

UNC ASHEVILLE PRESENTS

“MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE”



The Fifth Annual  
African Americans in  
Western North Carolina and  
Southern Appalachia  
Conference

October 18-20, 2018

UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA  
ASHEVILLE



Funded in part by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.





# Welcome

As a project of the UNC Asheville Department of History, the African Americans in Western North Carolina and Southern Appalachia Conference was initiated in an effort to illuminate a history that for so long was either brushed over, or simply ignored. Now in its fifth year, the conference has become a community-wide effort to continue the work of making the invisible histories of African Americans, and other historically marginalized highlanders, visible. In so doing, we build upon the work of such noted scholars as William H. Turner, the late Edward Cabbell, John Inscoc, and Sarah Judson, to name a few.

Commenting on the conference, Asheville native Lakesha McDay, a member of this year's organizing committee, noted that "The African Americans in Western North Carolina and Southern Appalachia Conference is not only important but necessary and vital to the reclaiming of a narrative that gets lost, has not been shared or taught and has become invisible to so many. That narrative being that the contributions and rich history of African Americans still and will forever contribute to the vitality, the heartbeat and the story of our region."

We are glad and honored that you have chosen to join us, and believe that you will leave with a greater understanding and appreciation for the tremendous legacy of the African American experience in our region.

## **Conference Organizing Committee**

Darin J. Waters, Dwight Mullen, Lakesha McDay,  
Rasheeda McDaniels, Tiffany De'Bellot, Kimberlee Archie,  
Sarah Judson, Gene Hyde, Reid Chapman, Deborah Miles, Ami Worthen

## Thursday, Oct. 18

### ■ Opening Reception — 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

YMI Cultural Center - 39 Market Street, Asheville

**Lakesha McDay**, *Emcee*

**Darin J. Waters, Ph.D., Nancy J. Cable, Ph.D., Michael Davis**  
*UNC Asheville Remarks & Introductions*

**Rasheeda McDaniels**  
*Award for Community Service Presentation*

**Keynon Lake**  
*UNC Asheville Department of History Award  
for Community Service*

**William H. Turner, Ph.D.**  
*Jesse and Julia Ray Lecture Series Keynote*

*Catering by Delia's Tea Time  
Music by The Ink Well*

## Friday, Oct. 19

### ■ Welcome — 9 a.m.

UNC Asheville's Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Ingles Mountain View Room

**Dwight Mullen, Ph.D.**

### ■ Morning Panel — 9:15 - 11:45 a.m. "African Americans & Education" Moderator: Darin Waters, Ph.D.

UNC Asheville's Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Ingles Mountain View Room

**Betty J. Reed, Retired Educator**  
*Spotlighting the Brevard Rosenwald School*

**Ajani Purnell, UNC Asheville**

*Catching Up: Late Integration of the UNC System, and Lack of Results for UNC Asheville*

**Jeremy James, UNC Asheville**

*African American Mentorship in Western North Carolina: My Black is Beautiful and It's Intellectual*

**Florancie Jacques, UNC Asheville**

*Aid and Education System for African Americans, 1865-present*

**Chris McKoy, UNC Asheville**

*The Shiloh School: Strength in Community*

■ **Break for lunch (on your own) —  
11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.**

**On campus options and locations:**

*Rosetta's Kitchenette, Sherrill Center*

*The Down Under, Ponder Hall*

*Reuter Cafe, Reuter Center*

*Argo Tea, Ramsey Library*

*Food Court, Highsmith Student Union*

*Roasted Coffeehouse, Highsmith Union*

*Dining Hall, Brown Hall*

■ **Early Afternoon Panel — 1 - 2:30 p.m.  
“Arts, Archives, & Activism”  
Moderator: Kimberlee Archie**

UNC Asheville's Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Ingles Mountain View Room

**Jay Miller, Ph.D., Warren Wilson College**

*City of Asheville Visiting Artist Announcement*

**William Isom II, East Tennessee PBS**

*Community History: Residents, Public Media and Universities*

**Lauren Bulla, UNC Asheville**

*Nina Simone: Music, Identity, Activism, and  
The Civil Rights Movement*

■ **Late Afternoon Panel — 2:45 - 4 p.m.**  
**“Place & Narrative”**  
**Moderator: Gene Hyde**

UNC Asheville’s Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Ingles Mountain View Room

**Susan E. Keefe, Appalachian State University,**  
**and Roberta Jackson, Junaluska Heritage Association**

*Junaluska, an African American Neighborhood  
in Boone, N.C.: An Oral History*

**John M. Coggeshall, Clemson University**

*“This is my home”: Defending a Black Enclave in  
Appalachian South Carolina*

■ **Naming of the Mullen & James Humanities  
Hall — 4:30 - 6 p.m.**

UNC Asheville’s Mullen & James Humanities Hall

■ ***The Jacob Lawrence of Jacob Lawrence* by  
Jace Clayton aka DJ /rupture — 8 - 10 p.m.**

Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center,  
120 College Street

*Purchase tickets at [blackmountaincollege.org](http://blackmountaincollege.org)*

# Saturday, Oct. 20

- **“Developing Long Tail Ecosystems and Value Chains that Start and Sustain Social Enterprises In Appalachia” in partnership with Mountain BizWorks — 9:15 - 10:45 a.m.**  
**Introduction: Tiffany De’Bellott**  
**Moderator: Kimberly Hunter**

UNC Asheville’s Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Ingles Mountain View Room

*Hear from mission-centered organizations run by and providing services to African American communities in Appalachia about how their focus to provide premium resources has created a steady resurgence of social enterprise incubation and development in the region.*

- **Allen High School and Nina Simone Celebration Brunch — 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

UNC Asheville’s Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Kimmel Arena

**Kimberlee Archie, Emcee**

**Sylvia Pate, MPA, Allen High School - Class of 1965**

**Tiffany Tolbert, National Trust for Historic Preservation**

**Angela Thorpe, NC African American Heritage Commission**

*Music by Melody and Sharissa*

- **“Crafting Affrilachia” roundtable in partnership with the Center for Craft — 12:45 - 2:15 p.m.**  
**Moderator: Marie Cochran**

UNC Asheville’s Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Ingles Mountain View Room

**Sharon Jones, SJ Studios, LLC**

**Jd Harrison, CR8 | Studio H Designs**

**Viola Spells, Zenobia Studio**

- **Screening of “What Happened, Miss Simone?” and talk back with Larry Reni Thomas — 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.**

UNC Asheville’s Wilma M. Sherrill Center,  
Ingles Mountain View Room

- **CoThinkk Awards Night — 7 - 11 p.m.**

The Collider, Suite 401, 1 Haywood Street

*Reserve tickets at [cothinkk.org](http://cothinkk.org)*

## Lakesha McDay



A native of Asheville who has been employed with Mission Health for 23 years, McDay is currently the Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Health Equity. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from UNC Asheville, a post-graduate certificate in Innovation Management from Western Carolina University and is a Certified Diversity Professional through the National Institute for Diversity and Health Equity. McDay is also a certified facilitator of Bias Training and Education, Culturally Competent Communication

in Healthcare, Compassionate Communication in Healthcare, StandOut, and Leadership Coaching. She actively serves on the UNC Asheville Foundation Board, United Way of Asheville & Buncombe County Board of Directors, UNC Asheville Center for Diversity Education Advisory Board, Middle School Success Advisory Resource Team, Delta House Life Enrichment Board of Directors, Carolina Day School Board of Trustees, and as a City of Asheville Youth Leadership Academy Mentor and a Youth Advisor in the Youth Ministry at her church.

## Darin J. Waters, Ph.D.



Dr. Darin J. Waters is the Executive Director of the Office of Community Engagement, and an Associate Professor of History at UNC Asheville. As a professor, Dr. Waters teaches courses in American history, North Carolina history, Appalachian history, African American and Brazilian history. He also specializes in the history of race relations in both the United States and Latin America. In his role as the Executive Director of the UNC Asheville Office of Community Engagement, Waters works closely with campus and community leaders, representing an

array of community based organizations, to strengthen and build new partnerships for and with the university. Waters is the co-host of *The Waters and Harvey Show* on Blue Ridge Public Radio. He currently serves as a member of The North Carolina Historic Markers Advisory Committee, the board of the National Blue Ridge Heritage Area, the board of the Thomas Wolfe Memorial of Historic Asheville, and the North Carolina Civil War History Center. Find out more about his work at [darinwaters.com](http://darinwaters.com).

## Nancy J. Cable, Ph.D.



Dr. Nancy J. Cable is the eighth Chancellor of UNC Asheville and is a nationally recognized leader in higher education, educational access, financial aid and affordability, and liberal arts and sciences curricula. Prior to coming to UNC Asheville, she served as President of the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations and has held leadership positions at Bates College, the University of Virginia, and Davidson College. Cable is one of the charter founders of the University of Virginia Semester at Sea Desmond Tutu Program in Global Understanding and the C.Y. Tung Scholars program on US-China

Relations. She was named a Fulbright Senior Specialist and has consulted with the Director of the Fulbright Center in Hong Kong on the development of the liberal arts curricula within the evolving Chinese higher education system. She holds a B.A. from Marietta College, an M.A. from the University of Vermont, and a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Virginia.

## Michael Davis



Michael Davis, a native of Asheville, N.C., is a senior management major at UNC Asheville. Michael's involvement in the Asheville and UNC Asheville community includes service as a peer mentor, a campus garden volunteer, a member of the WNC Martin Luther King Prayer Breakfast Committee, and a volunteer with the Hillcrest Learning Center, among many other roles. Michael has received numerous local awards, including the City of Asheville Youth Leadership Award. In addition to being the 2018-19 Student Body President,

Michael serves on the UNC System Safety Committee and works for the Chancellor's Office and Department of Public Safety.

## Keynon Lake



Keynon Lake is a native of Asheville. He is a social worker at the Buncombe County Department of Social Services, a published author, public speaker and community activist. He has played professional basketball in England and Mexico. In 2012, Lake completed his first book, *My Daddy Taught Me That*. This published work is intended to inform, educate, and enlighten readers about issues concerning youth in our society. The central focus has been placed on the man's role in the home and his influence in shaping his children,

families, and our society as a whole. After realizing his passion for helping people and giving back to the community, Lake created a nonprofit organization serving young men ages 12-19 in Asheville called My Daddy Taught Me That. He considers himself a family man, and enjoys time with his wife Leslie and their two daughters. He says, "I know the work I am currently doing is my life's work and I embrace opportunities to help anyone who needs it."

## William H. Turner, Ph.D.



Among the first to combine interests in the fields of African American and Appalachian Studies, Dr. William Turner has published extensively in national newspapers, refereed academic journals, and books on the black experience in Appalachia. He has focused his career on demographic and ethnographic studies and programmatic interventions among people of color in the Appalachian region, and he co-edited the textbook *Blacks in Appalachia*. Turner also was a research associate to Alex Haley, author of the Pulitzer Prize

winner *Roots*. He was inducted into the Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame in 2007 and was given Kentucky's Martin Luther King Jr. Citizenship Award. In 2009, the Appalachian Studies Association gave Turner its highest honor—the Cratis D. Williams/James S. Brown Service Award.

### THE JESSE & JULIA RAY LECTURE SERIES

## The Jesse and Julia Ray Lecture Series

The annual Jesse and Julia Ray Lecture Series is hosted by the Department of History at UNC Asheville and is designed to promote awareness and appreciation of not only the larger African American experience in the United States, but also of the particular experiences of African Americans in Western North Carolina and Southern Appalachia. It is named for Jesse and Julia Ray, both prominent and active members in their local community, who committed themselves to the betterment of people's lives through the elimination of racial discrimination, and the opening of political, economic, and educational opportunities for all people.

Jesse and his wife, Julia Greenlee Ray, established the Jesse Ray Funeral Home in 1938, building from his experience with McCoy Funeral Home on Eagle St. He lived in the YMI and later served as chair of the board of directors of the YMI Cultural Center. He passed away in 1994. Julia, now a centenarian and retired from full-time funeral directing, was active in the social and educational changes of the 1960s and 70s, shepherding the merger of the black and white YWCAs to one facility. She was appointed as the first African American on the Board of Directors of Memorial Mission Hospital and later to the Board of Trustees of UNC Asheville.

FRIDAY PANELISTS



**Betty J. Reed**  
*Retired Educator*



**Ajani Purnell**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Jeremy James**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Florancie Jacques**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Chris McKoy**  
*UNC Asheville*



**William Isom II**  
*East Tennessee PBS*

*Read panelists' bios at [aawnc.unca.edu](http://aawnc.unca.edu)*

FRIDAY PANELISTS



**Lauren Bulla**  
*UNC Asheville*



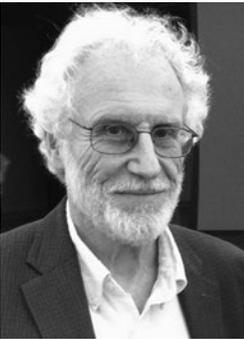
**Jay Miller**  
*Warren Wilson College*



**Susan E. Keefe**  
*Appalachian State University*



**Roberta Jackson**  
*Junaluska Heritage Association*



**John M. Coggeshall**  
*Clemson University*

*Read panelists' bios at [aawnc.unca.edu](http://aawnc.unca.edu)*

SATURDAY PANELISTS



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**Jd Harrison, CR8**  
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**Viola Spells**  
*Zenobia Studio*



**Larry Reni Thomas**  
*Writer, Radio  
Announcer, Lecturer*

*Read panelists' bios at [aawnc.unca.edu](http://aawnc.unca.edu)*

## Kimberlee Archie



Kimberlee Archie has been with the City of Asheville since July 2017 serving as the city's first-ever Equity and Inclusion Manager. Her undergraduate degree in social welfare is from the University of Washington and her graduate degree in education with a concentration in training and performance improvement is from Capella University. From a career that began in Washington state in the mental health field, Kimberlee went on to become a Family Support Director for a youth service bureau and she directed an early

learning and youth development initiative for the United Way of King County. Kimberlee's focus on racial equity and social justice began through her work at an Annie E. Casey Foundation Making Connections site and deepened as the Deputy Director of the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. As the Equity and Inclusion Director, Kimberlee works with internal and external partners, nonprofits, the public and stakeholders to establish the use of an equity lens in all city programs and policies.

## Sylvia J. Pate



Sylvia J. Pate was born in Maryville, Tenn. As part of the Great Migration, her family moved to Ohio when she was an infant and later to Swain County, N.C. where she attended a one-room school for the 5th and 6th grades. She started Allen High School in the 7th grade as a boarding student and graduated in 1965. She received her B.S. degree from Florida A&M University and her MPA from City University, Baruch College. As a career civil servant for over 22 years with the N.Y. State Dept. of Social Services, she worked as a program auditor

and Medicaid managed care consultant. She then joined NYC Health + Hospital, working at both Elmhurst Hospital and Bellevue Hospital Center where she was known as the "Managed Care Maven." She retired in 2002 and returned to North Carolina in 2012. She now enjoys traveling the world, Tai Chi, and making jewelry.

## Tiffany Tolbert



Tiffany Tolbert serves as a Field Officer for the National Trust for Historic Preservation within its Chicago Field Office. Previously she served as Director of the Northwest Field Office at Indiana Landmarks from 2006-2017. Tolbert is a native of Montgomery, Ala. and holds a B.A. Degree from Huntingdon College in political science and history and Master of Historic Preservation from Georgia State University. She has worked for the Alabama Historical Commission and the Georgia Historic Preservation Division as African

American Programs Assistant. She also completed consulting work throughout the Southeast where she compiled National Register of Historic Places nominations, state historic marker preparation and conducted research on the role of women in the Civil Rights Movement. Her preservation includes providing technical assistance to local organizations, establishment of local historic preservation commissions, historic designation and structural rehabilitation. Her research on Rosenwald Schools, African American communities and the African American experience in Indiana has been included in multiple publications.

## Angela Thorpe



As an Air Force brat, Angela Thorpe called half-a-dozen cities, domestically and abroad, "home." However, her family's roots are tied to the small, tobacco-farming community of Pinetops, N.C. Angela returned to her roots after receiving a B.A. in history with a minor in African American studies from the University of Florida; she pursued an M.A. in history with a concentration in museum studies from UNC Greensboro. After receiving her M.A., Angela worked briefly at The HistoryMakers video oral history archive in Chicago. She returned to

North Carolina to serve as the first African American Historic Interpreter at the President James K. Polk State Historic Site in Pineville. Here, she worked to draw in diverse audiences through developing inclusive programs and leading community engagement initiatives. Angela began serving as the Associate Director of the NC African American Heritage Commission in 2017.

MUSICIANS PERFORMING DURING THE CONFERENCE



**Melody and Sharissa**



**The Ink Well**

*Read musicians' bios at [aawnc.unca.edu](http://aawnc.unca.edu)*

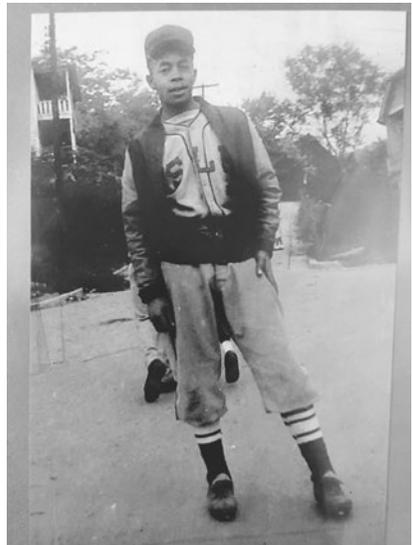


**Allen High School Photo Exhibit  
Through Oct. 31, UNC Asheville's Ramsey Library**

An exhibit of historic photographs from the school will be on display. The exhibit is co-sponsored by Special Collections at UNC Asheville and the W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection at Appalachian State University and is free and open to the public during regular library hours.

**“These Are My People”:  
Black Family Photography from  
the Swannanoa Valley  
Friday and Saturday,  
UNC Asheville's Sherrill Center**

Dr. Cynthia R. Greenlee, a Duke University-trained independent historian and journalist, will present historic photographs from her family, who hail from Ridgecrest, Swannanoa, and Black Mountain. These images—including amateur photography and studio images—chronicle a large family's intimate and public lives largely from the 1940s to more recent times. A clan of talkers, bootleggers, and lay documentarians who snapped shots of family meals, reunions, funerals, and the quotidian, the Greenlee family photographic archives are an invaluable record of the not-so-hidden history of Black Appalachia.



*Ralph Greenlee (father of the curator) in his Stephens-Lee baseball uniform, circa 1948-1950. The stains on his uniform suggest that this image might have been taken post-game.*

## EXHIBITS

### **Exhibitors**

**Friday and Saturday,  
UNC Asheville's Sherrill Center, Scholarship Deck**

Black-owned businesses and black-led organizations will have tables on the Sherrill Center Scholarship Deck during the conference on Friday and Saturday.



*Black History Mobile Museum founder Khalid el-Hakim*

### **Black History 101 Mobile Museum**

**Thursday, UNC Asheville's Highsmith Student Union  
Friday, UNC Asheville's Sherrill Center, Room 411**

The Black History Mobile Museum is an interactive traveling exhibit that uses historical artifacts to engage folks in conversations about the history of racism in the United States. Founded by Khalid el-Hakim, the exhibit is an award winning collection of over 7,000 original artifacts of Black memorabilia dating from the trans-Atlantic slave trade era to hip-hop culture.



*Approaching the sacred space of the obelisks at  
The National Memorial for Peace and Justice*

## **Community Remembrance Coalition** **Friday and Saturday, UNC Asheville's Sherrill Center**

Coalitions are joining together to make the traumatic events of U.S. history visible and promote truth, healing and reconciliation. Representatives from faith communities, youth, racial and social justice organizations, higher education and local governments are in the organizing stage as a "Community Remembrance Coalition" to partner with the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Ala. The goals include to install a historical marker and bring "home" the memorial of documented lynchings in Buncombe County along with work across our communities for healing.

The organizing is in the beginning stages and all interested in participating are welcome. Look for a table outside the Ingles Mountain View Room at the UNC Asheville Sherrill Center to add your name to the contact list.

CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE



**Darin J. Waters**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Dwight Mullen**  
*UNC Asheville*



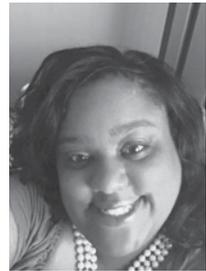
**Lakesha McDay**  
*Mission Health*



**Kimberlee Archie**  
*City of Asheville*



**Tiffany De'Bellott**  
*ACSF/IRL*



**Rasheeda McDaniels**  
*Buncombe County*



**Sarah Judson**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Gene Hyde**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Reid Chapman**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Deborah Miles**  
*UNC Asheville*



**Ami Worthen**



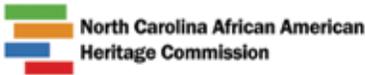
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Julia Ray

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W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection at  
Appalachian State University

*Front cover photos:*

*Left to right: Allen High School, 1957;  
Allen High School Debate Club students, 1944;  
Nina Simone at Allen High School, circa 1948*

*Photos are courtesy of UNC Asheville Special Collections,  
the W.L. Eury Collection at Appalachian State University,  
and The Nina Simone Project.*

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