

African American Male Librarians Association (AAMLA) Newsletter

Greetings from the President

Greetings!

It is not only my pleasure to serve as the President of the African American Male Librarians Association (AAMLA), but to play an active role in the development of the association is a godsend that words cannot fully describe. We as African American male librarians must come together collectively and continue leaving undeniable marks within our profession. The individuals that make up AAMLA come from a variety of backgrounds and provide a plethora of talents that shall be utilized for the betterment of not only its members, but the library profession as well.

Sincerely,

Alonzo W. Hill
AAMLA President



AAMLA Determined to Increase the African American Male's Presence in the Library Field

AAMLA is a group of African American male librarians who have come together to recruit and retain more African American males within the field of librarianship. Currently within the field of librarianship, the African American male represents less than one percent of the total U.S. librarian population. Therefore, as African American men, we total less than six hundred out of the one hundred and ten thousand degreed librarians. The members of AAMLA view this as a crisis and began coming together in the early part of September of 2010. AAMLA's president Alonzo Hill states it this way -- "The AAMLA is an organization that is geared toward recruiting, retaining, and restructuring how we operate as individual librarians, so we can operate as a collective group, network and lastly, be a beacon that will provide and ensure that we are successful with our endeavors as professional librarians." The President's view reinforces the need for action. AAMLA is a collective body which affirms its duty to create an organization that has the sole mission of recruiting, and mentoring African American males.

AAMLA's Vice President, Michael Eric Owens, conveys it this way -- "Out of our self-determination, we have created an Association that represents and speaks uniquely to the experiences of African American male librarians. We endeavor to unite all black male librarians in our industry for the sole purpose of empowering the least among us. Our desire was not born out of ill will toward any organization, but out of sheer determination to chart our own course."

Different Paths, One Goal

AAMLA Collaborates with Beacon Press to Spearhead the Eastside Detroit Prison Book Donation Project

AAMLA began its outreach program with a lending hand to prisoner reform in Detroit Michigan. This special project is being coordinated by Jesse Cleary, Adult Librarian, and Bobby Walter, Adult Librarian and AAMLA Membership Officer, in Detroit, Michigan.

Mound Correctional Facility (NRF) is the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI) facility and has the capability to place 120 prisoners in the program at a time. MPRI offers a wide variety of programming to assist prisoners with their transition into the community. The prison's academic programs provide for special and remedial education through completion of General Education Development certification for prisoners including those in segregation. The priority is to develop reading skills for each prisoner at least to the eighth grade level. Most prisoners are required to obtain GED certification prior to release from the facility. The career and technical education programs include horticulture, building maintenance, building trades, and computer literacy. As with most Michigan prisons, volunteers help staff in providing prisoners with religious and other life enrichment programs.

To supplement the program with reading materials, Bobby Walter has collaborated with Rebecca Fabian, Sales Assistant at [Beacon Press, Inc.](#), to acquire catalogues to be passed among the inmates by the Prison Librarian. Each inmate is entitled to one free book of their choice. The inmate can write to Beacon Press with their selection and one free book will be shipped.

The purpose of the project is to stimulate reading, knowledge and personal growth in the inmates at Mound Correctional Facility (NRF).

[Beacon Press, Inc.](#) is an independent publisher of non-fiction and fiction titles. Their books often change the way readers think about fundamental issues by promoting values such as freedom of speech and thought, diversity (religious pluralism, and anti-racism), and respect for diversity in all areas of life. AAMLA commends Beacon Press for taking an interest in promoting literacy to inmates and assisting us with this book donation project.



First Book

Two Detroit based organizations, [Focus: HOPE](#) and [The Coalition on Temporary Shelters](#) (COTS), are recent recipients of approximately 20 books from [First Book](#). Directed by Bobby Walter, Project Coordinator, these FREE books were distributed to needy and low-income children ages 3-6 to improve reading skills and promote literacy within Detroit communities. AAMLA is proud of the instrumental role it played in attaining these reading materials for many deserving young readers.

Different Paths, One Goal

Quick Facts

The African American Male Librarians Association was founded on Aug 28, 2010 by President Alonzo W. Hill in Flint, Michigan.

Mission Statement: The African American Male Librarians Association (AAMLA) is an organization that is geared toward recruiting, retaining and restructuring how we operate as individual librarians, so we can operate as a collective, network and lastly, a beacon that will provide and ensure that we are successful with our endeavors as professional librarians.

Purpose: To recruit, retain, and serve as an advocate for African American males within the library profession.

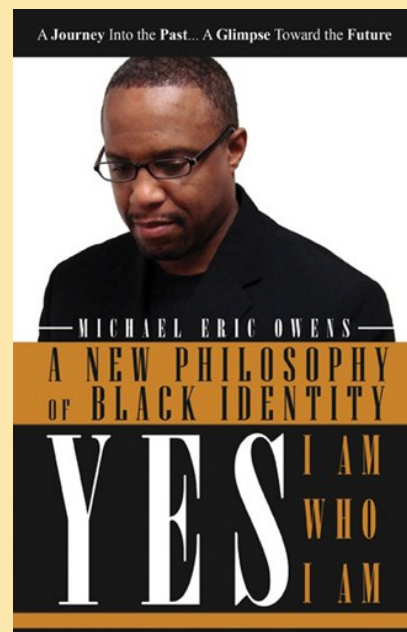
Motto: "Different Paths, One Goal"

Little Known Black Librarians Facts

Do you know that Bertha Pleasant Williams was Montgomery, Alabama's first African American librarian? Or that a former member of the Black Panthers, W. Paul Coates, was a reference and acquisition librarian at the Howard University Moorland-Spingarn Research Center. Have you ever heard of Eliza Atkins Gleason, the first African American to earn a Ph.D. in library science or William V. Frazier, the first professional African American librarian to work at North Carolina State University? [Little Known Black Librarian Facts](#), compiled and edited by Michele T. Fenton, introduces us to these and many more African American pioneers of librarianship. Published annually in February by [The Indiana Black Librarians Network](#) (IBLN), this publication is available free of charge. Visit www.indianablacklibrarians.org/Little%20Known%20Black%20Librarian%20Facts%202011.pdf to view the latest edition.

Yes, I Am, Who I am: A New Philosophy of Black Identity

Yes, I am, Who I am: A New Philosophy of Black Identity is the latest work of AAMLA's very own, Michael Eric Owens. On his website BlackIdentity.com, Owens states, "This book was written to explore the complexities concerning Black Identity. It is a journey that begins in the past, uncovering ancient truths and analyzing their impact on the present. It is a projection into the future of Black Identity and its implications for succeeding generations." To learn more about Michael Owens and his latest work, visit <http://www.blkidentity.com>.



Black Librarian Nation

Black Librarian Nation is a website created to give African American Librarians a place to network and share their experiences in the field. To learn more about this informative site or to become a member, visit <http://blacklibrariannation.ning.com/>.

Different Paths, One Goal

Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is accepting applications for the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce (IRDW), a program designed to recruit master of library and information science (MLIS) students from traditionally underrepresented ethnic and racial minority groups into careers in research libraries. The IRDW includes a stipend up to \$10,000 over two years, leadership and career development training, financial support for skills development, and a formal mentorship program.

For the program's goal, objective, and application criteria and process, visit the IRDW website at www.arl.org/diversity/init/. The deadline to submit applications is June 1, 2011.



Marcellaus Joiner

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Marcellaus Joiner recently accepted a 2-year position funded by The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as Archivist for Digital Projects in the Thomas F. Holgate Library (Bennett College, Greensboro, NC). Mr. Joiner has a BA in History from North Carolina A&T State University and a MLS from North Carolina Central University. Prior to his employment at Bennett, Marcellaus gained experience as an archivist while working at the State Library of North Carolina, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

AAMLA at ALA Midwinter

AAMLA held its first formal Meet and Greet at the San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina on Saturday, January 8, 2011. In addition to eating, drinking, and networking, members and guest discussed prospective objectives for the association. Some of the objectives considered included creation of a website, blog, and newsletter, mentoring and training opportunities, book donation programs, developing strategies to increase the number of African American male librarians, and professional development. The next Meet and Greet will be held during ALA's Annual Conference in New Orleans this June.

Different Paths, One Goal

This Issue Is Dedicated To The Life And Work Of Dr. E.J. Josey



Dr. E.J. Josey authored an ALA resolution forbidding ALA officers and staff from participating in state associations that denied membership to black librarians. This action led to the integration of the library association of several Southern states, and he became the first black librarian to be accepted as a member of the Georgia Library Association.

The following is a statement from American Library Association (ALA) President Jim Rettig on the passing of library champion and human rights activist Dr. E.J. Josey.

“Few have brought about more significant change in librarianship than the late Dr. E.J. Josey. Through his leadership he opened doors to segregated library associations and acted as librarianship’s conscience, encouraging the field to live up to and operate by fundamental American principles of justice and equity. His commitment to these principles, combined with his tenacity and advocacy, brought much needed diversity to the library workforce.”

“Dr. Josey’s contributions to the field of librarianship are invaluable. He energized a generation and more of librarians while serving as a benefactor, mentor and role model to students of all backgrounds.”

“Dr. Josey was a leading force in eliminating racial bias from library systems and professional organizations. His legacy lives on in the many students and colleagues he influenced throughout his career as well as through the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, which provides leadership for the recruitment and professional development of African American librarians; The E.J. Josey Scholarship Award, given annually to African Americans pursuing a degree in

an ALA accredited Library and Information Science program; and ALA’s Pay Equity Commission, which ensured equal compensation for male and female librarians.”

Dr. E.J. Josey was professor emeritus, Department of Library and Information Science, School of Library and Information Sciences, University of Pittsburgh. He was first elected to the ALA Council, the policy making body of the Association in 1970, past ALA president (1984-85), and founder of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association. Dr. Josey chaired the ALA International Relations Committee, wrote 12 books and produced more than 400 articles that focused on library diversity and equality of access issues.

On July 3, 2009, Dr. Josey passed away in Washington, N.C. A foundation has been set up to honor Dr. Josey’s life and work. Contributions can be sent to: The E.J. Josey Foundation for Justice and Peace, 526 West Second Street, Washington, North Carolina 27889.

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AAMLA Officers 2010-2012

President: Alonzo W. Hill, Team Librarian, Flint Public Library, Flint, Michigan

Vice President: Michael E. Owens, Manager, Ralph Ellison Library, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Secretary: Raphael D. Jackson, Reference Librarian Intern, Florida A&M College of Law, Orlando, Florida

Treasurer: Richard E. Ashby, Jr., Supervisor of Library Operations, Wyandanch Public Library, Wyandanch, New York

Public Relations: Marcellaus A. Joiner, Digital Project Archivist, Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina

Membership Officer: Bobby Walter, Adult Reference Librarian, Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan

Historian: Derek Mosley, M.L.S. Archive Management Candidate, Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts

ListServ Administrator & Newsletter Editor: Alan R. Bailey, Associate Professor & Assistant Head of Services, Teaching Resources Center, Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina

To join AAMLA, complete the [Membership Form](#) or contact Bobby Walter, Membership Officer, at walt24seven@hotmail.com.

Newsletter Contributors: Alan R. Bailey, Alonzo W. Hill, Marcellaus Joiner, and Michael E. Owens

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