



# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**Janice Curtis Greene**  
**16<sup>th</sup> President, National Association of Black Storytellers**

## 2019 Board

### National Association of Black Storytellers

|                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Co-Founder               | Mama Linda Goss        |
| Executive Director       | Vanora F. Legaux       |
| President                | Janice Curtis Greene   |
| President Elect          | Kwanza Brewer          |
| Secretary                | Janice Burnett         |
| Treasurer                | Gwen Hilary            |
| Immediate Past President | Sandra Gilliard        |
| Member                   | Rosa Metoyer           |
| Member                   | Steven Hobbs           |
| Member                   | Beverly Fields Burnett |
| Member                   | Beverly Cottman        |

### Our Mission

The National Association of Black Storytellers, Inc. (NABS) promotes and perpetuates the art of Black storytelling--an art form which embodies the history, heritage, and culture of African Americans. Black storytellers educate and entertain through the Oral Tradition, which depicts and documents the African-American experience. A nationally organized body with individual, affiliate and organizational memberships, NABS preserves and passes on the folklore, legends, myths, fables and mores of Africans and their descendants and ancestors - "*In the Tradition...*"

### During 2019 NABS celebrated both Co-Founders

NABS Started the year 2019 celebrating Our Ancestor Co-founder

Mother Mary Carter Smith's

100th birthday

February 10, 1919 - February 10, 2019

Proclaiming 2019

The Year of Mother Mary Carter Smith

Celebrations, Worship Services, Concerts and

Performances were held by 9 of NABS's 15

Affiliates, during February at the

37<sup>th</sup> NABS Festival & Conference in Montgomery, Alabama and

throughout the year.





## **History Made!**

On September 18, 2019 Co-Founder,  
Mama Linda Goss was awarded the  
National Heritage  
Fellowship in Storytelling from  
the National Endowment for the Arts.

NABS's 2019 Membership totals 350 with 58 Regular Members, 176 Elder Members, 17 Youth Members, 62 silver life members, 29 gold life members, 3 organizational members and 5 contributing members.

NABS Boasts 15 Affiliates in New York, Maryland, Georgia,  
Minneapolis, Rhode Island, California, Michigan, Ohio, North  
Carolina, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Utah & Wichita

1 College Affiliate, Johnson C. Smith College in North Carolina



Affiliate Presidents at the 37<sup>th</sup> NABS Festival & Conference

## **2019 Professional Development Webinars:**

The Education Committee Sponsored Two Educational Webinars:

### **March - The Healing Power of Stories**

Powerful insights from bilingual Storyteller, Percussionist and Author Mama Edie McCloud Armstrong on developing and presenting stories that comfort, bring peace and heal the world around you and your spirit within.

### **June - Storytelling at the Knee of the Elder: If My Child Should Ask**

Reaching back David “Sankofa” Anderson, Storyteller, Historian, Playwright and resident for the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History’s “Giving Voice,” led attendees through an historical and very personal journey of storytelling.



## **2019 Financial Report**

For the Calendar Year 2019 NABS is in full compliance withal local, state and federal fiscal regulating agencies with all required reports submitted and approved.

For 2019 NABS produced and operating budget within which we have successfully operated ending the year with a positive balance.

|                        |              |
|------------------------|--------------|
| 2019 Total Income      | \$121,853.00 |
| 2019 Total Expenses    | \$115,008.00 |
| 2019 End-of-Year Total | \$ 6,845.00  |

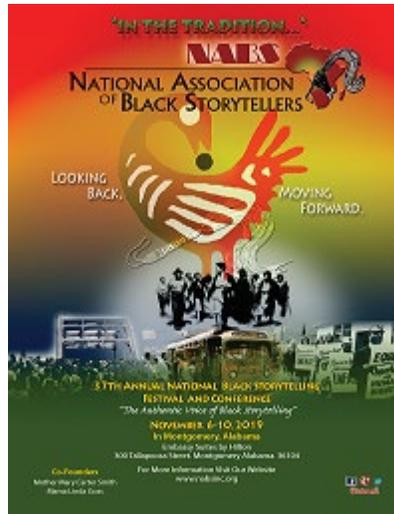


## **2019 Board Training**

The entire 2019 NABS Board received Board Excellence and Governance training conducted by Maryland Non-Profits traveling at their own expense to Baltimore, Maryland at their own expense.

In February 2019 NABS representatives participated in the National Association of African American Studies, (NAAAS) Conference. 2019 NABS Festival Director, Dr. Caroliese Frink-Reed, Immediate Past President Sandra Gilliard and Board Member Steven Hobbs presented papers on the History, Format, Uses and Development of Black Storytelling.

Oba William King, ED, Vanora F. Legaux, Sandra Gilliard, Steven Hobbs & Toni Simmons performed during the conference in the Festival within a Festival. President Janice Curtis Greene was also in attendance.



## **37<sup>th</sup> NABS Festival & Conference**

### **“In the Tradition...” Looking Back Marching Forward**

**November 6-10, 2019: Montgomery, Alabama Embassy Suites by Hilton**

The Festival & Conference began with the Heritage Tour of Historic Montgomery. Sites included the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, Bryan Stevenson and the Equal Justice Initiative’s Legacy Museum, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parsonage, Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church and Rosa Parks Museum.

The Scholar’s Panel was Presented by Dr. Richard Baily, consultant for the Center for Public Television at the University of Alabama and advisor for the Gees Bend story and Horace King documentary.

The Conference included concurrent educational and informational workshops for adults and youth, nightly concerts featuring a parade of talented Storytellers from across the nation, Co-founder Ancestor Mother Mary Carter Smith’s 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration and award presentations.

Outgoing NABS Treasurer, Gwendolyn A. Hilary received the Linda Jenkins Brown Nia Award for her dedicated Service and NABS’s highest honor, the Zora Neale Hurston Award was presented to former NABS President and Festival Director Dr. MaryAnn Harris and Dr. Bryan Stevenson, founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative and Southern Poverty Law Center.

Festival Highlights included the Youth Concert which included NABS youth and thirty youth from Brundidge, Al. whose registration was subsidized through the NEA AATP Grant.

The Youth and Adult Jackie Torrence Tall Tales Contest, at which Granddaddy June Bug, Mitch Capel serves as Master of Ceremonies, is always a crowd pleaser.

Through private donations the NABS Board was able to fund two Cowtail Switch Scholarships to sponsor two young adults to attend the Festival & Conference. Former Youth member and current North Carolina A&T State University student, Lovie-Afi Greene and recent University of Alabama Law School graduate Jilisa Milton were the recipients.

Eight NABS members were inducted into the Brother Blue Circle of the Elders.

Two NABS Youth received the Baba Jamal Koram Harambee Youth Awards.

At the Membership meeting NABS installed three new Board Members:

Kay Merrell – Maryland

Roy Harris – North Carolina

Dr. David O. Fakunle - Maryland

The Festival and Conference was graced with a visit from the first African American Mayor of Montgomery Alabama, Steven Reed.



Montgomery Alabama Mayor - Steven Reed with NABS President – Janice Curtis Greene

The Festival concluded with the Mama Linda Goss

Spiritual Breakfast and Unity Circle lead by Baba Jamal Koram.



## **Adopt-a-Teller Program Report**

As submitted by Karen “Queen Nur” Abdul Malik and S. Bunjo Butler,  
AATP Co-Directors

AATP is funded by a National Endowment for the Arts Grant secured for NABS  
by AATP Co-Director Karen “Queen” Nur Malik

Serving Title I schools and low-income populations, 29 storytellers presented 27 cultural and educational arts services at 16 venues, including schools, libraries, recreation centers, and one free public concert at a theater featuring 8 storytellers.

AATP served 4458 students, teachers and community members. A \$50 application fee was assessed per program. The programs were offered free of charge. Study guides were distributed to each school. Selected venues were video-documented and will be uploaded to our website.

The 26 tellers were diverse in style of delivery, context of story, and musical accompaniment. There were several specially matched artists to schools. Mitch Capel performed Dunbar works at the Paul Laurence Dunbar School, Deborah Asante Director of Asante Children's Theater in Indianapolis conducted a workshop for theater students at Lee High School, Anokwale Anansemfo, National Park Ranger performed for Brewbaker Middle School with a program that integrated storytelling to its US history curriculum and President Janice Curtis Greene performed works of NEA Heritage Fellow Linda Goss in Brundidge, Alabama where Goss has family roots. By placing tellers in various venues throughout the Montgomery, Alabama region, NABS presented an enriching and extensive public engagement experience with a traditional art form - the African Oral Tradition - a widespread experience that is unique within the discipline of storytelling.

We supported and hired 25 renowned artists and two newly local artists. For some working in the Montgomery area, the experience expanded their national resume while at the same time rendering stellar storytelling performances to audiences who do not often have the opportunity to experience national and regional storytellers. The Town of Brundidge youth attended the festival and are considering starting an NABS

The Festival and Conference provided NABS the opportunity to increase awareness of the art form of Black Storytelling. The public concert was co-sponsored with the City of Montgomery. Through our joint public relations efforts, we participated in a television news segments and two Montgomery morning shows. This increased local attendance at the Festival.

The Adopt-A-Teller program benefited over 4,000 students and teachers in diverse ways through free programming.

## **NABS AFFILIATES**

The list below are summary samples of programs hosted by NABS affiliates:

**Wichita Griots** held their Griots Cultural Arts Enrichment Camp

**KUUMBA** Storytellers of Georgia presented their 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Southwest Cultural Portraits in Atlanta

**Cleveland Assn. of Black Storytellers** held its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Sisterhood Luncheon and Tribute to Maya Angelou, “In All Ways a Woman” in Cleveland

**North Carolina Assn. of Black Storytellers** participated in the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts & Humanities in North Carolina

Valerie Tutson of **Rhode Island Black Storytellers**, who hosted the Annual FUNDA Fest, received the Pell Award for Excellence in Arts from Trinity Rep of Providence

Minnesota State Arts Board awards major grant to **Black Storytellers Alliance** for 2019 production in Shakopee Minnesota Women's Correctional Facility

**Keepers of the Culture** held the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Family Day Concert in Philadelphia with the theme JAMBO MAMA AFRICA! Stories & Poems from The Motherland

**Detroit Assn. Black Storytellers** sponsored its Fall Storytelling Festival

**The Griots’ Circle** hosted "Sankofa: Taking from the Past and Bringing it to the Future” featuring co-founder Mama Linda Goss at the Peale center in Baltimore

**Tradition Keepers: Black Storytellers of Western New York** held their pre-Juneteenth “Get on Da’ Bus” event in Buffalo

**Nubian Storytellers of Utah Leadership** shared their storytelling gifts at the Utah Division of Arts Museum Living Traditions Festival

The Women’s Fund awarded the **Asante Children’s Theater** a \$750, 000.00 grant for Therapeutic Theatre Program - Central Indiana Community Foundation

In **Chicago**, **ASE Storytellers** celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with motivational program for a cause, “Our Voices: Our Stories.