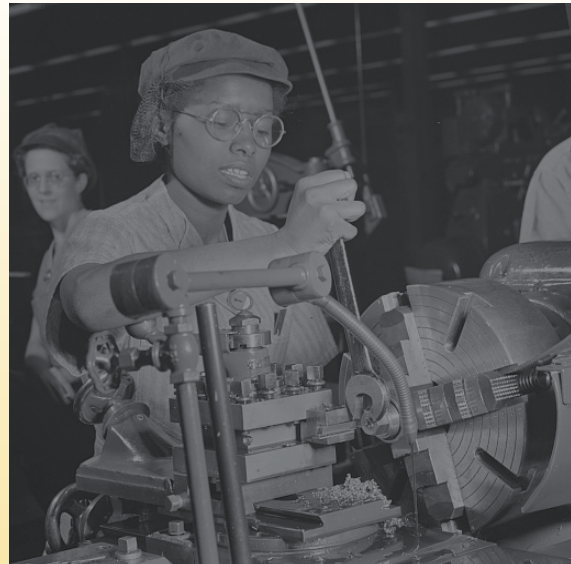




SPRING CONVOCATION



AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LABOR

FEBRUARY 12, 2025 | 10 A.M.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CENTER AUDITORIUM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Spring Convocation 2025.....	1
Black History Month Highlight.....	2
University President	3
Keynote Speaker	4
Spring Convocation 2025.....	5
Musical Selections	7
Black History Month Featured Events	8
2025 Black History Month Committee	9

African Americans and Labor



The 2025 Black History Month theme, "African Americans and Labor," highlights the profound impact of Black workers across history. From the cultural labor of enslaved Africans who supported the low-country colonies to the debates among Black educators on entrepreneurship and the fight against economic injustice, these contributions have been transformative in the United States, Africa, and the African diaspora. Understanding these contributions requires examining Black labor in all its forms — paid work in industries, public service, and private homes, as well as community-building through activism, volunteering, and institution-building.

The efforts of Black people in shaping history, culture, and society are critical to understanding the Black experience. Africans were brought to the Americas as enslaved people, serving as a highly exploited labor force for European countries and the United States in a society that devalued Black life. After fighting for freedom and navigating the shift from an agricultural to an industrial economy, the role of Black workers evolved into sharecroppers, farm laborers, landowners, wage earners, and key contributors to the nation's architectural heritage. The Black influence is visible across the country, especially in the South, which is responsible for designing and constructing some of the nation's most iconic landmarks.

Over time, Black professionals and workers from diverse fields, including teachers, nurses, musicians, steelworkers, washerwomen, and dock workers, organized to address the exploitation of labor, wage disparities and employment discrimination. Black women, like Addie Wyatt, played pivotal roles in union leadership, advocating for job security, reproductive rights, and wage increases.

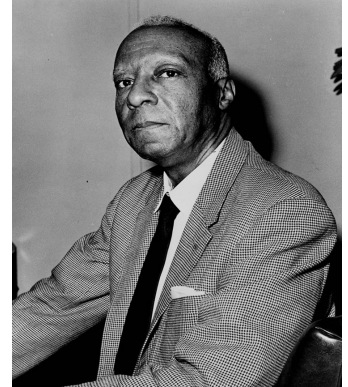
These efforts culminated in significant milestones, including the 100th anniversary of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids in 2025, founded by A. Philip Randolph in 1925. This was the first Black union to receive a charter from the American Federation of Labor. Randolph's work laid the foundation for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign, which incorporated economic justice into the civil rights movement. The theme "African Americans and Labor" encourages reflection on Black contributions to the workforce, urging a deeper understanding of the historical context, current challenges, and future potential of Black labor.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH HIGHLIGHT

A. Philip Randolph

Former President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the Negro American Labor Council

A. Philip Randolph was revered by many younger civil rights activists who regarded him as the spiritual father of the movement. "If he had been born in another period, maybe of another color," said John Lewis, "he probably would have been president." Randolph established the nation's first Black labor union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, in 1925. He pressured President Roosevelt in 1942 to end discrimination in wartime industries and President Truman in 1948 to order desegregation of the armed forces. In 1963, Randolph proposed a March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. His gift for evoking the best impulses in people helped other civil rights leaders set aside personal rivalries and plan the greatest peaceful demonstration in American history.



Statues of Randolph stand at Back Bay Station in Boston and Union Station in D.C., honoring his pivotal role in the American labor movement and civil rights struggle. They serve as reminders of his unwavering commitment to justice, from securing fair wages and better working conditions to advancing human rights for all.

(As cited on the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum website)

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Dr. Aminta H. Breaux

President, Bowie State University

Dr. Aminta H. Breaux has served as the visionary 10th president of Bowie State University since July 2017. From the beginning of her presidency, she has been committed to building on the legacy and rich history of Maryland's oldest historically Black university. She has initiated a university-wide focus to infuse entrepreneurship education across all disciplines and spearheaded the opening of the Entrepreneurship Living Learning Community in the fall 2021 to provide a hub for student innovation. As president, she is laser-focused on ensuring the long-term viability of the institution.

Dr. Breaux is very committed to serving the community, specifically with programs and activities that enrich the lives of children and youth. She serves as chair of the Board of Directors for the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association, the Board of Trustees of the Strada Education Network, and the Maryland Corps Program Advisory Board. She is also a member on the Board of Directors for the Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable, the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce, and the University of Maryland Capital Region Health.

Previous leadership appointments include the President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the Governor's P-20 Leadership Council of Maryland.

Her most recent honors include the Maryland Black Caucus Foundation's 2024 President's Harriet Tubman Award, the Maryland Daily Record Top 100 Women in 2020 and 2024, The Maryland Daily Record Power List 100 in 2023, the President Joseph R. Biden's Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award in 2023, the Maryland Daily Record Influential Marylander in 2021, and the Diversity in Business Award, Washington Business Journal in 2021. She has also received the Educator of the Year Award from the National Council of Negro Women the Trailblazer Award from the Bowie Business Innovation Center, in conjunction with Capital One and the Capital City Chapter Links Inc. Leadership Award.

Dr. Breaux previously served as vice president for advancement and vice president of student affairs at Millersville University. Earlier in her career, she held positions at the University of the Sciences and Drexel University in Philadelphia. She began her career in higher education as a counselor at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Breaux holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Temple University, a master's degree in psychological services in education from the University of Pennsylvania, and a doctorate in counseling psychology from Temple University. She is also a graduate of the Harvard Institute for Executive Management and the American Association for State Colleges and Universities' Millennium Leadership Institute.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Lorretta Johnson

Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus, American Federation of Teachers

Dr. Loretta Johnson is best known for her significant role in transforming the Baltimore Teachers Union into a lobbying and political force in the Baltimore community and Maryland State Legislature. She has served as the secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers and was the union's executive vice president from 2008 to 2011. Dr. Johnson's political influence has had a lasting impact on the education sector.

Her career began in 1966 as a teacher's aide in Baltimore, where she earned \$2.25 an hour with no benefits. Determined to improve conditions, she organized paraprofessionals into the Baltimore Teachers Union and successfully negotiated the first contract in 1970, which was notable for its grievance procedure. This experience laid the foundation for Dr. Johnson's ongoing union activism.



Dr. Johnson's political advocacy earned her the 2018 Economy and Labor Service Award from the Baltimore County Democratic Party, and she was honored as the 2005 Labor Leader of the Year by the Maryland Democratic Party. She is the assistant treasurer for the Baltimore County chapter of the NAACP, a board member of the BlueGreen Alliance and Citizens for Tax Justice, co-chair of the Child Labor Coalition, and chair of both the Faith & Politics Institute and the Institute for Women's Policy Research. Ebony magazine also recognized her in their article "Blacks of Influence in Unions."

In 2015, Dr. Johnson was named corporate representative to the National Alliance of Black School Educators. She also serves on several boards, including the American Income Life Insurance Company's Labor Advisory Board, Master Your Card's African American Advisory Board, and the Community Engagement in the State Courts' Advisory Board.

In 2014, Dr. Johnson chaired the American Federation of Teachers' Racial Equity Task Force, which led the union to become the first public sector organization in modern history to issue a substantive, action-oriented report on achieving racial equity in America, titled "Reclaiming the Promise of Racial Equity in Education, Economics, and Our Criminal Justice System."

In 2011, Dr. Johnson chaired the American Federation of Teachers' Benefit Trust while also serving on the board of directors of the Albert Shanker Institute. She served as the vice president of the American Federation of Teachers for 30 years and chaired the Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel Program and Policy Council for 32 years. Additionally, she was president of the Baltimore Teachers Union's paraprofessional chapter for 35 years and president of the American Federation of Teachers in Maryland for 17 years.

Dr. Johnson earned her teaching degree through the Career Opportunities Program at Coppin State University in Maryland. She has received numerous honors and awards, including an honorary doctorate from Coppin State, a community service award from the United Way, a service award from the Baltimore Teachers Union's paraprofessional chapter, and a volunteer service award from the Maryland State American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. Dr. Johnson's dedication to education, advocacy, and service exemplifies her lifelong commitment to empowering others and driving change while highlighting the impact of education on a better tomorrow.

SPRING CONVOCATION 2025

Order of Service

Presiding.....	CDT Renee Whittington History and Government Major
Prelude.....	The University Symphonic Band Billy R. Bennett Director, University Bands
Posting of Colors.....	Bowie State University Army ROTC Lt. Col. Roger A. Dominique, Commander
"The Star-Spangled Banner"	Arranged by Mark Hayes By Francis Scott Key
"Lift Every Voice and Sing"	Bowie State University Concert Choir By James Weldon Johnson Arranged by Brandon Felder, Choir Director
Moment of Centering	Nalani Byrd Miss Bowie State University
Reflections of Carter G. Woodson.....	Quincy Julien Epsilon Sigma Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
Occasion.....	Dr. David L. Reed Assistant Professor, Department of History & Government
Official Opening of the Academic Year	Dr. Guy-Alain Amoussou Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Bowie State University
Welcome	Kayla Lowery Vice President, Student Government Association Ephonia Marie Green President, Graduate Student Association
Spoken Word	Chief Bentil Mister Bowie State University
Opening Remarks	Dr. Aminta H. Breaux President, Bowie State University

Continued on next page

SPRING CONVOCATION 2025

Order of Service

- Introduction of Speaker Kayla Williams
Miss Junior, Student Government Association
- Selection.....A Spiritual Medley: "City Called Heaven"/
"Lord, I Know I've Been Changed"
(Traditional spirituals arrangement Polenitz, Dandridge, Hawkins)
Bowie State University Concert Choir
Arranged by Brandon Felder, Director
- Keynote Address Dr. Lorretta Johnson
Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus, American Federation of Teachers
- "A Quiet Journey Home"By Ayatey Shabazz
University Symphonic Band
Arranged by Billy R. Bennett, Director
- Closing..... Tierra Parker
President, Student Government Association
- The Alma Mater Bowie State University Concert Choir
- Retiring Of ColorsBowie State University Army ROTC
Lt. Col. Roger A. Dominique
Commander
- Postlude.....University Symphonic Band

MUSICAL SELECTIONS

"Lift Every Voice and Sing"

By James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand.
True to our God,
True to our native land.

"Alma Mater"

By Charlotte B. Robinson

There's a spot in my heart that never goes cold.
There's a place in my memory that never grows old.
There's a prayer on my lips that I'll ever be true
To God and my country,
To Bowie State, my school.

REFRAIN

Oh, Bowie State, dear Bowie State
May you forever be the flame of faith,
The torch of truth,
To guide the steps of youth.

There's a song in my heart that I'll ever sing
Of the beauties of Bowie State that each season brings.
There's a pledge in my heart that I'll ever keep true
To uphold the standards of Bowie State, my school.

REFRAIN

BLACK HISTORY MONTH FEATURED EVENTS

bowiestate.edu/blackhistorymonth

Feb. 12

**The Future Past Series:
Rustin Movie Discussion**

6 – 9 p.m.

Thurgood Marshall LGBTQIA
Resource Center, Rm. 1115

Feb. 13

**Are You Smarter Than Your Professor:
Black History Month Edition**

3 – 5 p.m.

Thurgood Marshall Library
Special Collections Room

Feb. 13

**Trailblazers for Black Male Educator
Award Program and Reception**

6 – 8 p.m.

James E. Proctor Jr, Rm. 102

Feb. 18

Avoiding Harm in Black: LGBTQIA+ Training

12:30 – 2 p.m.

Thurgood Marshall LGBTQIA
Resource Center, Rm. 1115

Feb. 20

**Du Bois and Black Radicalism:
Keynote Address by Dr. Maurice Jackson**

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, Rm. 1330

Feb. 20

**Celebrating Black History Month:
3rd Annual Affirmations Ball**

6 – 9:30 p.m.

Student Center, Wiseman Ballroom

Feb. 24

**BSU-UMD Social Justice Alliance
Legacies of Loss: The Barn to the Bus Stop**

7 – 8 p.m.

University of Maryland

Feb. 28

**BSU Community Trip to UMD:
Black History Month Hope, Healing
and Mobilizing Against Hate**

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Student Center

These events are subject to change. Visit the Black History Month webpage
for current information: **bowiestate.edu/blackhistorymonth**.

2025 BLACK HISTORY MONTH COMMITTEE

Chairs

Dr. William B. Lewis

Dr. William S. Allen

Regina Ali

Dr. Guy-Alain Amoussou

Frances Ampah

Dr. Benjamin Arah

Billy Bennett

Thomasina Boardley

Dr. Shirelle Briscoe

Margo Buck-Hurley

Dr. Tyesha Nicole Burks

Yvette Caldwell

Alexus Clanton

Dr. Sean Coleman

Dr. Janelle Cox

Andre Cutair

Dr. Roger Davidson

DeShaun Douglas

Talisha Dunn-Square

Brandon Felder

Dr. Holly Fisher-Hickman

Michael Fleishman

Nicholas Garofano

Kayla Ginyard

Ephonia Marie Green

Candance Greene

Master Sergeant

Scott Grimes

Chandra Hicks-De'Jesus

Charles Hill

Anekee Hinds

Erica Johnson

Tanya Jones

Nimi Kenanagha

Kayla Lowery

Melissa Morgan

Chukwunonso Onwuachu

Tierra Lanae Parker

Dr. Keadrick Peters

Rosetta Price

Sabrina Ram

Dr. David Reed

CPT Thomas Rigney

Montrose Robinson

Barbara Smith

Marinda Stafford

Patricia Taylor

Dr. Otis Thomas

David Thompson

Annette Wedderburn

Tewodross Williams

Dr. Otis Williams

Jennifer Williams

Latonya Wrenn

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Black History Month Committee at Bowie State University, in collaboration with the Department of History and Government, extends its deepest gratitude to all who played a role in the planning and execution of this meaningful program. We thank the Department of Fine and Performing Arts, along with the dedicated students, faculty, and staff whose time, talent, and efforts made this event possible. Our heartfelt appreciation also goes to the following offices and departments for their invaluable support: The Office of the President, The Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Military Science/Reserve Officer Training Corps, the Department of Communications, Conference and Event Services, Division of Marketing & Communications, Margo Buck-Hurley, The Staff Council, and Faculty Senate. Your collective contributions have been essential to the success of this program, and we are profoundly grateful for your commitment to honoring and celebrating Black history at Bowie State University.



14000 Jericho Park Road
Bowie, Maryland 20715
301-860-4000

bowiestate.edu