



PRESS RELEASE

September 20, 2024

For More Information, Contact:

Karen "Queen Nur" Abdul-Malik

AATP@NABSinc.org

www.nabsinc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The National Association of Black Storytellers Announces
the Black Appalachian Storytelling Fellowship Awardees for 2024**

Baltimore, MD: The National Association of Black Storytellers, Inc. (NABS) has selected six artists as the 2024 Black Appalachian Storyteller Fellows. Applicants with connections to six states in the areas designated by the Appalachia Regional Commission of KY, OH, TN, NC, VA, and WV were awarded. Recipients will receive a cash award of \$5,000 to support their practice as a Black Appalachian storyteller and culture bearer with opportunities to examine, research, develop and perform and/or document the Black Appalachian storytelling tradition. Additionally, the fellows will receive funds for travel to and lodging at the 42nd and 43rd Annual National "*In the Tradition...*" Black Storytelling Festival and Conference. Fellows will be welcomed at an opening "Akwaaba Gathering," and celebrated at the BASF Awards Ceremony during this year's Festival and Conference in Buffalo, NY, October 23-25. Next year, the fellows will present during the 2025 festival and conference being held in Atlanta. A one-year membership to the National Association of Black Storytellers is also awarded as part of the fellowship prize.

The NABS Black Appalachian Storytellers Fellowship is made possible through partnerships and funding in part by Mid Atlantic Arts' Central Appalachia Living Traditions Program and South Arts as part of the *In These Mountains*, Central Appalachian Folk Arts and Culture.

This 3rd year fellowship is an adjudicated award recognizing artistic excellence in representation of Black Appalachian storytelling and cultural heritage. The 2024 Black Appalachian Storyteller Fellowship awardees are:

Kentucky

- Jim Embry: Performer, Teaching Artist, Author, Activist, Workshop Presenter, Mentor, Historian, Agrarian, Cultural Organizer; Madison County, Kentucky

North Carolina

- Beverly Fields Burnette: Performer, Author, Poet, Workshop Presenter, Advocate; Buncombe, Polk and Burke Counties, North Carolina

Ohio

- Omope Carter Daboiku: Author, Performer, Teaching Artist, Mentor, Workshop Presenter, Advocate, Historian, Quilter; Lawrence County, Ohio and Wise County, Virginia

Tennessee

- Felecia Outsey *aka* Sista' Felecity LUV: Performer, Poet, Dancer, Teaching Artist, Historian, Activist, Author, Mentor, Cultural Organizer; Knox County, Tennessee

West Virginia

- Janice Lynn Cooley: Historian, Researcher, Exhibitor; Greenbriar County, West Virginia

West Virginia

- Eric "Monstalung" Jordan: Performer, Recording Artist, Hip Hop Producer, Teaching Artist, Workshop Presenter, Advocate and Mentor; Fayette & Monongalia County, West Virginia

The co-founders of the National Association of Black Storytellers, Inc. (NABS), Mother Mary Carter Smith and Mama Linda Goss (born and raised in Appalachia Tennessee) conceived the idea of a storytelling festival to give opportunities to African American storytellers to share the stories of their heritage.

The first "*In The Tradition...*" Festival of Black Storytelling was held at Morgan State University (MSU) in 1983. Now in its 42nd year, the Festival and Conference will be in Buffalo, New York and co-hosted by NABS Affiliate, Tradition Keepers: Black Storytellers of Western New York. The 2024 Fellows will be honored and will receive an originally designed award by Tennessee Appalachian Folk Artist, Dena Jennings.

-End-