and *What Works at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): Nine Strategies for Increasing Retention and Graduation Rates* (2015), both published by Rowman & Littlefield.