



Black Focused Sessions

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This compilation brings together the various sessions in which Black people were the focal points. It not only illustrates the depth in sessions' content, but serves as an opportunity to reflect on the Association's desire to be inclusive going beyond the commonly held image of Appalachia as White. Finally, this listing can be a resource tool for connecting us to each other's work as we explore ways of examining the Black presence in Appalachia.

The sessions were based on the sessions' titles. Thus, may not include every session at the conference.

Special Event

Friday, 7:00AM-8:00AM. HENDERSON HALL 214 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Meeting

CONCURRENT 1

Friday, 8:00AM-9:15AM. Session 1.7. PANEL: "Black Geographies in Appalachia"

Convener: Jillean McCommons, University of Richmond

- "The 'Double Minority' Position: Black Feminism in the Black Appalachian Commission, 1971-1974," Jillean McCommons, University of Richmond, Wilma Dykeman Faces of Appalachia Fellow 2024-2025
- "'It's Always Nice to Have People That Has Your Back': Black Appalachian Women Working Within and Beyond State-led Agricultural Organizations," Jed DeBruin, Jacksonville State University
- "The Decline of Over the Rhine: Urban Renewal and Community Erosion in a Rural Appalachian City," Dorian Cleveland, University of Kentucky

- "Remembering Where it Used to be': (Re)claiming the Hills and Hollers as Historically Black Spaces in Eastern Kentucky," Kristan L. McCullum, Clemson University

CONCURRENT 2

Friday. 9:30AM-10:45AM. Session 2.9. PANEL: "New Directions in Twentieth Century Appalachian Labor History"

Convener: William Hal Gorby, West Virginia University

- "Digging the Hawk's Nest Tunnel: The Racial Construction of Disaster," Cat Harless, West Virginia University

Friday. 9:30AM-10:45AM. Session 2.11. PERFORMANCE: "Community Remembrance Projects in East Kentucky and Southwestern Virginia"

Convener: Eric Fields, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth

- "EKY Remembrance Project," Darryl "Dee" Parker, EKY Remembrance Project, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, and The Alliance for Appalachia; Emily Hudson, Executive Director of Southeast Kentucky African-American Museum and Cultural Center, EKY Remembrance Project
- "Wise County Remembrance Project," Terran Outsey, Wise County Remembrance Project, Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards; Josh Outsey, Appalshop, Wise County Remembrance Project; Jared Hamilton, Appalshop, M.A.R.S. Collective, Kudzu Media, EKY Remembrance Project; Tiffany Pyette, The Appalachian Rekindling Project, KFTC, Appalachian Community Fund, EKY Remembrance Project

Friday. 9:30AM-10:45AM. Session 2.14. PANEL: "Memoir and Memoirists"

Convener: Chris Green, Berea College

- "My Mother's Translator: Stories and Poems from an Affrilachian Migrant," E.J. Wade, Independent

Friday. 9:30AM-10:45AM. Session 2.15. PANEL: "Tourism"

Convener: Audrey Nidiffer, Appalachian State University

- "The Black Appalachian Cultural Center: Building an African American Cultural Heritage Tourism Sector in Southern West Virginia," Cicero Fain III, Marshall University

PLENARY 1

Friday. 11:00am-12:15pm.

- "Teaching Affrilachia: Cultivating Community and Culture," Zanice Bond, Kristine Yohe, and Frank X Walker

Friday. 1:00PM-3:00PM. EDUCATION COMMITTEE SPONSORED SESSION. WORKSHOP: "Teaching African American Music History in High School and Postsecondary Classrooms across Appalachia"

Convener and Presenter: Bryan Pierce, National Museum of African American Music

CONCURRENT 3

Friday. 1:30PM-2:45PM. Session 3.12. PANEL: "What the Water Reveals and How We Heal"

Convener: Erica Abrams Locklear, UNC Asheville

- NitaJade, Black Appalachian Coalition
- Erica Abrams Locklear, UNC Asheville
- Meredith McCarroll, Independent
- Jim Minick, Independent
- Denali Sai Nalamalapu, Independent

CONCURRENT 4

Friday. 3:00PM-4:15PM. Session 4.10. PANEL: "Academic Histories"

Convener: James Leonard, Marshall University

- "African Student Grants Sought': An Examination of Kenyan International Students at West Virginian HBCUs," Abigail Smith, Simmons University

Friday. 3:00PM-4:15PM. Session 4.12. PANEL: "Appalachian Identity: Us"

Convener: Joshua Cody Ward, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- "What's Appalachia to Appalachia is Me: Exploring Black Identities and Experiences in Appalachian Virginia," Jacob Robinson, Virginia Tech

Friday. 3:00PM-4:15PM. Session 4.16. PANEL: "Recovering the History of Resistance to Slavery in Appalachia: The Greenup County Slave Revolt of 1829 and the Appalachian Freedom Heritage Tourism Initiative"

Convener: Cicero M. Fain, III, Marshall University

- "Finding the Greenup County Slave Revolt in David Walker's Appeal," Andrew Feight, Shawnee State University
- "Researching Slavery in Eastern Kentucky and the Mystery of Dinah's Execution," Marlitta Perkins, Appalachian Freedom Heritage Tourism Initiative
- "Thinking about the Greenup Slave Revolt in Terms of Environment," Chris Leadingham, University of Kentucky

Friday. 3:00PM-4:15PM. POSTER SESSION. 4.17

- "Race & the Railroad: Estill County KY Expulsions & Black Industry," Ren Kelley, University of Kentucky, Kentucky Steam Heritage Corporation; and Kathryn Engle, University of Kentucky, University of Kentucky; Mariel Gardner, Dragon Slayer; Jess Stevens, RUX
- "Race, Income, and Environmental Injustice: A Comparative Study of Marginalized Communities in times of Disasters," Kara Fisher and Maliah McCann-Coles, University of Charleston

CONCURRENT 5

Friday. 4:30PM-5:45PM. Session 5.7. PANEL: "Appalachian Identity: Others"

Convener: Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Middle Tennessee State University

- "The "Othering" of Appalachia: The Exploitation of West Virginia," Kevin Murphy, Shepherd University

Friday. 4:30PM-5:45PM. Session 5.8. PANEL: "Appalachian Identity: New Media"

Convener: Robert Ellison, Marshall University

- "Upper Cumberland Blues: Podcasting and Autoethnography as Archive, Storytelling, and Counter-Narrative," Tony VanWinkle, Guilford College; Erin Eldridge, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

CONCURRENT 6

Saturday. 8:00AM-9:15AM. Session 6.7. PANEL: "Sites of Memory: History, Storytelling, and Undermining the Erasure of BIPOC in Northern Appalachia"

Convener: Kenton Butcher, Bucknell University

- "Outside the Mainstream: Black Self-Publishing in Appalachian Ohio," Kenton Butcher, Bucknell University
- "'Eww, these apples suck, de donde son?': Latinx Storytelling in Rural Pennsylvania," Elena Perez-Zetune, University of Texas at Austin/Bucknell University
- "Race and Reputation: Black Appalachian Soldiers in the United States Colored Troops," Alexandra Finley, University of Pittsburgh

Saturday. 8:00AM-9:15AM. Session 6.12. PANEL: "Appalachian Musicians and Influence"

Convener: Jim Clark, Barton College - Emeritus

- "The Voices Behind a Voice: Tracing African American Influence in the Singing Style of Frank Proffitt," Olivia Phillips, Indiana University – Bloomington

Saturday. 8:00AM-9:15AM. Session 6.13. SPONSORED BY TENNESSEE TECH WOMEN'S CENTER. PANEL: "Women's History"

Convener: Allen Fletcher, University of Kentucky

- "Beyond 'Fotched-On' Women: School Reform and Gendered Politics in Progressive Era Appalachia," Allen Fletcher, University of Kentucky
- "Schooling Us: Generations of Educating Appalachian Women," Leslie Cook, Appalachian State University
- "Carrie Buck and the Ongoing Fight for Reproductive Freedom," Karen Spears Zacharias, Independent
- "Recipes and Remedies of Rural Appalachian Midwives and Families: Examination through the Lens of Racism and A Superstitious Belief System," Kristen Montgomery, East Tennessee State University

Saturday. 8:00AM-9:15AM. Session 6.14. PERFORMANCE: "The Brownsville Project: Recovering Remnants of an Appalachian African-American Community"

Convener: Clory Jackson, The Brownsville Project

- Clory Jackson, The Brownsville Project
- Caroline Hann, Creative Partner, The Brownsville Project

Saturday. 9:30AM-10:45AM. Session 7.21. ROUNDTABLE: "African American History and Culture in the Upper Cumberland"

Convener: Megan Atkinson, Tennessee Tech University

- "Black Union Soldiers of the Upper Cumberland," Troy D. Smith, Tennessee Tech University

- "Cookeville's Historic West End," Linda Irby, Northeast School Retired Teachers and Putnam County NAACP
- "West End Oral History Project," Krystal Akehinmi, Tennessee Tech University; and Megan Atkinson, Tennessee Tech University
- "Race Relations in Cookeville," Carl Owens, Tennessee Tech University

Saturday. 9:30AM-10:45AM. Session 7.23. PANEL: "Affrilachia: Testimonies - A Visual, Poetic, and Historical Journey through Southern Appalachia's Black Communities"

Convener: Maia A. Surdam, Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education

- Chris Aluka Berry, Independent
- Kelly Elaine Navies, Independent
- Maia A. Surdam, Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education

CONCURRENT 8

Saturday. 11:00AM-12:15PM. Session 8.8. PERFORMANCE: "We Dwell on These Mountains: Diverse Voices of Appalachia Showcase"

Convener: Justin Wymer, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

- Justin Wymer, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
- Sarah Einstein, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
- Torli Bush, Independent

Saturday. 11:00AM-12:15PM. Session 8.11. PANEL: "Appalachian Community"

Convener: Vonnia Davis, Independent

- "Monuments in Black Appalachia: Community Engagement for Memory and Growth," Gregory Galford, Virginia Tech; Vonnia Davis, Independent
- "There Was a Solid Community Here: The Development and Effects of Huntington, West Virginia's Segregated Public Housing, 1938-1950," Jillian Kendall, West Virginia University

Saturday. 11:00AM-12:15PM. Session 8.18. PANEL: "Gender, Race, and Appalachia"

Convener: Alana Anton, Radford University

- "Exploring Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in Appalachia," Alana Anton, Radford University

Saturday. 11:00AM-12:15PM. Session 8.20. PANEL: "Constructions of Whiteness"

Convener: Meghan Moore-Hubbard, Clemson University

- "Rural Appalachian Social Studies Teachers Grappling with Whiteness," Meghan Moore-Hubbard, Clemson University
- "Flotilla: Interrogating My White Ancestry," Melissa Helton, Hindman Settlement School

CONCURRENT 9

Saturday. 2:30PM-3:45PM. Session 9.12. WORKSHOP: "Community Stories to Policy Action: A Digital Storytelling Workshop" Convener: Bishop Marcia Dinkins, Black Appalachian Coalition

- Bishop Marcia Dinkins, Black Appalachian Coalition
- NitaJade Jackson, Black Appalachian Coalition
- Milan Bush, Black Appalachian Coalition
- Shana Goggins, Black Appalachian Coalition