



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

Sandra Gioia Treadway
Librarian of Virginia

Library of Virginia to Honor 2012 African American Trailblazers in Virginia History

Contact: Janice M. Hathcock
804-692-3592

For Immediate Release

In observance of African American History Month in February, the Library of Virginia is honoring eight distinguished Virginians as the 2012 African American Trailblazers in Virginia history for their contributions to Virginia and the nation. Those being honored this year include an anthropologist, an athlete, an entrepreneur, a filmmaker, a political leader, a civil rights activist, a religious leader and a principal in a civil rights lawsuit.

This year's honorees are:

Michael L. Blakely (1953–), Williamsburg
Anthropologist and scientific director of the African American Burial Ground in Lower Manhattan

Noah Davis (1804–1867), Fredericksburg
Author of an emancipation narrative

James Farmer (1920–1999), Spotsylvania County
Civil rights leader and founder of CORE

John Jasper (1812–1901), Richmond
Baptist minister

Willie Lanier (1945–), Richmond
Athlete and entrepreneur

Oscar Micheaux (1844–1951), Roanoke
Filmmaker

Yvonne B. Miller (1934–), Norfolk
Political leader

Irene Morgan (1917–2007) Gloucester County
Principal in a civil rights lawsuit

The men and women featured as Trailblazers offer powerful examples of individuals who refused to be defined by their circumstances. Their biographies are a testament to the determination and perseverance displayed by extraordinary people during challenging times. Through education and advocacy, these individuals demonstrate how African Americans have actively campaigned for better lives for themselves and their people. It is these many contributions that the African American Trailblazers program seeks to share.

800 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

www.lva.virginia.gov

804.692.3500 *phone*
804.692.3976 *tyt*

The 2012 African American Trailblazers in Virginia History program is sponsored by Dominion with media sponsor the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

Biographies of the honorees will be displayed in an exhibition at the Library in February; featured on a poster that has been sent to schools, libraries, and museums across Virginia; and included on an educational Web site for teachers and students. To learn more about the individuals honored this year, visit our Web site at www.lva.virginia.gov/trailblazers.

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