

Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission Somerset County Live Stream

Dr. Marshall Stevenson: To everyone in the audience, and also, those who are watching us via live stream. I'm Dr. Marshall Stevenson, one of the commissioners representing the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. I'm going to give a few remarks, and then turn it over to some people who will give us additional remarks and a welcome.

This is a very historic and important occasion, and I'm glad all of you are here, and recognize how significant this event is. At this time, I'd like to welcome the president of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Dr. Heidi Anderson.

Dr. Heidi Anderson: Thank you. Good morning, and welcome to everyone. As the 16th president of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, it is my pleasure to be here with you this morning on this very solemn occasion.

Today, we are gathered here in person, as well as virtually, to commemorate the lives of the victims of racial terror that took place here in Somerset County Maryland. Isaac Kemp in 1894, William Andrews in 1897, James Reed in 1907 and George Armwood in 1933.

The purpose of this gathering today is for us to remember, reconcile, educate, and bring about a sense of restorative justice. In 1956, Dr. Martin Luther King said these words, "but the end is reconciliation, the end is redemption, the end is the creation of the beloved community." We look forward to continuing the work that will transform us into that beloved community that Dr. King envisioned.

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore is committed to fighting for social justice in all of its forms, and we fully support the commission and as one of the state's HBCU's, we are pleased with having representation with Dr. Stevenson on the commission as mandated by house bill 307.

I want to encourage everyone who is here today and especially our students, and I know many of our students are here virtually, to listen and learn from today's hearing, because students, you will be the ones who leave this campus to help make Dr. King's beloved community a reality. A world that is intolerant to poverty, a world where all forms of prejudice, discrimination and racial terror will be eliminated. And students, you are the ones who will make a world where conflict is resolved peacefully, and social justice is at the heart of all of our well-being.

So I want to thank everyone for attending today, and may we all leave today's hearing inspired to make our world a better place, thank you.

Dr. Marshall Stevenson: Well, now here's some brief remarks from the president of the Town Commission, Michelle Johnson.

Michelle Johnson: Good morning. I bring greetings to the officials, to the commissioners and to everyone in their respectful places this morning.

On behalf of the town of Princess Anne, I officially welcomed each of you under the sound of my voice to our town.

As commissioner at large for the town of Princess Anne, it's an honor and a privilege to stand here today holding such a title as mine. To this day, being the only second black woman to hold his seat is an honor. It shows how far we have come, but it definitely shows how much further we have to go.

My prayer is today that this hearing will bring closure to some, and it will bring healing to all. I welcome each and every one of you to the town of Princess Anne, where we are now moving forward together.

Dr. Marshall Stevenson: We'll now hear remarks from Mr. Craig Mathias, president of the Somerset County Commission.

Mr. Craig Mathias: Good morning all. We certainly like to take this time to welcome each and every one of you to this auspicious occasion. This is an opportunity for us to reflect, not only to reflect on the past, but to move forward in the future.

We would like to thank the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission, for taking on the tasks of sharing with us information that is so vital to the history of this County.

Myself, I would like to welcome all of you and thank you for your participation. I have the distinct honor of being the first African-American to serve in a County government position, and at that time, it was 340 years of this County's history. God has afforded me the privilege to represent you, the constituents of Somerset County.

And once again, we look forward to continuing the dialogue in order to educate the residents of Somerset County, along with the citizens of the state of Maryland. So we thank you, because you can only look forward to the future, and not repeat the same mistakes when you know the truth of the reality of our history. God bless you.

Dr. Marshall Stevenson: Before I turn it over to our chair, Dr. David Fakunle, I would like to briefly make some remarks myself. We're here to reconcile and move to achieve restorative justice. The definition of reconcile is to be brought back into fellowship or favor with an offended party.

The Christian Bible says thou shall not kill, and whomever shall kill, be in danger of judgment. Let us now proceed with the hearings. President of the commission, David Fakunle.

Dr. David Fakunle: So before we get started, it is very important that we note this is a day for healing, for talking about the truth, and the truth hurts sometimes, but that's what brings us towards healing. I'm an artist above all else, and I believe in the power of art as a healing modality. So what I would like to do if you give me the opportunity, I'm going to give that opportunity to my mother.

Everything that I am, I'm a mamma's boy above all. So I'm glad that my mother, Dr. Mama Deborah Pierce, decided to join us today, because you never let me do anything by myself. And Mom, I would

love for you to sing a song that doesn't unlike anything other when it comes to setting a tone, strange fruit.

Dr. Deborah: [Singing 00:08:47.15]

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you, Mommy. And with that, I would love to now bring to order this Somerset County public hearing of the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

I hope that you all are prepared to participate in this experience, this process, this moment. This will be an unforgettable experience to see firsthand how the legislature can and should work for his constituents.

Today's hearing will begin with a reading of House Bill 307, followed by a reading about protocols for conduct and testimony. Following that, we will hear the narrative summary of each of the four known victims of racial terror lynching's in Somerset County. They being Isaac Kemp, William Andrews, James Reed and George Armwood. We will also hear both live and previously recorded testimony from descendants and relatives of the victims, witnesses, and possible perpetrators. We will then transition into the phase of the hearing that includes testimony from expert witnesses. During that time, the commission may also respond with a question after a witness has concluded with their testimony. We will also open the hearing for public comments before we begin the process of adjourning.

Before we get started, I want to acknowledge our partners from Living and Growing who have joined us to help create and maintain a safe emotional space for today's hearing to occur. Raise your hands, thank you, they're right there. Thank you, Living and Growing for all that you do. They are available throughout today to help us and for anyone who needs their assistance. After certain portions of our hearing, they will conduct short debriefing exercises to help with processing all that is seen and heard from today's hearing.

Before I move on with our agenda, I do want to take a moment to acknowledge our commissioners that are in attendance. Commissioners, would you briefly introduce yourselves please for our audience. So I will start to my immediate right with.

Dr. Marshall Stevenson: Dr. Marshall Stevenson, one of the members of the commission from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Dr. David Fakunle: Again, I'm Dr. David Fakunle, honored to serve as chair and I represent the National Great Blacks and Wax Museum.

Dr. Charles Chavis: Charles Chavis, Vice chair, and I'm from George Mason University.

Dr. Kirkland Hall: Kirkland Hall, chair to Somerset County Commission.

David Armenti: David Armenti, Maryland Center for History and Culture, formerly the Maryland Historical Society.

Dr. Iris Barnes: Dr. Iris Barnes, representing Little Louis Carroll Jackson Civil Rights Museum, an off-site unit of Morgan State University.

Dr. Nicholas Creary: Nicholas Creary, and I represent the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project.

Carl Snowden: Anne Arundel County.

Elizabeth Hughes: Elizabeth Hughes, representing the Maryland Historical Trust.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you all. And also, acknowledgment to our other commissioners who are joining us virtually. So I will just say their names. Simone Barrett Williams, Roger Davidson, Maya Davis, Teacher Dupree Wilson, Omar Eaton Martinez, Christopher Haley. Isaiah Mobley, and Stephanie Sewerth. And also a big shout out to our staffs Anita Hurley, Chris McFarland and the lovely Stephanie Thompson, appreciate you all, thank you.

So at this time, I recognize Commissioner Dr. Nick Creary, who will cite the specific state statute that pertains to this public hearing, thank you.

Dr. Nicholas Creary: The legislation creating the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission was signed into law in April, 2019. It has since been amended to extend the commission's Sunset date from 2022 to 2024. The ACT States as follows: whereas, lynching or the extra-legal murder of an individual in an act of mob violence is a violation of the rights to due process, and equal protection of the law. And whereas, at least 40 African Americans were lynched by white mobs in Maryland between 1854 and 1933. And whereas, no person was ever tried, convicted or otherwise brought to justice for participating in these racially motivated lynchings. And whereas, various state, county and local government entities colluded in the commission of these crimes and conspired to conceal the identities of the parties involved. And whereas, these crimes far exceeded any notion of justice, just retribution or just punishment. But were intended to terrorize African-American communities and force them into silence and subservience to the ideology of white supremacy. And whereas, no victim's family or community ever received a formal apology or compensation from the state, county or local government entities for the violent loss of their men. And whereas, restorative justice requires a full knowledge understanding and acceptance of the truth before there can be any meaningful reconciliation. Now therefore, be it enacted by the general assembly of Maryland, that there is a Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The ACT further provides for the commission members consisting of representatives from the commission on civil rights, the state archives, Maryland Historical Trust, the commission on African-American History and Culture, The Maryland State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Great Blacks and Wax Museum, the Maryland Historical Society, The Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, The Lily May Carroll Jackson Civil

Rights Museum, Maryland's four historically black universities, Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, with four public members appointed by the governor.

Staff for the commission is provided by Bowie State University in consultation with the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, and by the Office of the Attorney General. Staff members provided by the Office of the Attorney General may issue a subpoena for the attendance of a witness to testify for or for the production of documents in connection with any investigation or hearing conducted by the commission.

The commission shall hold regional hearings open to the public in areas in which a lynching of an African-American by a white mob has been documented received from the public, including those from the families and communities affected by racially motivated lynching's, recommendations for addressing, engaging and reconciling communities affected by racially motivated lynching's, including the erection of Memorial plaques or signage at or near the sites of racially motivated lynching's. And make recommendations for addressing the legacy of lynching that are rooted in the spirit of restorative justice.

In the hearings, the commission may research cases of racially motivated lynching's for which there is no documentation, should those cases be brought to the commission's attention. And the involvement of state, county and local government entities and relative news media in cases of racially motivated lynching.

On September 1st, 2020, the commission submitted an interim report of its findings and recommendations to the governor, and to the general assembly. On or before December 1st, 2023, the commission shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the governor and to the general assembly.

Dr. David Fakunle: Nick Creary, at this time, I recognize Commissioner Dr. Iris Barnes, to explain the code of conduct for the hearing, and explain the process for testimony and public comment, thank you.

Dr. Iris Barnes: Good morning. The testimony, questions, procedure and code of conduct is as follows. Members of the public had the opportunity to submit testimony via email to the Maryland Lynching or MLTRC at Maryland.gov prior to today's hearing. During today's hearing, questions and comments from members of the public here today will be collected by volunteers. Volunteers please raise your hand, where are our volunteers. Well, if you have questions, just pass them forward, we will make sure we get those. We will also allow you to openly share your comment or question at the podium located on the floor at the center stage. To make an open comment, you must sign up in advance. The public comments signup sheet is located in the lobby. If you are submitting a comment or signing up to make a comment, please provide your name and organizational affiliation, if any, and limit your comment or question to no more than three sentences or less than one minute. There will be limited time for public comments, so it may not be feasible for us to hear all who wish to make a public comment. Please, be respectful of the time limit. Questions and comments should be limited to the topic of discussion for today's hearing. If your comment or question is off topic, it will not be included in the hearing. Comments, questions and testimonies should be presented with decorum, and the respect appropriate for conducting this public hearing. Any comments or questions containing obscene language or language inciting imminent violence will not be addressed, and any live testimony containing such language will end. Finally, please note that members of the media may be present during today's hearing, and as such, public comments, questions and testimony may be broadcast or printed by news outlets. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you, Commissioner Barnes. At this time, I'd like to recognize Miss Carrie Samus, Mr. Charles Hall and Miss Margot Green Gale to present the history concerning the life and death of victims Isaac Kemp, William Andrews and James Reed, thank you.

Ms. Carrie Samus: Thank you for having us here today. We're happy to see all of you in the audience. I will be reading the narrative associated with Isaac Kemp.

Isaac Kemp, a strawberry picker between the ages of 23 and 27 from Virginia was lynched on Friday June 8, 1894 by a mob of about 150 people in Princess Anne Maryland. Isaac Kemp was born

in Nassau, the Bahamas in 1868. The son of a maritime worker, Kemp traveled to America and was naturalized as a United States citizen at Key West, Florida in 1888. Six years before his murder.

We may never know why he chose to start a new life here, or whether or not his parents, Linda and York joined him. Newspapers at the time say little of Kemp's past, save that he came to the Eastern Shore from Key West. Years later, like hundreds of other black men and women every season, Isaac Kemp went to the Eastern Shore as a migrant agricultural worker. This is how he came to be in Princess Anne by the summer of 1894.

On the night of June 8, 1894, Kemp was spending time with a dozen of his fellow workers that his employer, Mr. Frank Barnes of Somerset County had just paid. They arrived at a country store owned by Charles Miller, located about seven miles north of Pocomoke City. At around 9:00 pm on the night of June 6th, the workers purchased whiskey and shortly became unruly and began knocking down displays in the store.

Constable Ned Carver, at the proprietor's request, told the group that they could either leave or be arrested. One drunken member of the group said, we'll come as we please. At this moment, a fight broke out between Isaac Kemp and Constable Carver. Pushed outside of the store, the fight continued with Frank McCready, Constable Carver's brother, coming to his aid.

As the fight escalated, Carver and McCready were beaten over the head with clubs and empty beer bottles, the two men were badly beaten but the fight continued and for a moment stopped leaving Constable Carver and Mr. McCready nearly dead. Apparently unsatisfied, Isaac Kemp allegedly ran over to Carver, and cut the Constable with a razor multiple times on his face and legs killing Ned Carver.

With the store destroyed and Carver and McCready on the ground, the group fled the scene. Mr. C. A. Vessey attempted to clean the two men, then ran to Dr. Deshields for medical treatment. Once the doctor got to the victims, McCready was alive but badly injured. As for Constable Carver, Dr. Deshields said that there was nothing he could do to save him. Ned Carver was 32 years old and survived by one child.

Within two hours, 10 of the 12 men were arrested and placed in The Princess Anne jail on Main Street. The other two men apparently left the store when the men began fighting, and were arrested shortly after in Pocomoke City. Early in the morning of Thursday June 7th, a group of about 75 men

approached the Princess Anne jail, explaining to Deputy Dryden that they had a prisoner for him to arraign. Another 75 men were placed on guard.

Once the Jailer opened the door, the mob overpowered the deputy and rushed into the jail, Officer Dryden refused to give the mob keys to the jail and the group resorted to using a battering ram to open the door.

Forced to hand the keys over to the mob at gunpoint, Officer Dryden could do nothing but watch as the angry men found the supposed bring leader of the attack, Isaac Kemp. One of the other men, John Handy, claimed that Kemp was not only the lone person drinking, but said that he was the only one to hit Constable Carver with a bottle. Satisfied that they had found their man, the mob shot Kemp 50 times while he was still chained in the cell killing him instantly.

None of the other prisoners in the jail detained for the attack on Carver and McCready were harmed, and it was initially reported that none of the other members of the mob could be identified. However, Alva and Gibbons a man who spent the night in jail with the sheriff, noted that he recognized one of the members of the mob to be Samuel Webb, whose mask accidentally fell off during the raid. The sheriff was also quoted as being able to identify one of the lyncher's as Sewell Webb.

Afraid that the mob would return for other men, Officer Dryden requested a clandestine removal of the group to the jail in Salisbury Maryland about 15 miles north of Princess Anne. However, when the mob returned to the jail for the others and realized that they had been transferred, a request to send a train for a hundred men to take them to Salisbury was denied. In Salisbury, word had gotten out that the prisoners were there, and tensions between the white citizens who wish to lynch them and the armed black citizens who vowed to protect the prisoners created a problem in town.

As a result, another secret transfer of the 10 workers from Virginia was made, taking them to Murderers Row in Baltimore City, leaving chaos behind on the Eastern Shore. The black-owned newspaper, the Richmond Planet, published an appeal on their front page on June 16th to raise funds for the men's legal defense. Once tensions seemed to be under control, the accused faced trial and the conclusion was that Isaac Kemp came to his death from pistol wounds inflicted by some unknown parties. State Attorney, Henry Waters, conducted the examination at the inquest. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you.

Charles Hall: Good morning. I will be reading the biography of William Andrews. William Andrews, known as Cuba, was born in 1876 in Raleigh, North Carolina. The census indicates that William Andrews resided with his parents Henry and Rebecca Andrews, and his younger sister Bessie Andrews.

As an African-American male, he worked as an oyster dragger in Princess Anne, it is unclear when he moved to the Chesapeake region, but the Baltimore Sun reported that he was living with his parents in Richmond County Virginia at the time of his murder.

Andrews, like Isaac Kemp was among many black workers who migrated to the Eastern Shore to support the local agricultural industry. Somerset's primary industries were farming, timber, oyster farming and crabbing, and the area's population was segregated. Andrews was charged, convicted and sentenced to death for the May 5th 1897 assault of a local married white woman. After the trial on June 9, 1897, the crowd cheered the sentence, but was not satisfied. Outside the courtroom, a growing mob of about 1,000 people ripped the prisoner from the hands of the deputies, use bats and clubs to beat him nearly to death, and then hung him from a tree.

The judge and sheriff organized an inquest jury which determined within an hour that an unidentified mob had strangled Andrews. On June 19, 1897, John Mitchell Jr of the Richmond Planet condemned the Andrews murder and questioned the inadequate protection provided after the trial.

He was lynched immediately after he was tried and convicted of assault on Miss Benjamin T. Kelly. Andrews after being arrested for the attack and pleading guilty to the charges was taken to Baltimore city jail for safekeeping. This move was necessary to avoid any attacks against the prisoner prior to the trial date.

On June 9th at 11 A.M Andrews was in court on Main Street in Princess Anne, Somerset County. Within an hour, he had listened to Miss Kelly's tearful testimony, confessed to the crime without any defense. Although, he did mention that Miss Kelly was wrong and that he did not have a pistol,

and received a guilty verdict for the assault. Judge Henry Page ordered that William Andrews be executed by hanging at the state's requests, the crowd cheered as the sentence was read.

As court adjourned, the local police force noticed that a large group of people had gathered in the back lawn of the courthouse. Fearful of what their intentions were, Judge Page addressed the mob in an attempt to avoid any violence toward the prisoner. He pleaded with the crowd that Andrews has faced a speedy trial, and the verdict was decisive and satisfactory, essentially avoiding all of the circumstances that surround mob justifications for lynching. Judge Page requested that the people go to their homes as law-abiding citizens of Somerset County.

People screamed that they would only leave if the judge promised not to allow Andrews to be taken and held in Baltimore, and if the judge could grant that request, they would disperse. Judge Page concurred. As the judge told the officers that the crowd would allow them to transfer the prisoner to the jailhouse on Church Street, just across the ravine, Sheriff Nelson and his deputies took the handcuffed Andrews out of the court and were met by a boisterous crowd. Immediately, the officers were attacked in an attempt to get Andrews to the jail.

The crowd simply overpowered the officers as they tried to protect their prisoner, and Andrews was literally ripped from the sheriff's hands the instant they entered the courtyard. While handcuffed, Andrews was punched, kicked, beaten with bats and clubs and cut with razors until he was scarcely alive. Many of the punches found the face and body of the deputies trying to protect Andrews. Once the crowd was satisfied they'd beaten William Andrews to death, Sheriff Nelson went over to the body and realized he was still alive. The mob then grabbed Andrews once more and dragged him over to a walnut tree on the property of Z James Doherty, where in an instant he was hanged until his death was confirmed. William Cuba Andrews remained in a tree until around 2:30 PM when his body was placed in a plain coffin and buried in the alms burial ground.

Immediately, a jury of inquest was composed and within an hour it determined that he was strangled by a mob of unknown strangers not from Somerset County. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you.

Margot Green Gale: Good morning. I will be reading to you about James Reed. James Reed, born in Choctaw Nation, Southeast Oklahoma May 15, 1885. Lynched in Crisfield, July 28, 1907. Here is his biography.

James Reed, a laborer was born on May 15, 1885 as a Choctaw freed man, raised in the Choctaw tribal nation in southeast Oklahoma. These lands are not the ancestral home of the Choctaw nor the freed men and freed women who reside there at that time and currently. According to the 1897 Choctaw Freedom roll, Reed was the son of Sylvia and Henry Reed, and one of six children who resided in the Choctaw tribal territory.

Reed left his home sometime after his 15th birthday. Reed made his way to North Carolina and began working as a steward and waiter on the Endeavor, a United States Coast and geodetic survey ship originally built as a confederate warship, formerly known as Lady Davis. It is believed that Reed arrived in Crisfield aboard the Endeavor in April 1906, when the Endeavor docked in Somerset County. James Reed lived in Crisfield for a short time, barely making it to his 22nd birthday. Months later, he would be brutally beaten and lynched by a mob in Crisfield Maryland on July 28, 1907. The lynching was prompted by the murder of the night chief of police John H. Dardy.

Reed was accused of murdering Dardy, after Dardy arrested Reed's business partner who was only known as Hildred. Hildred was arrested for selling whiskey. Chief Dardy and Officer Evans were walking their prisoner, Hildred, through the African-American business section of town. When Reed learned of the arrest, he ran to an African-American billiard in the area and borrowed a 44 caliber revolver from Lambdul Showers, the owner of the establishment. Reed then supposedly followed Dardy and Evans several blocks before firing. One bullet hit Dardy in the back of the head, exiting above the right eye, killing him instantaneously. Both Reed and the prisoner fled the scene and were immediately lost among a crowd of people. Officers were dispatched to different parts of town in order to prevent Reed's escape.

The search party believed Reed had secured a boat and exited town through the local waterways. However, it was reported that Reed stole a bicycle and followed the railroad out of town before reaching the area known as Colburn Creek. It was here that Reed reportedly stole a small mail boat. Authorities chartered a fleet of small gasoline launchers to search the waterways for Reed.

Reed was at least 10 miles outside of Crisfield before he was spotted by Captain Shelton of the earth less vessel. Reed hid in the cabin of the mail boat. After several commands to surrender, Reed then jumped into the water and was shortly apprehended by Captain Shelton. The search party returned to Crisfield with Reed in custody. As they led Reed back towards the scene of the crime, the mob became explosively violent.

Reed was killed from blows to the head, which resulted in a fractured skull. His body was then hung from a telegraph pole as citizens celebrated and photographed the lynching. Reed's body was then buried crudely in the marsh. However, later that night, angry citizens dug up the body and further abused the corpse with bullets. Rioters then threw his body upon a bonfire. The rioters continued to run through the African-American community, pulling people from their homes and beating them indiscriminately.

The mob reportedly threatened several black men to leave town immediately. The town council assembled the following afternoon in an effort to restore peace to Crisfield. African-American leaders and professionals attended the meeting to offer several resolutions to produce peace among blacks and whites in the community. They requested that all African-American owned places of amusement be closed in order to prevent people from congregating or organizing a retaliation. Several salons and billiards were closed immediately, many African-American residents were arrested for vagrancy.

Councilman accepted a motion that all African-American visiting from out of town report to authorities and state their reason for being in town, asking permission to stay. Delegates offered another resolution condemning Reed for the murder Dardy. The council further stated that the African-American community would have joined in the search, and that the lynching was justifiable. Officials may have offered this resolution out of fear that future violence would plague their community.

Many must have believed these resolutions would prove their willingness to cooperate, thereby, calming angry citizens of Crisfield. However, several newspaper articles did not agree that the lynching was justifiable. The Afro-American Ledger stated on August 3rd, 1907 that it was unbelievable that the better element among the colored people would endorse the lynching of James Reed.

The Baltimore Sun stated, there are abundant reasons why the people of Crisfield should deplore the lynching of James Reed, a Negro murderer. In the first place, the murderer would have been hanged by due process of law if the courts had been left to deal with him. Maryland justice lacks in such cases, neither swiftness nor sureness. No mob is capable of administering the law in a way that will strengthen our civilization or add to the security of society. Lawlessness begets contempt of the law, and of orderly procedure. The lyncher of today may be the victim of mob law tomorrow.

The safety of every community rests upon the prompt and rigid enforcement of the law in courts of justice. To encourage Judge Lynch is to place a premium upon acts of violence and to expose every citizen to vengeance of a mob incapable of acting calm and discriminating justice, that the courts of Maryland punished law breakers in Maryland. There was no investigation into the lynching of James Reed. There was also no interference or sentiments about the event from a state level.

Lambdul Showers, the owner of the revolver that Reed used to kill Chief Dardy was arrested after leaving town. Showers was jailed in Princess Anne to await his trial, but no report has been found on the outcome of the trial, nor is there any report on the capture of the prisoner, Hildred. It is believed he escaped during the chaos. This is James Reed. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Our gratitude to Miss Samus, Mr. Hall and Miss Green Gale for sharing with us those stories. At this time, we would like to take a brief five-minute break, and that the end of that break, we will bring up Living and Growing to lead us through a brief debriefing exercise.

It is currently 10:07 a.m. We will come back at 10:12 a.m. with Living and Growing leading us through. We want to take a break first and then come back with a debrief, so it's a little bit of an audible, my apologies. So yes, a five minute break and then we will come back with a debriefing from living and growing, thank you.

Thank you all for coming back. As we transition with our hearing session, we first want to acknowledge the mayor of Crisfield, Darlene Taylor, thank you so much for being here. Madam Mayor, we appreciate your presence. At this time, we would like to bring up Living and Growing to lead us in a brief debriefing exercise, thank you.

Living and Growing: Thank you. Just going to take a moment to practice some self-care, as we listen to and absorb everything today. It's really important to take care of ourselves. And so, I just want to invite everyone to take a moment to scan your body, and take note of where any tension lies.

When we are listening to stories of trauma and violence that the emotional impact, the psychological impact it sits in our bodies, right? We absorb it, we feel it. And it's really good that we got up and moved around, because that's the best way to move things through our body, as we're still processing them in our minds, in our bodies processing them as well. [inaudible] shoulders, could be in your back.

And as you start to register how your body's feeling, start to take a few breaths. You can take it in through your nose, out through your mouth. And as you continue breathing in, really think about that place in your body or those places in your body that might feel tight or tense or painful. And as you breathe in the fresh air, the fresh oxygen, you're really trying to release that tension with the exhale. So we'll take a few breaths together, and then scan again.

So breathe in through your nose, let your lungs and your chest and your stomach fill up and then slowly let it out through your mouth. Again, in through your nose, expanding and release through your mouth. Again, through your nose, feel that air fill up your body, go to the places you need it to and release. Take a moment as you return to your normal breathing, and see if anything has shifted. I know it's a short time, but sometimes that breath is so powerful it can really move things in our body.

Take note of how your body feels now, and if you maybe need to continue doing some breathing. Now and throughout the day today, check in with yourself. Get up if you need to, move around if you need to, reach out to us, we can come outside and talk with you if you need to or just stand or sit with you. And remember that this is full body, full engagement work, it's not just a mental process, it's really a whole human process, so we need to take care of our whole human selves. One more breath, and release, and now we can continue. Thank you so much.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you. At this time, I would like to recognize vice chair Dr. Charles Chavis, to present the history concerning the life and death of victim George Armwood, immediately

followed by a brief mention of the child victim, Edna Broughton, as told by Mr. Isaac Jasper. Thank you.

Dr. Charles Chavis: All right. Thank you so much commissioner Fakunle, and thank you to all those who are gathered here today. I am deeply honored for this opportunity to share the research that I've been doing specifically in regards to these cases, the case of Matthew Williams which I presented on Summers and Wicomico County, and also the case of George Armwood. Before I begin, I want to provide brief context about the materials records that I'll be presenting from today.

As I mentioned, oftentimes to my students, I am a history professor, I do represent George Mason University, I want to clear that up as well. As a history professor, I oftentimes talk to my students, and I always encourage them to let the sources lead you. And that is what I seek to do in my research. And what you'll see in this work, a narrative that has presented, the sources will guide the story. And specifically in this case, the sources that have been suppressed and left out of the traditional narrative. And so you'll be hearing and seeing records for the first time that were a part of records that I discovered in 2018 while a doctoral student at Morgan State University.

As I mentioned previously that my main case that I focus on is the case of Matthew Williams. In 2018, I discovered boxes of records within the Maryland State Archives that had been hidden in full view for over 90 years. My book, *The Silent Shore*, is based on the amount of records I've found in the one box pertaining to Matthew Williams. However, there was a second box, and that box contained identical, almost identical amount of sources and materials pertaining to the case of George Armwood.

And I'll be presenting from those materials, in terms of the materials and sources that I'll be discussing. And coming from today there include eyewitness statements, photographs of individuals that were named by the office of the Attorney General, as well as statements from the local law enforcement officers who were on the scene identifying members of the mob.

And so, before we begin, however, I thought it would be fitting to first begin with sharing the Burn documentary that was developed by the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project and Mr. Will Schwartz, who's a friend of the commission. And so I'll start by sharing that, and then come right back and begin to present the research. Looks like we're having some technical difficulties. For

some reason, the sound isn't coming through, one second, please bear with us. We have the tech specialist coming. [Inaudible]

Burns documentary: Like the rest of the country, the 1930s were a difficult time in Maryland. With the depression, families and it didn't matter whether they were black or white, most people were in dire economic streets. And in the 30s, the Eastern Shore was predominantly agricultural and absolutely segregated. Jim Crow was alive and well in the 30s on the shore.

The threat to blacks on the shore was magnified by anger of the case of Yule Lee, a black man also known as orphan Jones. In January of 1932, Lee was convicted of murdering a white family of four in Berlin. Lee's lawyer was Bernard Atis, a communist from Baltimore. He not only got Lee's original conviction reversed but managed to drag the case on for years infuriating whites. He was despised on the lower shore, even though he was a tremendously effective defense attorney for his client.

In October of 1933, the Lee case was still unresolved when an elderly woman named Mary Denston said she was attacked by a black man while walking home near Princess Anne. She said she didn't know her assailant but would be able to identify him among a thousand. Word of the attacks spread quickly, soon hundreds of men from three counties joined the manhunt. The man they were hunting was George Armwood, a 22 year old farm worker who lived near Pocomoke City.

My grandmother's name is Mary Armwood. It was her family, it was her relative and she was there.

Tina's Grandmother had fond memories of her cousin.

And he would come by a lot, and he seemed like a really nice guy. He was always smiling, he was very friendly and she said he used to whistle a lot.

When he was 15, George left school to live and work with a white man on a nearby farm. Armwood, the Afro learned, was reared by a white family, and recognized by many to be feeble-minded and a fit subject for a psychopathic ward. He was not put in one because in spite of his mental infirmity or because of it, he was a good workman and an inexpensive one. Even before Mrs. Denston had a chance to identify him, Armwood was named as her attacker, it's not clear why.

I'm not sure that Armwood committed a crime at all. From what we know, and the fact that he was described as being dimwit, I'm not sure if he committed a crime. When you're looking for someone

to blame for something, you find a scapegoat. The weakest victim, the weakest person you can find, and you choose that person.

Whatever the reason, Armwood was a wanted man. The search intensified, and the next day, an armed posse entered the Armwood home demanding to know where George was.

And then they started threatening them, telling them that if they didn't give him up and if they knew where he was, then they would hurt all of them. Eventually, they seen them being drug out of the woods, and she said that they pulled them out and they were beating on him. And then they tied him to the back of a car and made them walk.

In a time of anxiety and anger, Armwood's capture was like lighting a fuse.

The Yule Lee case was still very much in the headlines, but here comes George Armwood, another African-American accused of a crime against a white woman.

They just met Williams two years prior to, and also the people in Richard County was still in uproar because what happened to Yule Lee, called orphan Jones, because it took two years before he was brought to justice and they wanted it to happen immediately.

Armwood was first taken to the Princess Anne jail, but fearing trouble, police took him to the Wicomico jail in Salisbury. The very place where Matthew Williams was lynched not two years earlier. As news of Armwood's capture spread, angry crowds began to gather. It was clear he was not safe in Salisbury either. So Governor Albert Ritchie ordered State Police to take Armwood away from the shore altogether.

Just as Armwood was let out the back door, the mob burst through the front. From Salisbury, Armwood was taken first to Cecil County, and then to the Baltimore City Jail where it was reported he signed a confession. In Baltimore, Armwood was out of the reach of shore mobs, but the respite was short-lived.

Judge Robert Duer, ordered that Armwood would be returned to the Somerset County jail after he had been assured by Sheriff Luther Doherty, and by State's Attorney John Robbins that they had everything under control. I could not understand why Judge Duer would do such a thing, because he was a circuit court judge, he wasn't a law enforcement officer. I found out later from his granddaughter, that Judge Duer was up for re-election the next fall.

Robbins told Richie the danger of violence had passed, he said Somerset county is law abiding and peaceful. Judge Duer also assured the governor, but he may have been more concerned with assuring his constituents.

Judge Duer realized that if he didn't bring Armwood back, it would be considered a repudiation of his own community. So to his shame, he had him come back.

Richie also faced re-election, so he agreed and at 10 o'clock that night, a convoy of State Police left Baltimore with Armwood in tow. When the sun came up on October 18th, George Armwood was sitting in a cell at the Princess Anne Jail everyone on the shore knew it. His return was trumpeted in the papers and on the radio. Predictably, the jail attracted the curious and the furious, people arrived by the hundreds, the danger was clear and growing.

The Troopers who brought onward back stayed to guard the jail, but there were only 25 and the mob now numbered in the thousands. The American Legion refused to provide reinforcements, and Robbins refused to allow Armwood to be returned to Baltimore. Reports of unrest soon reached the governor, again Richie called Robins and Duer, and again, each man assured him that Armwood was safe. But with every minute, the mob was getting larger and more menacing. At seven o'clock, Duer went to the jail himself to talk to the end of the crowd.

The judge confronted the mob, and said I know all of you, I know most of you. Let's just go home, we are going to try him and let the law take its course.

And there were shouts from the mob, well, what if the Atis comes over? There was this prevailing attitude in the lower shore, that if something was not done quickly, this lawyer, Atis will do the same thing here that he did in Worcester County, and we're not going to have that.

After speaking to the mob, Duer got back in his car and left for dinner thinking the crisis was over. He was mistaken. No sooner had the judge left when the crowd advanced at the badly outnumbered troopers. As they surged forward, the police closed ranks at the jail entrance. Rocks and bricks started flying, the police answered with tear gas, the smoke had the desire and effect but was quickly dispersed by the wind. And the crowd still growing in number and frenzy pressed in.

Police were armed but never fired a shot, instead there was hand-to-hand combat at the entrance. Some men brought heavy rails and ran the cave repeatedly until it only gave way at 8:30. A howl

arose from the mob when the gate broke down. Armwood was found hiding under the mattress in the cell on the second floor. He was dragged outside, a noose already around his neck. The frenzied mob taunted and beat the helpless prisoner, a boy of 18 cut Armwood's ear off and waved it around. It was described as a bloody Carnival in which men, women and even children took part.

It was a family affair. It wasn't just men, but women and they knew in advance what was going to happen.

To show their contempt for Duer, they dragged Armwood behind the truck to the judge's home hoping to hang them there. One estimate that the size of the mob of 5,000 people, almost six times the population of Princess Anne itself. Finding no suitable tree at Judge Duer's home, they chose the tall oak nearby. The mob streak as they yank Armwood up and let him drop several times. Then they let him hang for five minutes. When they cut him down, Armwood was dead, but the spectacle wasn't over.

And they dragged his body around for everyone to see, and then she goes, she says I remember them dragging his body through the neighborhood and everyone in the house, of course, crying and being really upset.

Finally, Armwood's body was dragged to the courthouse, it was doused with gasoline and set on fire. The crowd was so deep, the police couldn't get through. A visitor described the stench of burning flesh, the mob of men, women, boys and girls dancing and singing around the burning body as if it was a celebration.

The rope was cut into small pieces and given away as souvenirs. Armwood's charred body was finally dumped in front of a lumber yard where it lay in a street for hours. It became an iconic image memorialized on the front page of the Afro-American newspapers, a young reporter named Clarence Mitchell Jr was sent to the scene.

When we got down there, the crowd was there, they had actually completed the lynching at the time, but the body was there. They hanged and then poured gasoline on the body, and set it on fire [Inaudible] middle of the street.

How'd you feel though when you saw this?

Well, it was a revolting sight, there was no doubt about that, [Inaudible].

Here's how Mitchell described the scene in print. The skin of George Armwood was scorched and blackened while his face had suffered many blows from sharp and heavy instruments. A cursory glance revealed that one ear was missing, and his tongue between his clenched teeth gave evidence of his great agony before death. There is no adequate description of the mute evidence of gluttony on the part of whites who gathered to watch the effect upon our people.

Mary Dunston never did identify Armwood as her assailant, yet thousands of people took part in his murder, which was enabled by a few.

This was what Judge Duer, he and the governor at the time were complicit in. They represented the establishment, and they didn't think of black man's life was worth anything.

For his part, Governor Richie responded with outrage saying I am shocked beyond expression at this horrible lynching.

It's a little disingenuous of Richie to claim that he didn't know that there was a possibility that this would occur. Anyone with any knowledge of previous events knew that this was a great risk.

Richie placed responsibility for the lynching squarely on the shoulders of Judge Duer and State's Attorney Robbins.

So there was a clear effort on the governor's part to place the blame on other men, as opposed to taking that responsibility himself.

Judge Duer admitted, I was badly mistaken in my judgment and I am deeply grieved that such a thing happened in our county. His remorse was met with skepticism by the Baltimore press. Robin's on the other hand was numb, to the many questions he faced he had with one response, I have no statement to make at this time. Newspapers around the country registered disbelief and disgust at the events in Maryland. It was a stain on the state and its governor.

Under fire, Richie ordered attorney general Lane to investigate the crime at once. Nine suspects were identified, but in Maryland at that time, charges could only be brought by the County State's Attorney, and Robbins refused to arrest anyone.

So the governor actually in effect declared martial law. Sent the Maryland militia to Salisbury to the armory in Salisbury where they found out and actually apprehended four alleged leaders of the lynch mob.

The locals were incensed, and gathered at the Armory trying to intimidate the troops and prevent the arrests, they didn't succeed. The four men were rushed to Baltimore and were returned to the shore to face charges.

State's Attorney Robbins said, judge, I don't have any evidence against these men, so I've got nothing to charge them with, whereupon the judge dismisses the case. So the Armwood lynching just as the Matthew Williams lynching went without anyone being charged.

So basically, nothing happened. So business as usual, but someone had lost their life, family members lost a loved one.

And despite their efforts to placate shore voters, both Richie and Duer lost their reelection bids the next year. The community continues to suffer.

Princess Anne, [Inaudible] Somerset County are still weeping the results of that incident. We have a serious racial divide that still exists in our county.

And until we get to the point of talking about it, talking about what brought it about, and the aftermath of it, nothing's going to be done. There's that huge gap, there's no understanding of each other. And until we get to that point, lynching is going to have, it's like a stabbing heart.

Dr. Charles Chavis: So before we begin, I want to be very clear for the record, that what we saw printed in the Baltimore Sun at the time in terms of the no sufficient evidence is a flat out lie, let's all be very clear. And the lynching of George Armwood was a state sanctioned lynching. And we have to grapple with this, and we have to speak the truth and say it as a commission, if we are going to be honest about our word.

And I feel compelled to be very clear about this specific case, based on the evidence that I'll be discussing today. And so, I wanted to first begin with the radical black truth-tellers and talking briefly about the work of the black press.

In the film, you hear from Clarence Mitchell, who was actually the first on the scene. And I'm going to play a clip for the record, because I want to make sure the sources as I mentioned before speak for themselves. And this is from the Maryland Historical Society, but I'm going to provide some context. He literally comes from across the shore and gets word of the lynching. One of the things that oftentimes we forget in terms of researching lynching's and racial terror lynching's and anti-black violence, and one of the reasons again why lynching's are state sanctioned and this lynching specifically, the lynching was advertised.

When lynching's were on radio, they were pre-planned, right? So we think about meditation and planning regarding murder, these lynching's were planned. And then they were planned in such a way that Clarence Mitchell had enough time to come from Baltimore and other areas, and people came from all over the state. Clarence Mitchell comes from Baltimore, and makes it to the scene, and The Afro was literally the first there to report. So I'm going to play the extended version of his actual interview that he conducted and then I'll continue.

Speaker: In 1933, you were in Salisbury.

Clarence Mitchell: Princess Anne.

Speaker: Princess Anne, excuse me. In 1931 in Salisbury. What did you see when you were down in Princess Anne?

Clarence Mitchell: Well, in Princess Anne which as I said was 1933, I saw this lynching.

Speaker: You didn't actually see the lynching take place now, did you?

Clarence Mitchell: Well, we got there right after it happened, the crowd was still there.

Speaker: How did you know? It's just by coincidence that you happen to come along?

Clarence Mitchell: No, it had been well publicized. Actually, what happened?

Speaker: You don't publicize a lynching?

Clarence Mitchell: But in those days, they did.

Speaker: You knew when something was in the oven.

Clarence Mitchell: It operated on a schedule which was announced on the radio.

Speaker: Oh, come on.

Clarence Mitchell: That is correct. Actually, what happened?

Speaker: You mean everybody knew when the thing was going to take place, and the authorities didn't take adequate steps to prevent it?

Clarence Mitchell: They might have gone through the motions, but they didn't take adequate steps. You see in a situation such as that, the victim had been brought to Baltimore while he was still alive

of course, for safe keeping, he was supposed to have molested an elderly white woman on one of those Farms, on some part of the area surrounding Princess Anne.

Also, the story has it that he was feeble-minded, but be that as it may, whatever happened, it aroused such antagonism and he was brought to Baltimore city for safe keeping, and Governor Albert C. Ritchie was governor at that time. He was urged to send this man back on the ground that it was a reflection on the people in Princess Anne to say that anything would happen, and that he should be sent back. Well, it turned out that because two years before at Salisbury there had been a lynching, anybody with his common sense should have known that it was hazardous to send this person back.

But the Eastern Shore land was an important political entity, and I assume the governor didn't want to antagonize them anymore they already had or any more than they had been antagonized victim away. So there were these announcements had came over the radio in those days radio was much more primitive than it is now, but it was sufficient for you to know what was happening. And the team that was supposed to go down there from the Afro-American was supposed to start when the word came out that the crowd had gathered, and that a lynching was about to take place.

Speaker: You mean everybody knew it was going to take place? Well, why did the governor send him?

Clarence Mitchell: They knew that something would happen, and there's something that everybody expected was a lynching. And that is the reason why we went. The Baltimore Sun at its newspapers reporters down there, and we had to go a long way around at that time, up for [Inaudible] but anyway, whatever way it was, we had to go around and all the way of course, we were picking up these reports and what was happening.

Somebody gave me a pistol, I had never fired a pistol in my life, so I stuck it down in the upholstery of the seat out or what happened to it with anybody ever found it or not. But anyway, when we got down there, the crowd was there, they had actually completed the lynching at the time, but the body was.

Speaker: Did they shoot him or hang him?

Clarence Mitchell: They hanged and then poured gasoline on the body and set it on fire, and it was right out there in the middle of the street. It's a horrible sight, and all these people standing around.

Speaker: Was the fire out when you got there then?

Clarence Mitchell: My recollection is that the fire was out, but the body was still in a state of [Inaudible]. And the interesting thing too was at that time the crowd must have been more or less surfeited. Because they were standing around, but being young and brash, I went around asking people questions.

Speaker: How did you feel though when you saw this?

Clarence Mitchell: Well, it was a revolting sight, there's no doubt about that. I had to see a fellow human lying there in the middle of the street in that kind of a position.

Speaker: He was lying on the street then?

Clarence Mitchell: Yes.

Speaker: Okay.

Clarence Mitchell: By that time he'd been cut down with somebody. I suppose all might have just burned down, because the body was saturated with gasoline and maybe he gasoline did burn him, I doubt with anybody who's taking trouble to give many respectful attention.

Dr. Charles Chavis: Clarence Mitchell continues in the interview, and for the sake of time I'm going to stop the clip. But in the interview, he continues and the interviewer asked him was he not scared, right? And within the interview, he discusses how the president of UMES or Princess Anne Academy at the time literally allowed him to stay on campus, all the reporters, the black reporters stayed on campus at the time. And I just wanted to acknowledge that in terms of the role of black institutions.

Here we have the black press, but also the HBCU, historically black colleges and University, this sacred space. So he's able to find safety overnight as he comes to the shore, and I believe he actually stays in the residence of President Kaya at the time. And so from there, we recognized Clarence Mitchell, I recognize him as a black prophetic truth teller.

He challenged the presumptions of Armwood's guilt, organized community defense, and he crafted a counter narrative to lynching logic which was rooted in fascism, white supremacy and opposition to multicultural democracy. In addition to this, you also have other reporters, because as we know, our most should know it by this time, if you're a group in Maryland, you should know something about the Mitchell name. Clarence Mitchell, you see here with Lyndon B. Johnson was the 101st Senator and really the author of a lot of the legislation, civil rights legislation that came out in the 60s. However, his first major job provided by FDR through New Deal legislation was an opportunity to write as a reporter for the Afro-American, and this was one of his most impactful experiences which I think went on to impel him to advocate for civil rights.

He's joined by lesser-known individuals who were also employed by The Afro, one Levi Jolly was an investigator reporter who also covered the Matthew Williams case as well. And one of the things that I think is remarkable about Mr. Jolly's work is his ability to salvage the humanity of the victim. As I've mentioned during the Matthew Williams testimony, we see in most of the white newspapers that the individual, the black victim is oftentimes only recognized and identified by their alleged

crime, their humanity is lifted from their person, and they are literally only identified by these alleged crimes right.

And so what Mr. Levi Jolly does in most of his work, in his journalism, he seeks to salvage the humanity of the victims, by connecting with their friends and family. And a lot of the information we know about these individuals, if we were leaning specifically and solely on the white press, we would have no information. But because of the brave journalism of individuals such as Jolly and others, we know about George Armwood's friends, his family, because Levi Jolly took the time to interview them and consult with them.

We also have one Ralph Matthews, as well again for the Baltimore Afro-American. Because of Mr. Matthews, he supported and helped with a fundraiser to secure funds for the body to be buried, I mean, he was also present at the burial. And so consistently, in the midst of this white racist terror, black reporters journalists came over and to support this community here on the Eastern Shore. And I wanted to honor them before we get to the specifics around those actually behind the lynching of George Armwood.

Next, and this is where we transition in terms of the records that you're seeing into the records that were discovered in the Maryland State Archives in 2018, rediscovered I would say, they were hidden in full view.

You see correspondence from national leaders. The first leader is Charles Hamilton Houston of NAACP. I mean, he's literally writing to Preston Lane and the governor, and these are all in the governor in the State's Attorney, Office of the Attorney General's files that I discovered. You see them writing, encouraging them to make sure they get it right this time. And he calls out Richie, Albert Richie the governor at the time for trying to have these fake investigations, right? One of the things that is important to recognize and that we see within the Burn film, but also in some of the research that I'm going to cover, is the ways in which black bodies were used as political tools, right? Specifically in this case, Richie was jockeying for the presidency, as it's articulated in the film, and he's recognizing as a Democrat that he's going to need black support.

And so he thinks, like a lot of politicians unfortunately think, that if there's a symbolism where in news newspapers or in word only, if I say that I'm going to do an investigation, that's all the colors really need to get their vote. We see this playing out historically in terms of those jockeying for

black support. Richie is using, I argue, black bodies to do this, with these false words that he's publishing. Charles Hamilton Houston is saying no sir, not today.

So let's actually have an investigation, right, and let's not just say we're going to have one. Because based on the research that I uncovered with Matthew Williams, we know that the mob, Richie knew exactly who committed the lynching. So you've done this before, and you said again, what's published in The Afro, not The Afro, but the Baltimore Sun, that there's no evidence, which is again, I wanted to be clear is an absolute lie.

There is ample evidence, hundreds of records. And what I've noticed in reviewing the Armwood materials in which I'm going to discuss, there is more evidence than that of the Matthew Williams case. And also, the evidence is solely based on eyewitness accounts, not from blacks specifically, but law enforcement officers of the state which I think is really telling. And you see again the lie that's printed in the Baltimore Sun that there was no evidence.

And so from there, we also have someone who you might see, notice, Thurgood Marshall, right? Who's also responding to this. Again, telling Richie to not play politics with black bodies on Eastern Shore and in Maryland. If you're going to do your job, then do your job, but don't play politics with black bodies. And of course, we should know that Thurgood Marshall would go on to serve as the first African-American Supreme Court Justice.

So Marshall is writing to the governor and to the Office of the Attorney General, the Attorney General at the time, William Preston Lane. You also have correspondence within the records from a number of organizations including the ACLU that offered a reward for any of those that were named and involved in the lynching.

I would be remiss if I did not mention Dr. Lily Mae Carroll Jackson, who was also involved with supporting what we've recently learned, supporting private investigators, white investigators, who actually came to the Eastern Shore to investigate these cases.

We were able to put our hands on Department of Justice Records from Northeastern University law school. These records, as well as NAACP records identified correspondence where Lily Carol Jackson is corresponding with the secretary of the NAACP, Walter White. And we have Dr. Iris Barnes who represents that museum here, the home of Dr. Jackson. And for those who don't know too much about Dr. Jackson, she was a NAACP president in Baltimore.

Took the branch from one of the smallest to one of the most thriving at the time, but she also was very successful own properties in Atlantic City and throughout Maryland. And with that wealth, Walter White called on her to pay for private investigators, white women, from the north, to come and to infiltrate the mobs on Maryland's Eastern Shore. And so I would be remiss if I did not mention her work and her activism as well.

And now, we get to the identification of Armwood's lynchers. Again, what is most astonishing about this specific case is the brazen way that the evidence that's just out there, and clearly put out there. But again, we have the black press and black organizations, black institutions that are leading the way for identifying those involved. So we have the Baltimore-based leading for the struggle of Negro rights, which is a successor to the American Labor Congress. And they identify, one of the first organizations, they identify Mr. William S. McQuade who's employed by the American Storage Company in Pocomoke City.

And he directly participated, as someone who directly participated in the Armwood lynching. And he calls on the company to fire him, he makes this demand, and this is articulated again in the same files I discovered in 2018. Again, the Baltimore Afro American is speaking truth to power. We have coverage and identification of the mob by The Afro. And so because again, there is a lack of trust obviously of the state as well as those involved with these cases. The Afro says we're just going to put it out there, and that's exactly what they do. And so The Afro is among the first to name the names of individuals who were a part of the mob.

We also will hear about the case of Edna Broten, a seven-year-old victim as well, but it's also important to understand the personal risks that were associated with speaking out regarding these cases. And what I notice consistently, the similarities I noticed between the Matthew Williams case in this case was that there were black witnesses, eyewitnesses who actually spoke out. And so one of the things that I seek to do in my research, but I think it's important for us to understand is we have to dispel this myth of black silence, that blacks were scared and fearful. I mean, as we move into this phase where we see assaults on truth telling within this country.

If we are to erase history and these stories, then the stories of the heroes, right? Those who stood on the right side of history, both black and white are also a erased, right? And with that, it's important for us to recognize and honor the black witnesses who named names, and dispelled the myth of black silence. So following the lynching of George Armwood, a grand jury hearing hear

testimony from dozens of witnesses, among them were as many as 12 black men, who were incarcerated alongside George Armwood.

Despite threats of further violence from the lynchers and their allies, Mullen Jones excuse me and others recounted their experiences with immersed resolve. And here, you'll see one of the documents again, the part of those documents discovered in the state archives, unprocessed collection here for Mulligan Jones, right?

And so in terms of the sources, as I prepare to go through the main portion of the presentation, the sources are combined critical testimony with corroborating evidence as I mentioned from officers, right? Jailers, journalists and other witnesses. We can identify those responsible for the lynching of George Armwood.

So who lynched George Armwood? Gordon Butler, this is a photograph within those records that I discovered in 2018. The Office of the Attorney General had photographs of most of the individuals who were involved in this lynching. And this is one Gordon Butler, who was the brother of the alleged victim. And here we have individuals who place him at the scene, right at the jail. So when Dr. Hall and others are in the film discussing how they were all there, and Judge Duer knew them by name, this individual is one of those individuals.

And so, the mass of the mobs is being removed, right? And so one of the things as well it's important for us to understand, is that we have to dispel this lie that lynchings took place at the hands of persons unknown. That lie has to die, and we have to begin to recognize and grapple with the truth of what black people have always known in communities such as this. That there were no faceless ghosts who came in to lynch our loved ones. They were real people we worked with every single day, who we worked for every single day. And so, it's really important for us to do that. And so here we have Gordon Butler.

Rusty Heath was also an individual, and again these are all primary source original documents from the office of the Attorney General, records that were hidden in the state archives for 90 years. Rusty Heath is an individual, and I'm going to go back to Gordon Butler for a second, because if you see at the top was very significant in what makes this case in many ways unique, is that this is not a statement from a black person. This is not a statement from a someone else, it's a statement from an agent of the law.

This is a statement from Sergeant William Weber, these are all law enforcement officers who are making these statements regarding who they saw in the mob, right? So Rusty Heath, another individual who pulled the rope, right? You see that statement here. William McKay, again The Afro mentions this individual early on, but again, if you look at the statement here, you will see he was recognized by who? Another sergeant, right? And will probably be recognized by other sergeants who are there. You have this individual name Mays, right? In the film again that Will Schwartz put together, and again, honorable Dr. Hall discussed, that scene.

And here we see the individual that Duer is talking to, and he's identified as one of the ring leaders and his name is Mays. And so if you can think about all of those invisible faces within the film, we're putting names with those faces here today. William P. Hearn another individual right pulled the rope, directly involved in the lynching, okay. Jack Walloper, another individual directly involved in the lynching. And we have a physician or a pharmacist who's also involved directly in the lynching. And his specific case is very unique, in that he almost ended up testifying before congress, and I'll get to that in one second.

What makes the case of George Armwood and what happened on Maryland's Eastern Shore specifically in Somerset County so significant to the national movement for anti-lynching legislation? But here we have, what Cheryl Iffil talks about in her work, and the law and all its majesty. How again, this case, I would argue is un-refutably state sanctioned. In which you have literal members of the coroner's jury who are part of the mob, that individual, one individual, and you'll see the coroner's jury the photograph again from the office of the Attorney General's records. Dr. William H. Thompson and Ralph Powell, both individuals who were at the jail and pulled the rope to Lynch George Armwood.

Big Boy Smith, another similarity that I saw in between the cases of Matthew Williams and George Armwood, is that you had local prize fighters that were involved, and Big Boy Smith was one of those individuals, who actually assaulted officers and was directly there participating in the lynching and he was amongst the crowd. And we have a photograph from the Maryland athletic association commission that was pulled by the governor, the office of the Attorney General at the time. Irvin Atkins was also an individual, who had hold of the rope at the first hanging. We noticed in the film, the film discusses the depravity and the ends that people go to, in their hatred and rage. And so here we see him, Atkins, as well as Jetsen, who are participating in the first hanging of

George Armwood. Shelburne Lester, directly in front of the jail, these are all again from the statements of officers.

Ralph Powell, who I mentioned earlier, was also a member of the coroner's jury. Martin Duer, he was at the hanging holding the rope, and identified again by an officer as pulling the rope. This one is by far one of the most in many ways, again, pointing back to this state sanctioned piece of this. You have actual employees of the state road commission who are also participating in the lynching of George Armwood.

And so literally you have correspondence, I mean, excuse me, in the statement of one of the officers and others, again you have and you'll see here what I wanted to highlight, I didn't get a chance to highlight, you have one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight officers who cooperate with seeing. And it's based on what I've seen in these materials, you have between eight and ten officers that are almost always corroborating the identity of individuals who are participating in this mob.

Here you have an individual who has witnessed, who is informing the members of the mob that if they need to get into the jail, he actually has Dynamite on his truck if it comes to that, right? And then you see here from the office of the Attorney General, because the individual was unknown, they actually pulled all of the trucks and names of individuals that were stationed to the specific region for the road state commission.

And those individuals are, as you'll see on the screen, I cannot see without my glasses, but you'll see their names on the screen there for the record. Again, the Judiciary as well, the Somerset Judiciary. But so as we know, from the film, as well as from what's published in The Afro and other sources. Judge Robert Duer of Somerset County was present when the lynching mob was formed, and his family members directly participated in the lynching. Judge Duer guaranteed to the lynchers that no black men would be appointed to the grand jury, tasked with investigating the lynching of Armwood.

He also allowed at least two perpetrators to be appointed to the coroner's jury. The law and all its majesty. Again, state and institutions equally responsible for the lynching George Armwood, you hear the state's Attorney, John Robbins of Somerset County, who we see in the film is rebelling against the orders of the governor when it comes to arresting these individuals. And here, you see his writings and response, I mean, his appeal to the attorney general, Preston Lane. Despite

pressure from Maryland's attorney general Preston Lane and Governor Albert Ritchie, John B. Robbins state's attorney for Somerset County refused to arrest the perpetrators of the Armwood lynching. Instead, he regurgitated lyncher logic, warning that arresting the lynchers might incite another mob. He further defended the Lynch mob's temper, which in his words were inflamed by passion.

Systems and institutions, again, equally responsible. Somerset County police and Maryland State Police, these are all the names of the law enforcement officers that were on the scene at the time of the lynching of George Armwood. And these again are from the original documents. I also want to make sure to be clear as well that in spite of the inability of these Law Enforcement Officers to stop this lynching, they did enter into hand-to-hand combat with individuals and tried to defend the mob.

But they also, which is really unique as I mentioned earlier, decided to name the names of individuals on this mob. And most of these officers I want to be clear as well, were state officers, corporals as well as other officers from local other regions in the state, who came to support, to make sure and to protect the prisoner which the governor ordered.

Lastly, as I mentioned before, we have to also make sure to reckon with and deal with the role that white ran newspapers and local newspapers such as the Baltimore Sun and unfortunately Christopher Field times in regurgitating anti-black racism. And stated that the black people were inherently criminal, hypersexual and implicitly and explicitly encouraged lynching's and attempted to silence black perspectives.

And this is the conclusion of my presentation. But I do want to transition at this time to, how am I on Stephanie? Could you go back, two minutes, I got you. And with that note, you'll see here this is from the local newspaper where the lynching logic is perpetuated. But I mentioned that earlier.

But as we transition I want to conclude by discussing the national significance of this case, which I think those in the community and also nationally, historians fail to recognize how significant what was happening on Maryland's Eastern Shore was to the national conversation around anti-lynching legislation, but also around anti-black systemic racism, and addressing the needs of black people nationally from a political level.

Specifically, during the Great Depression, president at the time Roosevelt was deeply aware of what was going on Maryland's Eastern Shore, having recently, prior to the lynching of, following the lynching of Armwood, he visited Washington College nearby and gave a speech. In all the while, his wife is meeting with Walter White, Eleanor Roosevelt is meeting with Walter White, hearing about these cases and among those cases is George Armwood and other cases that were taking place in California and throughout the country at the height of the great depression.

And as I conclude, I want to share one more clip that I discovered, it's actually newsreel footage that was barred from being shown in the state of Maryland by the film commission, but I want to show that footage. It is very short, I promised you. Two minutes, and then I'll transition to Mr. Jasper, there's no sound, of course. Here we go, did everybody see that? So this is actually newsreel footage from Paramount, and there's also a path which is out of France, but the newsreel.

They were also on the scene when the mob broke out, when the arrest was trying to be made for the individuals behind the lynching. And those materials I've yet to discover from path, but I was able to identify the materials located in the Paramount newsreel archives as well as the Library of Congress. And so play this clip briefly.

[Inaudible] Thurmond and Holmes confessed killers of Brookhart have been lynched. An angry mob swept on by the fury of self-appointed leaders have dragged them screaming from the San Jose jail. In the park, [Inaudible] a cold light of morning reveals the damaged prison where 500 out brought a handful of unarmed jailers. The shattered window of Thurman's cell target of bricks and stones. From his craft cell, Thurmond watched his approaching doom.

The morning also find the crowd still around, and perfectly willing to show how they got to Thurmond and Holmes using the same gas pipe battering ram. The Gallows spot a beautiful Park in the heart of the city. In press statements, Governor Ralph condemns the lynching, to the newsreels, he says.

Governor Ralph: The people of California are peaceable and law-abiding citizens. It's no wonder if they were so aroused at the kidnapping and the murdering of this young man that they momentarily forgot themselves and was determined to give notice to the world that kidnapping and the murders which follow it would not be tolerated in this state.

In Salisbury Maryland, 24 hours after Governor Ralph's statement, another determined mob clashed with soldiers. The state militia had arrested four suspects in a month-old lynching, after County authorities had refused to act. The Angry crowd tried to prevent the arrests and turned their fury on reporters and cameramen, who took to the air. The Maryland arrests bring into focus the question, mob law or the law of the land.

Dr. Charles Chavis: All right. And with that, I'd like to bring forward Mr. Isaac Jasper, actually one of my students who I'm honored to present, to re-discover a case that he found in the records and the collection of Dr. Kirkland Hall in his newspaper clipping files when my students came earlier this year, to help investigate the case.

And he'll be sharing the story of if confirmed by this commission, as to be included, will be the youngest victim, and also, the only female victim of racial terror lynching that we've identified, seven-year-old Edna Broten. And so with that, I bring to the podium Mr. Isaac Jasper. This is why stem is so important, it is very important. Student comes to rescue again, okay, not yet. Images, all right, we're good, Isaac Jasper.

Mr. Isaac Jasper: Thank you all so much for being here today. I just want to acknowledge again Dr. Chavis, Dr. Kirkland Hall, Alexander Jones and Kai Robertore for all the support in working with this project this semester.

So as word spread of the possible lynching of George Armwood, white male and female ruffians rushed to Princess Anne to take part in the spectacle, leaving seven-year-old Edna Broten in their wake. Young Edna was the daughter of Leon and Mindy Broten in handy, a Fairmont Road and nearby Jamestown Maryland.

On October 18, 1933, Edna was taking her usual route with her classmates on the bus headed home from her day at the nearby Westover School. As she stepped off her bus at Roark Lane, she was mowed down by Mrs. Margaret Nelson, a white female driver who along with two white men, one of which believed to be her husband, Fred Nelson, were rushing to participate in the search and

eventual lynching of Armwood. Afro-American investigative journalist Levi Jolly interviewed the bus driver who witnessed the killing.

According to Annie Stevenson, operator of the Westover Public School Bus, the girl was in a group of children which had left the Westover School, and were riding to the respective homes in the vehicle. The girl departed from the bus in front of her home, and started across a 20-foot Road. As she was passing the middle of the road, and only a few feet away from her gate, a machine operated by Miss Fred Nelson white of Crisfield who was operating on the wrong side of the road struck and ran over the girl.

According to Stevenson, Nelson, the driver, after recognizing that Edna was an African-American girl, returned to her vehicle, gave instructions to the nearest hospital and left her name and address and sped away. Stevenson was one of two adult eyewitnesses on the bus with children. In addition, her classmates and friends who watched the terrifying tragedy. Even with the information given by Margaret Nelson, and her accomplices, Princess Anne officials refused an investigation. Furthermore, the acting medical coroner Edgar A. Jones refused to make a public statement.

These lynching's convert instant status into the white citizens in towns like Princess Anne, statuses of protection and privilege which enabled these racially motivated murders of the truly ordinary people like that of Edna Broten. To hold this status as a white Community member, meant the ability to be the judge and jury upon the black community. Today, we see these effects of those decisions and they resonate as those historically in this town sit on opposite ends of power, prestige and capital. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you commissioner vice chair Chavis, and Mr. Jasper. What I'd like to do right now is to take a brief break, just to give us an opportunity to process all that we just heard. It is currently 11:28 a.m. I would like to take a five minute break, please do your best to come back at 11:33 a.m. Well, we'll see 11:34 a.m. since it's now 11:29 a.m. Please, come back at 11:34 a.m, thank you.

Thank you all coming back. Again, being mindful of all that we have heard and will continue to hear, before we proceed with hearing from the descendants of George Armwood, we'd like to bring back up Living and Growing to give us a brief debriefing exercise. Thank you.

Living and Growing: Hello everyone. This has been a lot, it's been a lot for us. So we're sitting down, and we're going to try to take all of this information and the energy that it presented to us, and sort of move it out of our body. It would be very similar to the first exercise, but this time we're going to try to like focus on where it is and just move it out. So I'll show you.

So sit very, you can look at the ground, close your eyes it doesn't matter and sit up, and then just take one deep breath first, I'm going to explain it first. One deep breath first, and you're going to let it out, and take your hand and literally, put it about six to nine inches from your body, and you're sitting, so you're going to take it from your here and you're going to move it down out of you. And then that sort of will help to give more room, to give you more room, because we'll be taking in more. So we want to have space for that too.

Okay, so we'll do it like we did. You're going to look down or close your eyes, take your hands to the top of your head, take a deep breath, and then move your hands down and breathe out, just move it out, out of your body and then slowly bring your hands back. Refocus, and pull the energy, that negative energy, the sadness, the hearts, things that are in, all the tension, the knots and move it out of your body, breathe out.

Take one last really large breath, fill your body with oxygen, and then let it out. Release it, breathe and pull that negative energy out of your body, blow it away, just blow it away. Now sit there for a second and be with yourself, be with yourself. When you're ready, you can open your eyes and we can restart. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you so much. Our continued gratitude to Living and Growing. Again, a constant reminder that this may be history, but it still hurts and we have to navigate that. So at this time, we are honored to bring forth descendants of George Armwood who have joined us today. We are sorry that Mr. Cedric Armwood is not here to tell his story, but we are joined by Miss Marci Bryant, as well as Miss Tina Johnson, and they will come forth at this time to share their testimony. So, thank you.

Marci Bryant: It is truly a blessing from God to be here today. Oh you, wonderful people. I won't be before you long, but I do admit those who were responsible [Inaudible] certainly well worth it. This is something that needs to be ongoing and this is a story that needs to continue to be told. I was born here in Somerset County, I was born in 1950, and I was born as Marion Cotton. I am a descendant of George Armwood, because of my grandmother Esther Armwood.

Mary and Floyd Armwood were his aunt and uncle that was Grammy's parents. I called her Grammy. And Grammy used to sit us as her grandchildren at her feet to tell us the stories, and they were horror stories for us as children. We didn't know how to filter them, but Grammy made sure that we listened to every word. She did not like Princess Anne when we were growing up, and she didn't understand why many of the black African-American Negro folks wouldn't just get out of there. She said I can never forget what happened here with my cousin George.

She said not only did they lynch and they destroyed him, they destroyed a whole family, and she wanted to keep that from happening to us. Of course, the mother and who could be happy about that, no one could, but the mother, Etta, was never the same again. There were others in the family also that were never the same again, and Grammy tried to prepare her grandchildren for this cruel world. She told me, as the oldest of her seven grandchildren, she says I want you to leave this place as soon as you're able, if you're ever going to make something out of yourself and your life, you're going to leave Princess Anne.

I'm not saying don't ever come back, but what I'm saying is you've got to go from here. Because no human being, that's how she felt, she lived the way that we as, we call Negroes at the time, should live like we had to live. We had to walk literally five miles to school. Literally, we had to walk through the town of Princess Anne, but we could not stop at the water fountain, we could not go into certain stores or buildings, period. We had to go straight through town. There were certain areas in the community that we were not allowed to go at all. And we were told that if we did go there, we might never get home.

Another thing that they stressed for us, is that if they sent us to one of the white homes for a reason, we could never go to the front door, we had to go and knock on the back door and wait for them to come, so we can tell them why we were there. None of those things, as I said we as children, we didn't talk back, they didn't make a whole lot of sense to us. But this was our grandmother, sitting

us down, Esther Armwood, telling us what she wanted us to do with our lives so that we could have a better life and get away from this.

And she used to also tell me that it must not have been in her heart to hate, because there was a lot of people that she could hate. Her vivid description of what happened to her cousin, George Armwood, will always be up here in my mind. The things that she said, she used very common words, and she also said that she would never forget it, and she didn't believe that she would ever find in her heart without God to ever forgive.

And I never realized how much those conversations actually pushed me to leave this area when I was 18 years old, to go out into the world and find my own way. I love to write, so I'm a writer from the heart. So I got a pen name when I was just 17 years old, and my pen name was Marci, even though I was born Marion, the name Marci it stuck. And I would write for the college newspaper, and I would also write inspirational articles and books, because I wanted people to grow and to be the best that they could be, find out who they were, where they came from and then go out and be the best that they could be.

And I also like to write for the moral and social consciousness of people, but I do that through plays. It wasn't fully understood until I got here today how much I was influenced by what my grandmother told me about my ancestors, and I thank God for that. And I am here today on the shoulders, the backs of those who suffered so much so long, and I'm sure that suffering has touched the lives of all of us in this room in some way, shape or form.

As I was listening to the recount of what I, as I said, I heard as a child, but I heard it in a more raw context, it brought back such pain and such memories of how my grandmother and how the Aunt Etta, great aunt Etta, how they suffered and felt helpless and felt hopeless.

So because they felt helpless and hopeless, they were trying to plant in those of us who came after, a way where we wouldn't feel that they wanted us to go out and they wanted us to be better and to do better, and they wanted us to have hope and they wanted us to see the world through different eyes. Because the eyes wherein they saw the world was one of a lot of pain and sorrow.

I see, and I feel that pain and I feel that sorrow, and I am so sorry that I had an ancestor, and as those of you who probably have had some ancestors that have gone through this. But I am so sorry that that has happened. But I would like to believe that every life is not in vain. That George

Armwood's life was not lived in vain. His story is still being told today, and it will continue to be told for years and years and years to come.

And it is my hope and it is my prayer that folks will get inspired, and it will help them raise up and do their part, whatever that part is, so that we can become a unified people and a unified nation. I thank God for the opportunity to stand before you today to give you these few words. I have been inspired even before I came here to write a play called black history on parade. It's been viewed several times college and school campuses.

I won the Martin Luther King Jr Award for that play, and that play is going to come back to Princess Anne and George Armwood is going to be added among the list of the people that will be presented when it comes back to the Eastern Shore. Thank you for your time.

Tina Johnson: Hello everyone, my name is Tina Johnson Harris, and I am the granddaughter of Mary Armwood Braxton, who was one of George Armwood's first cousins, who was actually there when they dragged him out the woods. I stand here with you all today, to tell my grandmother's story. I wish that she was here to witness this turning point in history, in our history, in the Armwood history.

I remember when I was about 10 or 11 years old, my family member was dating a young white lady in the state of Pennsylvania when they got into an argument in a public parking lot. The police was called, and they were told that there was a young black man, scary black men, assaulting a white lady and he was arrested.

And even though the lady told them that she was his girlfriend, and that they were just getting into an argument and that she was not harmed in any way, the state still took on the case, and he was arrested for four years. I remember that right after my cousin called, and he told my other cousin and I that story, and that he was going to be locked up for four years and he didn't know what he was going to do with his life.

My grandmother, my nana, or should I say Nene, because that's what we called her. She sat down on the living room sofa and looked at me and started telling me the story of her cousin, who was killed because they say he tried to have sex with the old white woman. Then, she just started going into

her story, in her words, because they play on repeat over and over again as if she told me this story yesterday. I remember he came home in the old house in Westover.

I was about your age then, he started screaming mama, mama, I didn't do it, mama. Mama, I didn't touch that woman, and she stopped him and she looked at him and she said you didn't do what? Ma, they said I tried to have sex with that old white woman. His mom told him to go over there and tell his white people. He didn't live too far away, they could actually see where he stayed right across the field. Later that night, she said they were sitting outside by the fire and they cars came up.

A group of white people, police officers and a small mob telling them that if they didn't give him up, that they would all die. So his mother told them that he's with his white people and pointed to the house across the field. She said only about 30 minutes or so after, they saw him and they were pulling him out of the woods. They were dragging him out by rope, tying him to the back of a car, where they then made him walk all the way to Princess Anne from Westover.

And she goes and we live pretty deep in Westover, it wasn't like it was right there. We were close to Pokeball. She said that that later on, they were told. She said she had no idea, or at least not to her knowledge, what was going on with George. She said later on, they came to the house and then they knocked on the door, she said a black man knocked on the door and told them that he was dead. They had no idea that all of this was going on.

It was later on that they had found that they had beat him, stabbed him, hung him on the old tree in town, then they pulled his body around town for everyone to see his burnt flesh, and then they just threw him in front of the lumber yard. They just threw him there, like he meant nothing, as if he was nobody. At that point, one single lonely tear dropped and fell from my grandmother's left eye. It rolled down her left cheek, and she wiped it away softly and said these black men will never learn, will they? However, at the time, my childish self didn't understand. I didn't understand, I really didn't. I didn't understand her pain, and I didn't understand the wisdom behind the words that she had told me.

And all I did was look at her and say nana, I'm really glad that we're not slaves anymore. Not even realizing that at that time, he technically was not a Slave. That slavery had been over. However, when I was in school, that I learned that this is what happened during slavery, not doing freedom.

She then just said to me yes, maybe you're right. And I truly didn't realize that at that time I kind of just brushed off her pain, but later on, I realized that she was hurting.

It wasn't until I was in college, and I was taking a Maryland history class at Salisbury University, where I was only one of two black students in that class, that my grandmother's words really hit me. When I looked down at my textbook, and I saw just one line, one little sentence that stated, George Armwood murder was the last reported lynching in the state of Maryland on October 18, 1933 in Princess Anne, Maryland and that was it. The only thing that it said was that. And I remember raising my hand slowly, as the teacher then calls on me, hesitantly, and says yes? And I looked at him in the entire class and I stood up and I said that's my cousin, and everyone got silent.

I looked around and everyone's heads were down and my teacher's mouth was open, and he looked at me and said that's your story, that's your paper. And at that moment, that is when I started really digging into my past and my history and wanting to learn more about my family. And I just kept thinking to myself that this was so long ago, however it really wasn't, it was only in the 90s, the early 90s. However, that is only 89 years and 18 days ago from this date of November the 5th 2022. 89 years, that's all. We have people right now that we are visiting who are 89, we have people that we know who are 90, who are a hundred and that is not a long time ago.

So I stand here with you all today in the spirit of my grandmother, Mary Armwood Braxton, and all the other Armwood's to remember George. Not hanging on the tree, not burning on the limbs and not being thrown in the lumber yard. Not being beaten, and pulled out of his sail and downstairs to his timely death, but remembered as a person.

After researching this tragic murder of my family member, someone who was still young and in his prime. Someone who I may have been able to meet and get to know, but was robbed of that. Now, all I have are stories of who he used to be. A good man who would do anything for anyone. A great and hard worker, and a pretty good singer. I was told that his eyes on the sparrow was his favorite song, and that he would sing it and hum it all the time. I was told that people used to wait by the fence as he would walk by whistling that song usually with the small bag in his hand on his way to work. I also remember that being one of my Nana's favorite songs as well.

Now, I can only wonder if that's why. Is that the reason that song is the song she would hum on Saturday morning? Or is that the song that she would sing while she cooked breakfast on Sunday? Is

that why every now and then I would catch her in her feelings, in the spirit, and that song playing in the background and that one lonely tear dropping from her left eye? I remember when she herself was in the nursing home ready to cross over to the other side.

That we all stood around her bed holding her hand and we kissed her on her cheek. That we watched her single lonely tear fall from her left eye, rolling down her left cheek. Was that George? Was that George bringing her home and taking her to her final resting place? Thank you.

Commissioner David Armenti: Good afternoon. I'm Commissioner David Armenti. One of the additional pieces of evidence that was brought to our attention as a commission, and further supporting our documentation is a portion of a documentary film that I'm going to play here, about a three or so minute clip from a public television production that includes oral history and additional first-person accounts of the event. So if you'll bear with me here, we're going to show this brief clip as that additional context to this.

That October on Maryland's Eastern Shore, police arrested George Armwood, a retarded 22 year old black man, for allegedly assaulting an 82-year-old white woman.

The townspeople had broadcast they were going to lynch George Armwood prior to him even being charged with an offense. He had simply been arrested at that point.

Sensing trouble, the Baltimore Afro-American sent Cub reporter Clarence Mitchell to Princess Anne on his first out of town assignment.

Clarence Mitchell: That drive to Princess Anne by my father he said was with a lot of mixed emotions, because they have been threats made against any Afro-reporters coming in to record this. And generally, all reporters.

Sidney Hayman: When I went out on the Porsche, I saw these five big men around a telephone pole and they were trying to pull it out. And what they were trying to do was to get their telephone pole used as a battering ram to break the jail door in.

Sam Doane: They broke into the jail. I think from what I've heard, that when they threw him down to those steps, which was about 20 steps and those steel steps, that he's dead before they ever took him out of the jail.

Sidney Hayman: I could see this mob coming towards us, and perhaps, there were about three or four hundred people in the mob, and they were yelling and screaming and oh, it was just horrible.

Sam Doane: They hung George up the tree, and then they took him down, put him behind the car and started back towards town.

Sidney Hayman: They were dragging the poor devil by a rope, had tied around his neck. Of course, he was dead, and with that time, the dirt and everything he was sort of blacken, and this reveled on just all over. And they took him, and about two blocks of where we were sitting and dumped him in a lumber yard.

Sam Doane: It was a terrible sight to see, badly burnt body. And his ears was missing, his penis was missing, and it just made you feel like you wanted to embalm him.

My father said that they allowed him to interview people, because they wanted blacks, they figured an Afro reporter would really let blacks know what would happen to blacks if they got out of line. And he began to talk with whites, and he saw a young white mother bringing her child who was no more than seven, eight years old to walk by and look at this charred body, and said look how we barbecued that nigger.

No one ever stood trial for the murder of George Armwood. When Clarence Mitchell returned to Baltimore, he spoke out at local church and youth groups and condemned Princess Anne officials for failing to prevent the lynching.

Beulah Pinkney: Clarence told us, in detail, exactly what happened. It was horrible. You felt a deep anger. It was a frustrating anger.

Baltimore's black community marched in protest, lynching's.

Commissioner David Armenti: Good afternoon, again. I'm going to try to keep my comments brief. I appreciate the time that all of you have dedicated to sharing this unique experience with us.

As the chair of the research committee, and in my professional position as the vice president of education and engagement at the Maryland Center for History and Culture, formerly the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore, it's an honor to be here.

As a commission in community, we're commemorating those lives we've heard so much about today, and supporting efforts, continued efforts I should say to document those crimes against them. I want to thank the many researchers who have laid that essential groundwork, and allowed for this visibility and continued documentation to exist.

So since the establishment of the state Commission in 2019, we've been working with an array of partners. And I really must stress the necessary collaborative nature of this work, and the many folks that have made it possible. So forgive me if everybody is not mentioned. But the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, its local affiliates, George Mason University and its students, Heritage Associates as well is a local historical research and genealogy firm, who has been supporting our efforts since late 2021. I also want to acknowledge those researchers and credit those who've been doing the work for years ahead of us including Cheryl Ifill, Lynda Dyer, Dr. Charles Chavis, Will Schwartz, Dr. Nicholas Creary, C. Christopher Brown and many others.

We as a commission are attempting to build on that earlier work of the Maryland State Archives, the Edward H NAB Center at Salisbury University, in building our repository and collection of primary source evidence that will allow for these more fuller narratives to see the light of day, and really have a continued impact on the communities where these crimes existed and beyond.

We seek to continued corroboration of those existing and future cases, not just on the newspaper accounts, which we've heard so much about, but also on those government records, family papers, oral history interviews and personal accounts that really shed incredible light on the events and their continued impact.

Online genealogical collections and platforms have also been invaluable in this work, providing leads about possible living descendants. Some of those individuals I really want to thank again for being here and sharing their story. Some knew about the story, some did not know about their personal connections. And it's our work as a commission as well to continue to contact and reach both direct and collateral descendants of the victims and their families, to let them know and hopefully, get further insight and branch out in terms of that story. We'll continue to review accounts from the black press.

We've heard a lot about the contribution of the Baltimore Afro-American newspaper, but there have also been many national publications of significance that have been invaluable in expanding our narrative and interpretation. So aside from the local black press, cases in Somerset County were covered at least by the Richmond Planet, the people's friend, the Kansas City black man and the Pittsburgh Courier, among, I'm sure others that we will continue to discover and publicize through the course of our work.

The chronicling America database from the Library of Congress, in addition to some of those other resources from the Library of Congress we've heard has been another crucial digital access point that allows us to show these stories in a really visual and dynamic light.

I should note that the Afro-American newspaper or Ledger as it was sometimes called in its early years, different iterations, was either unavailable or at least not digitally accessible for 1894 and 1897. And therefore, there were some limited ability to share the local black presses perspective on the cases of Isaac Kemp and William Andrews.

As Dr. Chavis did earlier, I also want to commend the bravery of individuals like Clarence Mitchell Jr. Also, Paul Henderson was a photographer for the Afro-American newspaper who accompanied Clarence Mitchell Jr on not only the immediate aftermath of the George Armwood case, but also earlier cases including Matthew Williams on the lower Eastern Shore. But certainly, I want to acknowledge their contribution and that bravery.

I think that the commentary in the press around these events also really highlighted some of the regional tensions within the state. In addition to some of the accounts that were uncovered and shared here, national publications as well as local including the communist party's daily worker addressed the events of George Armwood.

Also, some of the, at least some of the individual commentators associated with the white press including nationally known commentator H. L. Menken really went into the fray in these conversations. So we note and honor the contribution of the black press, as well as what we can learn and discern from the predominantly white press, and how they interacted with and commented on these events.

As a commission, we'll continue to work with state county and local district agencies to locate relevant record collections, including those but not limited to, correspondence of Maryland Governors, attorney generals, death certificates and coroner's records.

I also wanted to note that the research has very recently in fact expanded beyond our local repositories, due to the victims origins in other states, and potentially, other countries that you heard about earlier. As several victims were apparently migrant workers without significant ancestry or family connections in this region, it became necessary to do so and we will continue to follow those threads, whether into Indian country and territory in Oklahoma or as far as the Bahamas as we heard about earlier.

Further corroboration of those unique ancestries will continue to be explored and added to the historical record. So as we move forward with our work again as I emphasize the collaborative nature, I want to emphasize that we need your support. We want to continue to work with local activists, local scholars as well as the students.

We've heard from Dr. Chavis's students, as well as the behind the scenes work that they've done in terms of supporting our research, putting together narratives. I want to definitely tip my hat to

them and have that as an example of a way that continued engagement of young people, as well as others in the community, can help us move forward and do the best job that we can do as a commission. We can't do this without you all.

So with that said, we can be contacted at MLTRC@Maryland.gov for those that want to continue supporting research efforts and allowing us to do the work that we do, until our Sunset date in 2024.

But with that, I want to thank you all again, and we hope to see you again at Future hearings and to support this work. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Thank you, commissioner Armenti. And before we proceed, I also want to say immense gratitude to the descendants so George Armwood. I don't want to take lightly the fact that we have to talk about your ancestor in this light, I'm glad that we can do the best we can to elevate his life, and not just focus on his death.

I appreciate the fact that you have shared with us, again, just how much this continues to hurt, and we felt that, that was the reason my head was down, this hurts us too. So we thank you for your bravery, we thank you for your courage, that helps us to get to peace and healing, above all those for you, for you both, for your families. So thank you for taking this step with us.

At this time, we would like to bring forth some of our expert witnesses. We will start with Miss Carrie Samis of Main Street Princess Anne to present testimony. I will say to my fellow Commissioners just being mindful of time, please limit your questions. We'd like to get as much in as possible, but please be mindful of our time. Thank you, Miss Samis.

Miss Carrie Samis: Okay. Thank you for having us here today, and thank you all for being here today. And to our audience members as well. I'd like to make a few remarks about kind of the legacy of our past, and how we are moving forward into the future. So I have some images here depicting, some of which you've seen earlier today. But our history here is complicated, these stories are part of the fabric of our community.

They are literally in the soil of our community. You see on the front of the stage, there some soil samples that have been collected from some of the sites where the lynching's occurred in Somerset County. These stories are in the collective memory of our family and friends, their stories in our minds and in our hearts. When I moved here five years ago, I was told by many white leaders in the community just don't talk about the lynchings, that was the instruction that I received.

They said it's in the past, we don't need to talk about that anymore. But my black colleagues and friends thought differently. I live here, I work in this community. I work with many different kinds of people here, and I strongly believe that we do need to acknowledge our complicated past and work intentionally to move forward as a community for the benefit of the whole community. We live in a community with such beautiful historical buildings, and those are an asset to this place. But those places and structures also serve as tangible reminders of this complicated past, good and bad. I walk past these places every day.

I walk down the streets where the bodies of the victims were dragged by white mobs. I walked past the jail and the police department where people who were there to protect us, were overpowered and the door was breached by a battering ram. I walk past the lumber yard where George Armwood's body was dumped and it still looks exactly the same.

We are a community of approximately 70 percent African Americans, but until recently, very recently, the majority of our community leaders, elected officials, organizations, heads of different non-profits and businesses were majority white men. The old boy network is still a thing here. We still suffer from deeply embedded stereotypes prejudices and biases, and institutional racism. We are one of the most under-resourced economically stressed communities in the state. But Princess Anne is our economic center, it is our county seat, it is the heart of our community.

But this complicated past absolutely impacts economic development and the overall health of our community. Just to quickly refer to a couple of the photos up there. The two top right photos are pictures of not the mob at the lynching of George Armwood, but the mob that assembled outside of the courthouse when all of those who had been accused were quickly acquitted. They were celebrating in the streets, just outside of the Washington Inn, outside of the courthouse, and disassembling pieces of the courtroom as souvenirs.

On the bottom right, you see a page from one of our local newspapers, where Klan activities were regularly promoted. One of the most disturbing ones, my editor friend, Richard Crumbocker provided to me, you can see on the right, you could order a blow up toy of a Klansman, what the hell? Like this is crazy. And the bottom left is a postcard from our town, a postcard that reads searching for the Negro, Princess Anne. So this is the legacy of our community.

Historically, our main street district was very segregated. Most of the buildings downtown as you've heard before had prohibited entry for black people. African-Americans had to be served separately, couldn't come in. There were some of the stores and restaurants downtown where African Americans could order food, but they were not allowed to eat, and those places still exist today.

Dr. Heich from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore actually opened his own restaurant on what is now called Heich Boulevard, to ensure that staff and students from UMES had a restaurant in town where they could eat. We have local black and brown people who because of the past are still hesitant to come downtown, and assume it's still like it used to be. And we have white people who recognizing the undeniable demographics of our changing community, don't want our downtown to become too brown. And I have heard people say that in public meetings.

But we've made progress, we really have, and those are the stories that we also need to tell. My job is to promote the economic and community development here. To build, to foster growth, to improve the quality of life for the whole community. I'm essentially the hype girl for Princess Anne, that's what I do. And it's a tough job, but I truly believe we have tremendous potential and I'm passionate about this place and the people who live here.

If you take a look at some of the images on the slide, you can see the demographics of our downtown, our Main Street District have changed enormously. So in what was previously a segregated district, now almost all of our businesses are owned by women, people of color and immigrants, and that is a powerful story to tell. We have a black owned B&B, we have black owned restaurants that serve fantastic crab cakes I understand some of you had last night.

We support black businesses, and that's amazing. Right now, we have the most diverse Main Street District in the state of Maryland. So it is unusual, even within the historically designated Main Street communities across the state.

Our community is resilient. Now, as I mentioned, not just businesses are changing, but so is community leadership. Our town commission is now majority black, our town staff is now a majority black. The president and vice president of our Chamber of Commerce are both African Americans. Our community members are reclaiming spaces, and that is a powerful story to tell. Some of the images from up here are from our second annual Juneteenth event.

Some of the folks in this room helped to organize that event, but a couple of things that I just wanted to point out in the center, Dr. Lane, who was unable to be with us today. Dr. Lane has led for a number of years now, UMES student's downtown to learn about the lynchings in the community. And each year, there's a walk of remembrance honoring George Armwood.

The girls on the left at the bottom, that's from our Juneteenth celebration. And this I think is an amazing image, because those girls are dancing with their black girl magic t-shirt song, right in front of the Princess Anne fire department, where only a generation ago, their grandparents were hosed down by the local fire department during Civil Rights protests. And there are people still in our community who brag about the fact that they were the ones who held the hoses. But now, we literally have people, like I said, reclaiming those spaces.

We have an excellent HBCU under strong leadership thanks to Dr. Heidi Anderson. We have Hawks Corner downtown and Walter Woods, an individual who is helping to bridge the connection between the university and the town. We have an MOU between the Town, Main Street and UMES to foster entrepreneurship. So what else do we need? We need more people working together, we need reconciliation, and yes, some form of reparation, and we need to figure out what that looks like for our community.

We need funding and capacity building to support entrepreneurship and Business Development. We need to continue to strengthen our relations with UMES and with everyone who lives in our town. We need funding to support marketing and promotions, to celebrate the diversity of our town which is our strength, it is absolutely our strength. We need to support these locally owned businesses that are owned by women and people of color.

We need to share these stories with inclusive historical storytelling that yes, acknowledges the past, and celebrates those stories of resilience in our community. And we need to increase our capacity to tell those stories with compassion. I'm encouraged to see leaders from three downtown churches

in the audience, and the president of our historical society. And the real estate agent who has the challenge of selling the Washington Inn right now, which also has a very troubled past.

As a community, we have the chance to flip the script on some of these properties, some of these places, some of these communities. And be truly, intentionally, respectfully moving forward together with open minds and hearts and love. Thank you.'

Dr. David Fakunle: So at this time, I would first thank you Miss Samis for your testimony. And at this time, I'd like to call up a fellow commissioner, Dr. Kirkland Hall, for his testimony. Thank you.

Dr. Kirkland Hall: Good afternoon. And for the sake of time, and as we mentioned before, I will keep my remarks very brief. I first like to thank the commission for undertaking this task, but not only that I commend those individuals from the community, who came forth to present their various testimonies. From a personal perspective, I started this research in 2002, for our organizational leadership class. And as I was preparing for a topic, I thought about the George Armwood case, because I heard about it in 1986, when I became administrator here at UMES.

One of the first things I asked Sister Carrie when she joined the committee, I asked her how does she feel about accepting the task and whether or not she still have a job tomorrow? But she courageously accepted the task of working with our committee and of course, you can see has done a tremendous job. And then I look at Cousin Martin, Cousin Tina and who stepped forward after a number of phone calls, to engage other family members in joining this endeavor.

Then I look out, I see my former teacher, Mrs. Margaret Gale, who was excited to participate in this event. But I want to talk about very briefly social justice. After all the research and the smoke has cleared, what is it that we need? As president of the Somerset County Branch NAACP in my third tenure, a third time around, we looked at Social Justice, what does it mean? And what is it? And what have we gleaned from this experience that we've heard today.

And some of you may not know, but most history books label the county in which I was born and the county which I now live, the county in which I was educated, they label it as a town or county in which time has forgotten. I repeat, in which time has forgotten. And through this experience, this

exercise, we're getting first-hand knowledge of what happened and why we are still striving. Yes, we've made some progress, but there's a lot of work to do.

As I ventured around the county, talking to individuals, and what do we need for this community, and 90% of the respondents mentioned additional funding for our board of Education, and especially, for our young people who live in the community, because they have been forgotten. In my youth, Maryland State College at that time was a place for us to come in bunches, because the facilities were open to us. We didn't have a Boys and Girls Club, like every other community in our County.

We didn't have a swimming pool which so many other communities have. So as young people, we were left out. And as sister Marci expressed so eloquently, all young people will encouraged to leave once they got out of high school. I graduated in 1969, the year prior to immigration, and we were one of the last counties to integrate our schools in these United States of America. But I said I took a new different route, I stayed and went to school and taught in the county and at the University.

At this point in time, the poverty rate of the citizen of Somerset County is the highest in the state. Our young children all eat free lunch at school, and I tell them yes, I want them to eat, because I raised 14 children, but it bothers me that we are still, the Boys County, and our children have to go to school looking for a free lunch. And the question I asked, when are things going to change? When are we as a people going to change? I'm thankful that I met Mr. Crumbacker, Christopher, I'm trying to get into work in Princess Anne. But if you want news about what's going on, in our County, we have to go to him. We don't have a radio station, we don't have a newspaper, we don't have television. So we have no idea what our youth and the people of the community are doing. And put in a commercial, if you don't mind, chief, I put in the commercial.

My daughter just played on a Bayside Championship hockey team, but no one would know it, because we do not have the avenue to express it. When our children do well in school, we don't have the means of showing the public what our students and kids are doing. Yes, we made some changes, but we still have a lot of work to be done.

My task was talking about social justice, I got a little carried away, please forgive me. But if we look at Social Justice, and Wikipedia describes it and everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities.

Social justice in terms of distribution of wealth, opportunities and privileges in the process of ensuring that individuals fulfill their societal rules, and receive their due process. My dream after the day, and as we continue to educate our public, educate people in the community that they will come forward in the political arena. Yes, we made strides in Crisfield and Princess Anne, but the county we have five commissioners only one person of color, who spoke today at Pastor Craig Mathias.

And they're saying to me all the time, that I'm only one, and they've already told me that democracy rules. So I can easily get over voted with any measure that I want to bring forward. In our court system, we didn't have a person of color that's a lawyer. But hold it, I know nine people from Somerset High School that I graduated from that are attorneys, but they had to leave home in order to make a living. Medical doctors, we have a place in Princess Anne called Chesapeake now.

You saw in the video [Inaudible] that was his vision, to bring a medical center to our community. Because people of color could not afford Medical Care. And yet, his name was supposed to be on the building, a picture of Mr. Dome inside the building, and it has been denied. We're working on that to get his due that he deserves.

We have work to do, remembering the years of working in the field of agriculture, like you don't know what that means. Picking strawberries, or picking beans before you went to school, making a few dollars to help support our families. Businesses, yes, we have small businesses. But if not for UMES, not for easy ECI, so many people would not have a place to work. So many people would not have jobs. And so many will not have places to call their own. Yes, work has to be done. The model for Somerset County is Simra Edom, meaning always the same. It's my prayers that we could improve the playing field, but the continuation of past practices unfortunately still exists.

But I'm going to leave you today with this that we will never give up, that we will never stop. And one day, our children, my grandkids will have an equal opportunity in this community. That they'll be able to buy a home, that they'll be able to get a good paying job. They'll be a leader in the county, as well as a time. That they'll be judges in the county. Until that happens, we have yet to reach the dream that we hear so much about, and today's educational historic activity, I'm hoping we'll open our eyes of so many individuals.

And then we're talking about fear, there's still permeates in the hearts and minds of people in this County, I need to tell you the truth. We as individuals speak at this event, I don't think I can, I got something to do. We all are busy, but it's something you believe in, if it want change, you'll sacrifice. George Armwood's who's sacrifice, it endorsing life. But yet, as Sister Tina said, sister Marci, his life would not be in vain, his death will not be in vain. And I'm thankful again to be a part of this commission, I thank you for your time, and again, we still have much work to do. Thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: Our gratitude to Commissioner Hall for the sermon. But unless, hey, I get it, a necessary one. So being mindful of time and this is certainly with our sincerest apologies, we will have to table the public comments. But we do want to make it known that and I will call out your names to the honor the fact that you wanted to speak. Miss Tina Harris and Mr. Edward Shea, we still want your testimony. We still want what you want to share with us so that it can be entered into the records. Please, follow up with us after the conclusion of this hearing session so that we can figure out the best way to make sure that your stories are acknowledged and preserved.

So at this time, I want to, as we transition to our close, I first want to give gratitude to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, for being the home of this historic moment. Our fellow commissioner, Marshall Stevenson, as well as the esteemed president of this fine institution, for giving us a space to share this truth.

To our expert witnesses, those that were able to join us, even those that were not. And we also want their testimony as well to be entered into the record, we will make sure that's known. We thank you for the insight and wisdom that was shared. To our researchers, my brother here Charles Chavis et al, for diving deep into all that goes into these atrocities against humanity, and we have to call it as such, atrocities against humanity. And most importantly, and with all due respect to everyone, to the descendants, what else is there to say? Thank you for allowing us to elevate these stories. It's not easy for us, and I will not insult you and even imagine how hard it is for you all. As I mentioned, this is healing for all of us, and we want to keep you centered in this healing process.

We want to keep what will be best to honor the legacies of the young men and child, I'll say that again, and child, whose lives were taken simply because of their existence. So I'm glad that Miss Samis referenced the jars here. This is our tangible way, one of many of remembering the lives that

were taken simply because of their existence. We will continue to honor those stories, we will continue to honor those lives. We will continue to connect the dots. We may be a historical commission, but we are very much about elevating and bringing to light and calling out the atrocities against humanity happening today.

Let me be clear and put this on the record, lynching has not ended, it has evolved. I will say that again, lynching has not ended, it has evolved. We too must evolve to eradicate this atrocity against humanity. So before we close, vice chairs, do you have any comments you want to share? Okay. I'm glad I know the significance of what we are about to do, and before we do that, I do want to give quick acknowledgment to Judge George Ames, thank you sir, thank you for being here. Judge of the orphans Court of Dorchester County, thank you so much sir for being here. I heard there were some people that chose between this and the Harriet Tubman Museum, yes, I heard that, I heard the stories. Thank you for being here, thank you for choosing this.

We are glad that you're a part of this history. The museum will still be there, I promise you, it isn't going away, but I'm glad you're here now, yes sir. Thank you for being here, thank you. Okay, absolutely. Thank you sir, thank you. This is your home, all day. Well, you know what, it is always important to acknowledge the masters, and acknowledge the people that bring us to this space. And just like I know you have learned so much from Dr. Hall and I continue to learn from commissioner Chavis and everyone on this commission, I'm grateful. I am truly grateful for the wisdom that is in this space. Thank you to the Maryland State Police for being here, for keeping us safe, for protecting us. May all of law enforcement do that for us when we need it, so thank you. I appreciate you.

We started with a song, we going to end with a song. So at this time, Preston Gross the second, are you here, are you in our space? Yes, I heard he was here too. Preston you here with us, are you coming? Oh okay, all right. So we heard that there was a song that's very near and dear to the heart of one of the people that were honoring today. So I cannot think of a better way to officially close this hearing session than with this song. So Preston, thank you so much. Take us home.

Preston: [Singing] thank you.

Dr. David Fakunle: And with that, I move that we accept the testimony that we heard from our historians, our researchers, our expert witnesses and our descendants from the people on this day. Is there a second? Thank you. So moved. Thank you all, you're part of history. Go forth, fight for love, fight for peace, fight for justice, fight for liberation. It's hard work, but it's possible. Why else would we do it? Peace.

A couple quick announcements, yes. Thank you. Any voting information that you would like is outside. Those who wanted to give public comment, please come to the front. I think we got food. I think we got some lunch boxes outside. Okay, any members of the media that want any materials, please come to the front as well, thank you.