



INTERNATIONAL  
STORYTELLING CENTER

## Separate but Equal? Race-based Bias in Education Transcript

*(Please note: This transcript was created from live closed captions and as such may have errors in spelling, grammar, and mechanics.)*

>> Good afternoon and welcome to today's public discussion for freedom stories. I am joining you today on the one-year anniversary of the police killing of Bree Anna Taylor in Louisville Kentucky. It is hard to believe it has been a year but it has been. I am Dr. Alicestyne Turley the director of the freedom stories project. Today's topic is separate but equal, race -based bias in education. It is another timely freedom stories discussing highlighting American history in illuminating issues that we continue to grapple with in today's society. The freedom stories is an international storytelling center, designed to bring forward underappreciated and ignored in a ductal -- and neglected areas in Appalachian history and demonstrate the interconnectedness of the past, present and how we structure our future. As a ATH funded project, freedom stories brings the full art of storytelling. It brings it with humidity scholarship, with the intent of guiding the public through a deeper appreciation role of African-American stories in the creation of American culture. Conceived as a regional program based in Central Appalachia, with the full-time media toolkit which is always online. You can access it now. It is a presentation of resources we hope everyone will continue to use. It is a resource for the nation in the world. We are here to highlight the diversity of Appalachian communities, and the complexities of the histories and the role the region has played in U.S. history. All of which has been subject to misunderstanding and stereotype. The international storytelling center is able to produce work from a major grant from the National endowment for humanities. That is the major funder of the series. Today's discussion is recorded, along with all prior freedom stories. They are made available to the public through YouTube national storyteller website, our Facebook page, and I would encourage you and you are watching in your questions for me the panel's. You can text us through our Facebook page, and we will try as best to get to as many as questions as time permits. Information regarding the future of the discussions can't always be found on the international storytelling website. That site will have the latest details of the stories. So, today we begin as we always do, with the benefit of having the art of a storyteller. Today we are fortunate to be joined by another nationally recognized storyteller Bobby Norfolk. He will be joining us from St. Louis news jurors -- St. Louis Missouri. He started as a standup comedian at local St. Louis comedy clubs. An actor in a St. Louis Black repertory company. He worked ten years at the Gateway arch in St. Louis as a National Park Service Ranger. In 1979, he made his first appearance as a storyteller at the St. Louis storytelling Festival. He discovered through storytelling, he was able to combine his love and experience of theater and stand-up comedy, as background as a story performer. Along the way, he discovered that the brain is hardwired for storytelling. As a television persona, Mr. Norfolk has 13 Emmy awards as a host of the CBS TV show gator tales. And a host to the nominated series children's theater at Bobby's house. Both shows are based out of St. Louis, and promote themes of character Inc., literacy and storytelling. Here today to share his story about his remarkable life of Tuskegee agricultural scientists Dr. George Washington Carver. Please enjoy story performer Bobby Norfolk.

>> Thank you, Dr., I must say my first journey out of St. Louis for storytelling was in Jonesboro Tennessee. It was not ISC during that time, it was NAP PS. The acronym for the National Association for the provision and perpetuation of storytelling. So, it is coming home, this is a homecoming for me. I am going to say in the whole context of storytelling, that Dr. George Washington Carver's story is a classic case of the hero's journey. I look at every aspect of this man's life, it is what Joseph Campbell put together as a book called a hero of a thousand faces and I hero's journey. Let me give an example, when I do this program on partner, it

is 60 minutes long with a PowerPoint. So I was then challenged by Dr. Alicestyne Turley to craft it down to 20 minutes so I said I am with that. So we are going to capsule this man's incredible journey over all the years of his life, to become a creative chemist. It started off in 1864, in diamond Grove Missouri, Delray. This man according to historians, was orphaned before he was 1-year-old. He was kidnapped and left on the ground to die in the forest. When he was recovered by people who went to seek his rescue, he had all kinds of lung diseases. So he was stunted in his growth. His older brother James was strong and strapping. But George was very weak and frail. His foster parents, again hero's journey, often you get him by foster parents. Moses Carver, and Susan Carver, brought in James and George to be part of the family. They moved into the regular Cam and in diamond Grove Missouri. What George Carver did because he was so frail and weak, is he went out to the forest. He went out and studied nature and the natural order of things. I want to keep coming back to this premise that this man was not just a scientist, he was a mystic. He was not going around proselytizing about the Christian Bible even though he had a Bible his entire life. We will get to that in a moment. He did not go around reciting chapter in verse with this Bible. He sat in the forest, he wondered why birds have certain plumage why the seasons change? How do these colors change on these flowers? And how do the pickles drop? Then, the trees always become in these beautiful colors in autumn. He wondered why do these animals have certain colors and configurations? He hadn't studied Darwin, but he knew intuitively it is mind as a young boy sitting in the forest. So, what he did is he learned how the plants could talk to him. Not the way I am talking to you right now, but it was a form of intuition. He talked about this a lot in his essays. Where he could feel the energy coming from plants and animals in the forest. As a young boy, he would go into the forest and he would take his index and thumb, and pluck up an herb or flour with the root system still intact. Then, people would bring him sick plants and flowers, and he would heal them. He would know if they needed too much sun or if they needed shade and sand, and soil. They dubbed him the plant, That was way before he got all of these doctorate degrees, when he was a kid in southern Missouri. But I digress, on Sunday he and his brother would go to the school in diamond Grove and they will learn about the Lord. Then, that same school that they could go to on Sunday and learn about the Lord, they could not go to that school Monday-Friday because it was an all-white school. So Moses and Susan Carver had a spelling book. So, he found out at 12-years-old, he needed to start the journey. Okay stay with me now with the hero's journey. His foster parents said we can educate you here you will going to go to the shore about 20 miles away. He got to step in and when he got there he met Mariah Watkins. She was a herbalist and a healer. She had the utmost respect for white folks MBO's law Missouri. Because she had medicinal powers and a healer. She found him sleeping in her barn one day. She said boy what you doing my barn what is your name? Ten she said Carver George. She said what kinda name is that? She scared him so much he forgot his own name., she said Andrew look what I phone in the barn with the morning eggs Carver George. So she started taking this young man out in the forest and plugging all of these herbs and flowers. She did not help all for this young boy was. All of a sudden, he would reach down, and pluck up an herbal roof Allah with the root still attached. Miss Watkins, this is what you need.

>> Yes, it is, boy you have been anointed, I do not know what it is about you, but you have special powers that the Lord has given you. So, you take this Bible, and these people can't teach you anymore, you know more than the teacher is teaching you could teach him. You take this Bible, and you continue on your journey. Because, black folks need what you have got to offer in terms of your learning. So, he continued and he learned Mariah Watkins, and then he started hanging around in Kansas. In Kansas, he ran into a situation with Forrest Scott. That's why later on, in history that's why they called bleeding Kansas. If you go back in history you will find out about bleeding Kansas, and John Brown and I digress again. Let us move forward. Because, George Carver experienced a lynching. Not just the hanging, he experienced it firsthand. He said it Scott Kansas, this wife was glad a black man out of the jail and they beat him and then they tied him to a tree stump. Then, they put all kinds of wood around doom and cardboard boxes and wooden boxes. Then they threw coal on him in and they set the man on fire. George Carver said, I am getting out of here. Quick. Even till the time that he died, he said that incident they are, wowed his soul so much. He could not

get it out of his consciousness. So, he decided to move on, he found out that he had book knowledge. With this book knowledge, he ran into these other white folks Mr. and Mrs. Howland. What they did, they owned a whole area of bookstores. So, George could sit in the bookstore and he could get all of this knowledge that he wanted, but then it happened. They said George, you need to go and continue your education. So he went to Highland Kansas, and he applied and when he applied, they said we need to bring this young man to our school from his application. He is superlative, when he showed up, that place Presbyterian College, they said we except Indians and white folks but we don't accept colored folks. So we have to move on sir. And that hurt him to his soul. He became aside Buster after that. He began pushing side plows around. And then he became a fiddler because his foster daddy was -- Moses was of figure two. He could pluck that fiddle too. And then at one time during the Kansas winter, he would get on that fiddle and they would say boy, not only can you have some smarts with the plants. You also can pluck that fiddle. But he needed to move on. Then he ran into Mr. and Mrs. list done. And Mrs. Liston told him to go to Simpson College. At Simpson College, they owned a bookstore also. They got more and more book knowledge, desperate. Mrs. Liston, who sent him to Simpson College, said I want you to study Christian science with me. And he found more about the mythical side of Christianity. Later, he moved on and his education continued. He went to from Simpson College which is a Methodist college, then he went to Iowa. Then he met Edna Mae Bud. Edna Mae Bud, his art teacher, was an excellent author. She said you might not make it as an artist, but let you introduce you to my daddy JL Bud at our state named our -- Iowa. Right there it blew up. But it was not so pleasant for them the first time he went there in the first semester. Because in the first semester, they made him eat with the custodian, and the maids. They made him eat in the basement. That's right, at Iowa State. And all of a sudden he wrote a heartfelt letter, to his play mother Mrs. Liston in the Queen was not amused when she got that letter. They are making you eat in the basement? She said, I am coming right now on a train look for me at the train station. She put on her best bonnet and hoop address. She walked around campus with George Carver and she had an attitude. She said young man come here, do you know who this is? Yes, that is George Carver. You treat him with respect okay, this is my son. And they started looking at him and looking at her. She said don't worry about the color he is my son okay. And they did, it all changed. Talk about a 180. As a matter of fact to change so fast he started eating in the regular dining hall, and when you eating in the regular dining hall all white students were around her. He had that magnetism too. Here came a foolish white kid from Alabama, a freshman. And Dr. Carver at the time was still a student and he sat down with a straight in the lunchroom. And the young white boy looked at George Carver, and he started banging the silver on the table and bang in his chair. George Carver said what is wrong with him? Carver would not move. So the white guy got up and he went over to the table with my kids. The white kids look at the new student, they started banging their silverware on the table and bang in their chairs. And they went over and sat with George Carver. How this thing turns around. They said I guess he must be somebody important. The Chicago exposition was happening around that same time. George Carver, he drew a painting call Yuka in cactus. He did not have enough money to go to Chicago. So all his white friends got the money together and said you need to go to Chicago but that painting on display. He said I don't have any money or suits. His wife and so we can fix that, they went to the Taylor, got him all dressed in his new haberdashery. They bought him a train ticket. They gave him a per diem for food. And they say what is your excuse now? And he said I do not have one. And then, that eating one and award while was in Chicago. He had a 4.0 GPA when he was at Iowa State. At his postgraduate work at LH Pamela, he was head of the ecology -- mycology what is that? Is the study of fungus. He said and I quote, he is the best collector I have ever had in the department or I have ever known. So he was a professor before he was a professor. Then, in 1896 came, and he went to Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He had these visions, he said when he was looking outside of Booker T. Washington's window, during that orientation, he had a vision of how all these things would change. , at Tuskegee Institute. Now some people call Dr. Carver the Wizard of Tuskegee or the Washington Wizard of Tuskegee. I will let you decide who is the real wizard. Because, what Dr. Carver did he worked magic when he went to the laboratory. That's why they call him the creative chemist. He will go out at 4:00

a.m. in the morning. Desperate, before sunrise and talk to God and nature. He did not make references to Jesus Christ, he said the Creator. It was something that he quoted, that makes me think he was indeed a study year of mystical knowledge. Because, he said when he went on the 4:00 a.m. walks in nature, he would listen to the creator and the creator would give him all of the divine inspiration that he would need when he went back into the laboratory to finish his work. So, what happened was that he started getting some flack from Booker T. Washington because I think, I don't know a pocket he was a hater or not. But he was a little jealous of Dr. Carver, because Carver has so much power and influence. So, it was not until Booker T had the way in 1915, that Dr. Carver began to then become very powerful. The new principal became to the point, whatever you want you can have it in the laboratory. That was a banker, his name was Jessop. He said if you want to teach these people about horticulture, and forming I will give you money and you take the Jessop wagon and you all the information in it and you take the Jessop wagon all around Alabama. He then started to teach the illiterate farmers how to grow. He had three major crops. Black IP, some people call it the cow pee, the sweet potato in the peanut. Through his divine intervention he realized, his pattern was pulling the nitrogen out of the soil. So if you rotate these crops around, and then you start planting peanuts instead that brings the nitrogen back into the soil. So Carver taught them an appreciation of the miracles and beauties of nature. He said to create creative forces of the universe will divine in origin and men will tune themselves to these forces and harness the power because of an agent of the creator of the miraculous. There were several things that he did, and simple things that he said. I just want to make her a few things. Some people say he had a high-pitched voice. Once he started to talk, his eyes were like glowing coals of fire. And then he would lose sight of that high-pitched voice and they can only hear the power of man who had been anointed. Henry Ford tried to get up to work with Ford Motor Company. Carver declined. Thomas Edison tried to get them to come to New Jersey he declined. More hotness Gandhi tried -- started getting bulletins from George Washington Carver because he wanted to find the power to raise the level of the tradition that the Indian people trying to get the bridge of their neck. He was almost hired to come to Russia to work with Joseph Stalin. But that is a story for another time. Vice President Calvin Coolidge, sought his counsel and so did Franklin Delano Roosevelt. I think those things he did become the wizard of Tuskegee. He said I love to teach of the appreciation of beauties of nature. The great creative forces of the universe are divine in origin. The man who told himself these forces, and foreigner step power becomes a agent for the creation of the miraculous. I think a garden should be connected to every school in America. So they can study nature and agriculture, even if the child does not become an agriculturist or a farmer, these things have a tendency to make the child think. That is what we are trying to do, is make the child think. That is what he did to a maximum degree. In the last quote on Carver's philosophy nature was a great teacher, and understanding appreciation of natural phenomena and forces, led to a clear conception of all truth. Nothing existed in a vacuum. Everything was an integral part of the great hold, therefore when a student understood one phenomenon, he could be easily led to understand unrelated phenomena. Those things, brought to bear, Dr. Carver became the creative chemist people direct people sought his advice all of the time he said he did not want to put his name on a particular thing. He just wanted to raise the level of rapport and -- raise the level of the poor in Alabama. That whole peanut thing, about the hundreds of things that doll after Carver invented, he did not invent the butter that was Edwin Marsalis. He was from Ontario Cam that he was from Ontario Canada in 1884, 12 years before Carver even showed up and Tuskegee. That is not to say, that the 300 other things that he invented have the stamp of his name on it. And it is so with those things, and his journey trying to get the education, to want to see all of the things that he ran into in the obstacles that he ran to. The hate that he ran into from his own people. Then all the people who grasp his knowledge before he understood it, and he at the nature fairies out there also. Let's go back into that mythology, those nature fairies that were talking to him in weighing on his consciousness level. Some people think that he was a Freemason, but, I will let historians talk about that later on. But he did have some mystical knowledge, and he hung out with Freemasons while what he was in Washington D.C. Rumor has it, that he was also part of that cabal that created that symbol on the back of the

1 dollar bill. With the all seeing and the unfinished pyramid and E porpoise autumn at the base of the pyramid. Things that are hidden in plain sight, George Washington Carver, created scientist, humanitarian I will give it back to you.

>> Thank you so much. Man you gave us a lot of to talk about Bobby. Today we are fortunate as always to have a wonderful panel to continue the talk. Bobby Norfolk will stay with us for the discussion. Joining him is today's illness, to explore race and education in America. Adam Velk, who currently serves as a director of Green McAdoo Cultural Center in Clinton Tennessee. And Adam Dixon, supervisor of the Langston Center in Johnson Tennessee. Green McAdoo Cultural Center is a nonprofit organization devoted to honoring and telling the history of the Clintons well. If you do not know who the Clinton 12 bar, you will hear about today. The first students to just segregate a state run public school in Tennessee. He is currently creating products that projects at the Green McAdoo Cultural Center. This gives high school students opportunities and experience in mentor ship in Museum work. He educates the patrons of food inequality and culinary injustices and focuses on bringing the community together. He received his bachelor's degree in history from the University of Hartford. His masters degree is from the University of Illinois, Springfield. Little Kentucky and their Abraham Lincoln. He has worked for organizations such as the agora planetarium, the central Illinois African-American Museum and the Lincoln home national historic site. The White House national Christmas tree in the Padre Island National seashore. We are very happy to welcome you to today's discussion Adam, thank you for coming and join us.

>> I could not be happier.

>> Our next panelist is a civic leader and community activists. Mr. Adam Dixon was raised in Washington County Tennessee. He is a graduate of Davy Crockett high school and received his bachelor of arts in political science in from Carson Newman University. His masters of ministration at Tennessee State University. He worked for the Langston center, is that of promoting multicultural awareness through community arts, education and leadership. Langston center and sits on the former historic site of Johnson City Tennessee Langston high school. That was a segregated Johnson City high school from 1893-29065. Langston preserves, the goal of it is to preserve the Langston high school alumni and create artistic and educational programs, that enable students and the community to learn in a fun and develop life skills. Welcome Adam and thank you for joining us.

>> Thank you.

>> Wow, we have so much to discuss. So let's start with a gauging everyone's experience in public education. I think that will be very different. So we will start with you Adam, so tell us where you began? What is your public school experience? Could you relate to anything that Bobby spoke and to his experience?

>> Yes so, when it came to some of that, I didn't necessarily have the same experiences. To address the elephant in the zoom, I'm a white guy, I am a white Jew from the suburbs of Chicago. I probably had pretty different experience with Adam and my final billing list. So, when I look at my experience with the educational system, I see it as overwhelmingly positive on a personal level. That is not the experience that everyone else had. I know from middle school through Midway high school, I was what any teacher would call a poor student. I did not do my homework, I did not pay attention in class, I was more interested in social life than the academic work. I had a low point of 1.7 GPA my freshman year. With that being said, I had excellent educators and wonderful administration staff that I went to. I had a sub incredible support base of friends and family wanted nothing to see me succeed. They gave me every emotional and physical tools to give to me, so I could succeed. In some cases, it meant that I was given second, and third in the barest of the fourth chances to go back on the right path to right my wrongs. I am very fortunate that I got those chances in those opportunities. As you mentioned before, I graduated from the University of Hartford in Connecticut. For my undergrad, I went on to graduate from University of Springfield for my grad degree.

I worked hard to go to do those things to not to diminish my work at all, but when I look at my educational experience a big thing that comes to my mind is privilege. The privilege that I received to get to where I am. It would be foolish of me too think it was just my hard work that got me here. Had I grown up in a different part of the country, or in a different part of Illinois outside of Wakonda Illinois. Not to be confused with the Black Panther Wakonda, or had I had a different colored skin, I would hope that those same opportunities and extensions of forgiveness would have been given to me. But, the probability of that happening, I would say I do not know if I was gone the same things if I were in a different situation. My experience is overwhelmingly positive. But the experiences of everybody in the country, they do not have the same one is me. That is where the issue lies.

>> How about you Bobby? You are in St. Louis school system correct?

>> Yes, as a matter of fact, during the day when I was growing up, I am a Boomer. When I was growing up in St. Louis there was an area called Delmar Boulevard. It is called the great divide. So north of Delmar Boulevard was 99.9% was African-American and south of Delmar 99.9% were white. So, the Delmar divide was almost, it made national news. It was so stark. I went to Charles Sumner high school, the first black high school west of the Mississippi River, founded in 1875. Dr. Carver was going to go to Charles Sumner high school, my alma mater, and he came from Kansas. It is a long carriage ride from Kansas all the way to St. Louis Missouri across the entire state. So he did not make it to Charles Sumner, but I did. But those who know the history of Charles Sumner, he was a white abolitionist from Massachusetts. He says some disparaging remarks about Andrew Butler the senator from South Carolina. The representative did not like what Charles Sumner was saying, and put Charles -- to Charles Sumner on the floor of the Senate with a cane. He broke the cane. A lot of his sympathizers came with the inscription hit him again. In 1861, that the same state, South Carolina seceded from the union and welcomed in the U.S. Civil War. They tried to close Sumner high school about ten years ago. Because he was on the north side of the great Delmar divide, but there were some people that would not let that happen. They tried it again this year. And I am going to say that, Charles Sumner high school other than the white abolitionist, it had luminaries that came out of there. I am not tooting my horn are talking about myself. I am talking about the graduates of the Charles Sumner high school, Tina Turner, Chuck Berry, Rod Townsend and Sammy Davis Junior from the fifth dimension. Arthur Ashe, Anselmo other folks that I will mention this time but just look it up.

>> Did you feel as though you had all of the resources that you needed at Charles Sumner?

>> I did and I didn't. Because, what I found out even know we were getting a good education is Sumner high school, will be started going on field trips to these white schools, we found out that we were getting used textbooks, we were getting use desk, everything was used. It was being used first by the white high schools, and then sent to us. Now make of that what you will. But Margaret Bush Wilson, went to the U.S. Supreme Court she was a Sumner right. She went to challenge redlining, through Shelley versus Kramer, the restrictive covenants. I did not know about that until I got into college at the University of Missouri St. Louis. I did not know what redlining name was. You talk about the Black Panthers, I started learning about the real Black Panthers when I was a freshman in college. Not at Sumner, we learned about Booker T. Washington, and Dr. King. But I did not know about the Black Panther party for self-defense out of Oakland California, and to my freshman year at the University of Missouri St. Louis. So, it almost takes me back to Dr. Woodson's, miseducation of the Negro.

>> Very much, I was second Adam, you are now supervising a historic site. How about you growing up in East Tennessee? That got mentioned in our lead song was education like there?

>> Well good afternoon to everybody, growing up in Northeast Tennessee specifically Washington County, I have to admit I had a fairly positive experience. I think that it is important to look at it in context. In the Washington County school system I had outstanding teachers, who solve promise in me. Then there was, coupled with that there was a lot of support from the community. So, growing up I had two teachers, Mr.

and Mrs. Lewis, Boyd and Patsy Lewis. Ms. Lewis was my fourth grade teacher and Boyd Lewis is my high school government teacher. They literally took me under their wing, when they would go on trips from time to time I would get to go with them. I remember getting to go to Governor's school, which was a life changing activity for me. They planned their trip to New Orleans around my trip to Memphis, so we drove right through Memphis drop me off, and they went on to New Orleans. When they came back and they put me up and we came back home. They took me to two different colleges, they really wanted me to excel academically. But there was also a community of support. So there was an African-American community in Jonesboro, that really kept emphasizing the worth and education. So I can remember when I had hair, I would go to Mr. John D Howard's, he would have a room in the back of his house. Mr. John D was a unique character. He used to dig graves, and he was a coal miner. He had spent some time in the century. So, he was a unique character but every time he would cut my hair, he always bent down in a really deep voice and say, keep your head and them books boy, keep your head in the books. Mr. John D Howard, Mr. and Mrs. William Hart, there was always a group of people in the community that kept pushing me to excel. So, growing up it was positive. I think for me, the point at awakening, or I guess encountering racism, would be when I got to high school, and then in college. Thankfully, it was not from teachers, it was just trying to find my place I guess my racial identity, in a setting, in an academic setting. Because when you are the only black in a group whites, you are black., my fatherly used to say is like looking at the fly and buttermilk you're the only one it is just you. So you deal with that, then you deal with the dynamic of other black students looking at you and saying, while you are trying to act white. So you're trying to find yourself, so that search for racial identity. I also think about high school, when you are coming to be aware of the story and you are becoming aware of your racial self, you are trying to figure out how to address it? So for me, and high school and college, my silent protest, every research paper that came up always focused on the black experience. So I always wanted to showcase the black experience in my research and in my term papers. That was my way of trying to affirm, myself and my people were somebody. I guess the last piece when I think about again the racial aspect of my educational experience, again undergrad and graduate experience, was trying to form this sense of blackness. Exactly who am I? As a black man. So when I think about Dr. do boys and others, there is this idea that blackness was a political and economic ending about experience. So I am cognizant of the political and economic issues that affect black people. But, if you were to say for example, let's just hang out for a chill for a little bit and let's relax and thus take it easy. I might be able -- I might be a little bit stiff and rigid. So the idea of trying to figure out who am I as a person? I am a personal ISA read, and study and do those types of things, as I say to many people, trying to find your sense of practice. So blackness for me was a political and economic understanding of the conditions of African-Americans. Not so much, that cultural sense. So you can just imagine in college, and everybody is wanting to go to the club and party. And you are kinda like wait a second period but I was politically and economically cognizant of the conditions of black people. I think those are some of the issues that I dealt with in my schooling.

>> I am from Eastern can Kentucky and Appalachia. How much do you think the outsider and this is the Appalachia background? When I was going to school, I don't sound like a sound now. I had that Appalachian twang like you have got. Right? I was not going to say it but since you brought it up, it does get you treated differently. Do you think that is the case?

>> Listen, Lord yes every bit. Every bit. So trying to be the black person that again has the deep twang as you say, and trying to connect with other black people, trying to show that we are one of the same. Then, my father was of an of country music. So I had

>> Oh gosh.

>> So all of my connections were back to country music. So as I am trying to connect black people, I remember a Barbara Mandrell's song I was country when country wasn't cool. That did not connect black folks at all. So it was a chore trying to again, identify culturally with African-Americans. The way that I could get my foot into the door was in this context of history. If we could talk about the history of racism

and the history of again the stratification of black votes, people then begin to look at it differently and then they begin to accept. So it was a little harder, but we achieved.

>> The reason why I do not sound like I'm from Eastern Kentucky person right now, because when I went to a Ohio school, my auntie was a teacher. She spent the whole summer trying to beat the Appalachian out of me. She was an English teacher, and she said, no we cannot change her to school sounding like that. You will get abused. So she took the whole summer, practicing on my vowels, am I y'all's. She spent the whole summer doing that. Until right now, they think I am from some Midwestern state. But, it was just her, it was Wisconsin, so she said I cannot send you out into what something like that. So I do understand. Let's talk about the idea of integration and how we show the power point, we tried to give people a little bit of oversight. I think really we do not do a good job of explaining education in this country. We take a lot for granted. In America, this idea of education being up book value, that was not the founding principle of this nation. Education was reserved for the very rich, the very will place. So, this movement towards public education for everyone, I sort of a new phenomenon. I am often struggling with this question so I will throw it out to you, the three of you. What's integration a good thing for black people? We will start with you Adam, Adam number two.

>> Well Dr., I believe that that question has to be looked at with what I will call an authentic context. So, underscore the word authentic contents. -- context. So separate but equal was, so black folks did not have the good end of the deal. So one has to believe, that there were a number of parents that wanted the best for their children and wanted simple equality for their children. Thus, we know the difference Supreme Court cases. I wonder sometimes though? The idea that black parents did not see the hidden backlash that was going to come as a result of racial integration. Where I work at the Langston center, the story continues to come up. The black school closes and the Blacks kids have to go to the white school. There is never a thought or consideration of white kids come into the black school. So integration is based on the idea that everything is good, right, and real is on that side of town. Not in our neighborhood. So you cannot help but wonder, did black parents see the hidden backlash that was going to come as a result of integration? The effect that will have on the black middle class for example. The noble of -- make the numbers of teachers that would lose their jobs and have to move. How does integration affect black consciousness? So 40 years later, you go into a classroom, and you are the only kid in the classroom. You were trying to figure out who am I? I am talking from experience there. Who am I in this classroom? What is my experience? I went from kindergarten to the 12th grade and four years of college and then another two years of grad school, and never had an African-American teacher. I never had an African-American teacher. What does that do in terms of the black consciousness. And the third piece that comes to my mind when you come to this question, what about the notion about black excellence? So when integration comes about, black people now are put into situations where you no longer see people that look like you. That can now push you, not you, affirm you to what you can be and what you can achieve. So what does this in terms of the idea of black excellence? I think about a 20 years ago, if someone would've asked me going to a HBCU I would've probably said I don't know. Now, at 42, I am asking myself from time to time that experience of being in a mostly black setting, where you had other educators and you have staff and you have a culture of excellence. What does that mean? I hear a lot of the older folks say it like this, we got what we wanted, but we lost what we had. So just some contacts there as to the reality of integration.

>> Bobby, and St. Louis, were you at a predominantly black school throughout?

>> Yes Sumner was predominately back -- but black, and then Forest Park community college that is in Forest Park, so you know it is only second to New York's parks.

>> What you feel about this idea of integration? Do you think it would have been better if you had you been in an integrated classroom?



>> The integration came in 1969, when I went to Forest Park community college to get the GPA up to I went to the University of St. Louis Missouri and there were white and black students there. It changed my whole concept of integration. One being, there was a group called the Association of Black collegians. They had pattern themselves after the Black Panther party for self-defense of Oakland California. They were doing recruitment, and -- in the cafeteria. There were an elder's cleavers album dig. It was on the loudspeaker. Some white students didn't like what they were hearing and went to complain to the president of the community college. It was a white guy from the self, he was in the Marines, instead of talking to the ABC students, is he went and grabbed the stylus, this was a 33 and a third final album. And he put this big scratch on his. And all hell broke loose in the cafeteria. He should not have done that. The school was closed down for two weeks in a moratorium. Then, there was rap sessions going on, I'm not talking about hippity hop to the barber shop and get me a Jerry Carroll. The rap sessions were students going into the student lounge is in talking about political things. Those were rap sessions. Then what happened was at Malcolm X's birthday came, and some of the ABC students wanted to bring the American flag down to half mast for Malcolm X. Some of the white students from Young Americans for Freedom, they did not like that. They brought the flag back up to full staff. Ventimiglia broke out again then the American flag was torn. So one of the black students got arrested, the oysters went back to class. So I had a whole perspective of integration from a level that I had not seen at Sumner high school.

>> Okay Adam one, I hate to do that to you. Again you will not have the same experiences.

>> Yes, I, once again don't have the same experiences. Granted, Wakonda was a pretty mixed town. But, it was mostly just white people and Latino, Latina and Latin X people. When I went to college it was 50% White, 50% people of color. So, I do not have those experiences, but I do have the Clinton story. The clinical Isis to lean on. So when we look at whether -- the Clinton crisis to lean on. So when we look at whether, we look at who? Which demographic from people within that, the grand Borella all black people in this area. If you as Ms. Teresa Blair who was an educator at the Green Maca new school. The only black school in Clinton, grades 1-8, I would say is not a benefit to her. Her in an estimated 38,000 black educators lost their jobs as a result of Brown V. Board. They lost a solid source of income. They lost something that they were very passionate about. So with that being said, if you asked the parents of the students for the Clinton 12, they are tax dollars were going towards Clinton high school. Their children were not getting benefit of the hard spend tax dollars. Instead, they had to drive to Knoxville or they had to take a bus about 30 minutes to what is now Austin East. Who was the one who's paying for the buses? It was not the state it had to come are the parents pocket. So that was an additional economic burden. So integration happen, economically it was a big benefit to the families here in Clinton. Because it meant that that kids could walk to school, they did not have to worry about how are we going to come up with the bus fare? With that being said, take it one step further, the family life. How does it affect the family love? For folks in Clinton, I tell people come to the center, these children were going to warrant getting a better education. We had the clan riding through a predominantly black neighborhood in Clinton. They were setting off bombs in these children's yards, there were tanks on the main streets the National Guard was here. The amount of violence and Fitch are all the experience at school was unfathomable to me. The pressure of all of that traumatic experience. The students of the Clinton 12, only two of them graduated from Clinton high school. Most of their parents took them out and sent them other well or because they feared for their safety and I cannot blame them. If I was in the Clinton 12, it would've been a the Clinton 11 real quick with my mother. She would've pulled me out faster than you can say hello. So, when we look at has been beneficial? The hope is the long term has been beneficial? And as a much as I don't want to say it has been super beneficial. The statistics, according to the U.S. Department of education, show on average we spend over \$300 more per white student in America, as opposed to every know my student. In mostly white schools, students with 90% population of white or more, we spend it on average \$700 more. , then a student who went to a nonwhite school. 90% or less, that is on the national average. If you bring it down to smaller, looking at the state of Tennessee, my state now the state of Tennessee. In 2017, 37% of students were students of color. Like Adam mentioned, these

students are not having that black presents as an educator's. Only 13% of teachers and faculty here in Tennessee, are people of color. Break it down to smaller points, of all of the districts in Tennessee, seven of them, had more than 20% faculty were people of color and more. And each one of those instances, the students and the population of students made up 50% of color. It is a huge divide and representation, the problem isn't that we do not have highly educated and highly qualified people of color who don't want these jobs. Who do not want to teach our use. Desperate teach our use. Desperate teach our youth. There is a big systemic issue, how do we address these issues? There are kids, like Adam said, who are struggling with this idea of blackness. And where they kind of fit, and they are in a sea of white people and all is a C is white people, like you mentioned the fly in the butter. I can't imagine the inter- home while that that causes. So, I think that it has hopefully been more beneficial but is a slim module of how beneficial it has been overall.

>> I think that these are the issues, again lies within social media today. People aren't addressing, these are the underlying currents we do not want to deal with because that is means we would have to give money to schools and districts that are suffering. I know much of the elementary education, many white teachers come into black neighborhoods to get there teaching certificates and degrees and they become excellent teachers. Then very swiftly leave the black community and get better pay working in white schools. So, once again African Americans are being utilized as a training ground. We never get the benefit of that quality remaining in our schools. Just like our teachers, I know when they integrated our school, and hazard, we lost all of our teachers. My English teacher, oaf Etta Basye, actually had to sue the pre-county school system in order. They wanted to make her the library and so she still would have a job. She absolutely refused. She said my degree is in education and English. After she won her lawsuit, she became the first black teacher in an all white school, and the teaching standards of that school rose because she was excellent. In fact when they integrated the school, we were ahead of the way students academically. Because, of our teachers. But we had always been told that our school is behind. We did not have the best books, but books don't teach is the teachers that teach. So a lot of our teachers didn't really use books. We use magazines, we use newspapers, we use other resources to learn. So, I guess now you would call that Montessori school? Okay I'm coming down. What do you think about that argument? Who was right was to block right all was Washington right? Let's start with you Adam once eventuated.

>> I think in a perfect world, both of these men were right, it is one you know those things where you both. If you are forcing me too choose one, and this case I am going to go to Washington. We have had this discussion in the museum. How do we get more people of color to be interested in working in museums? Predominately, museums have been a place the people of color feel that their welcome. One of the hardest things to do is to convince someone, maybe this is the first time that their family has ever been able to send someone to college. You are saying, yes get a job in the museum world, where you will wear the same pair of pants for the next 30 years because you can afford anything else. This is not an economically great job. Despite so many historians saying that blood moves the wheels of history, I would argue that it is cash. Cash moves the wheels of history. So I look at Washington and his argument of economics. He said the individual can do something in the world, that the world wants to be done in the end will make his way regardless of race. At the end of the day, not very many, if you have a choice between a plumber in your town or a guy who knows about history, you would want the plumber. When you are the only plumber and Tyrone, when you live in Carpenter, the electricity, these are jobs that we need this now. We need these jobs, their well-paying jobs, but people are focused are too much on the liberal arts. I am the perfect example, I am saying this as a person with a liberal arts degree. The money is in doing those blue-collar jobs. I look at the example of Russell Shepard, a formal NFL wide receiver, he had a pretty decent career carved out a nice career for himself. After he was done and retired, he started out waste management, which he runs the Gulf Coast in Texas with porta parties, and hand sanitizing stations, and takes care of all of that. He is making hand over fist with money. Because, there are people who don't know how to do a, who don't want to do, if you can, find someone who is willing to roof your house, I cannot do that. We are pretty much at the will of the roofer. If my car breaks down, I am at the mercy of the mechanic. I need a car to it were, they are going

to charge me what ever they want to charge and I just kind of have to suck it up. So when I look at that, and I look at the ideas that killer Mike from Run the Jewels, in his Netflix television. His second episode is all about education. You can be anything you want what you want to be when you grow up? They say I want to cure cancer will be the president. They say oh, I want to be a singer or basketball player or a rocket scientist and also a candy taste tester. While those are really great jobs I assume? While they probably are high-paying, there is not a lot of room for those. There is only so many of those jobs. We need to start focusing on teaching children useful skills, so that they get out of school and they have that economic stability. I look at it as I am a guy who makes under \$40,000 a year, and there is somebody who makes \$80,000 year. Economically, they have more power to donate to campaigns, to ignite change in their own community than I have. So yes, if I have to choose one, they make an excellent argument, we need civil rights legislation, we need people who know arts. They have a stance around whitewashing history which assessed me too know and even I deal with it today at the Green McAdoo Cultural Center about the Clinton 12 story. We need those voices to come in, but we need to make sure that people have jobs, so when they get out of school they able to contribute and make money. So, once again wheels of history don't term applied they turn with cash. Let's get cash in people's hands.

>> Already we have some questions coming in. I want to take at this point these are the last few minutes to get your questions answered so submit them to the Facebook page and we will respond. But I want to ask about, one of he was asking this question. Since most teachers in the U.S. our white and largely white women. How can we empower our educations to be more sensitive to race and ethnicity? Especially rocking the vote in public education? I would say more funding in public education. I will ask you Adam.

>> At the Langston center, we've had a couple of conversations, about this dynamic. Mostly white women interacting with diverse groups of students. Because of the Langston center is so new, we opened up in November of 2019. The pandemic occurred a couple on occasions where we had to shut down the facility. Because where part of the city of Johnson City and Johnson City decide to close all facilities. We haven't really had an extended period of time to implement all of the progress. But, in one conversation about this topic, we have concluded that we need to engage in multicultural education with white individuals. If we don't see up on shift like we would like. In other words African-American men and African-American women, the percentages of black men and women becoming teachers. Then at some point we are going to have to start working with white men in white women teachers and exposing them to multicultural education. So, if you do interact with Bobby who happens to be black, and Bobby raises his voice, that you understand may be in Bobby's home environment, that is just normal speak. So, maybe what you will calling raising his voice and being ugly is just normal speak. You need to understand the dynamic of how uncle, mama, and daddy talk. Because sometimes in black parenting some people talking away boy don't you hear what I'm telling you? They are going to talk like that. So maybe that is way Bob is used to being told to. So we have to understand is cultural insensitivities. We have these conversations at the Langston center, is now it just a matter of planning it out.

>> I can also say as a college professor, when I have had other teachers talk with me, about black students and many of the women in college level white women were very intimidated by black male students. Especially, a lot of it comes from the athletics, many of these colleges are phenomenally white, many of the sports teams are but don't really black. So, these students are in their classroom, and if you are a professor who has never really dealt much with at any time, the students they felt were intimidating to them or not being respectful to them. Because, when they teach us both of them, the student did not look at them directly. Then when the student looked at them, it was is the student was angry. I was trying to explain to my colleague, that in a black household, you do not eyeball your parents if you're talking to them. That is just something you don't do. If your mother is yelling at you or talking to you, it is respectful to keep you head down in your mouth shut. That is not ignoring you, that is being respectful. But, if you see it as being dismissive, so I understand exactly what you're saying. So they're a little cultural tales, that if you have

never been outside your own community might be difficult to be translated. So, I have another person who was asking, how do you think the phenomenon of college teams, which is something happening around the country. Kneeling during the national anthem speaks to the issue of integration today?

>> That is a good question, a very good question.

>> What was answered to jump right in go ahead Adam, Adam two. Tension just very quickly, I address this issue in my civic life I serve as an alderman for the town of Jonesboro. This issue, we are living this issue in real time in our community. I spoke at a loss -- right at our last alderman meeting about this issue. In the context of what we are dealing with in Johnson City, one of the major responses to the ball team kneeling, was that it is disrespectful to the flag, and disrespect to the national anthem. I brought out the point that we need to have a balanced view of history. This is the way that I tend to think about things, so when the terms of balanced view of history, certainly the flag, the anthem, the pledge have merit to those that see those symbols as freedom and liberty. Those are beautiful symbols. Those are beautiful gestures of freedom and liberty. But, people of color we have not always had the opportunity to really immerse ourselves into freedom and liberty. If you think about that for a second, we haven't really felt the full extent of freedom. If we talk about slavery, 12 years of reconstruction, but then in 1896-1960s Jim Crow slavery 2.0. Then on top of that legislation after-the-fact. So we still haven't had the full experience of freedom and liberty. But two people of color in America is about the idea of justice and equality. Thus the need. So in my comments in the alderman meeting, I was saying we have two vivid pictures of America here. What we really need is cooler heads prevail, is to look at this idea of what it means to be an American. You have two vivid pictures of America, freedom, liberty, flag anthem and pledge. And then the side of justice inequality, and then the earning at the heart of the students of these ballgames because the only reason why they are kneeling is trying to bring awareness to this history of racism, systemic racism in the country. Two different pictures of America, we need to lower the temperature, we need to talk, and we need to go.

>> Adam Velk?

>> I agree with what a lot of you are saying there. But I don't agree with the issue is with people kneeling. I think that it is a dog whistle, I think it is the dumbest thing that people argue against it. It is always the other hurdle. It is well, when I was in Chicago and people were protesting down the street. It was, while I don't mind if they're protesting, I support people's right to protest, you shouldn't do it so I have to hit traffic I do not want to be inconvenienced by it. Then, you move forward it is call and cabinet taking a knee. And it is all for protesting. In his Confederate flag and we are defending a statue. But, I just want to watch sports, it is disrespectful to the flag, it is disrespectful to our troops. Completely ignoring just make completely ignoring the fact that when he did that he talked to a football player who is he served in our own forces, and they came up with this way of taking a knee during the national anthem. As a way to not be disrespectful to our troops. It never was about being disrespectful to troops, is not about disrespecting the flag. At the end of the day taking a knee is saying I love my come tree, I love where I live, I love being in America. America is imperfect? We can still be better, we are not done. We are still a young country there are still ways for us to continue to improve. It is no different than asking your spouse or your girlfriend or your boyfriend, can you pick up your dirty socks? It's uncomfortable to say that to somebody you've been living with for ten years, hey can you pick up your dirty socks. But, you have to have these conversations or nothing changes. This is a spark, this is the ability to have the conversation and taking a knee is having the conversation. But the other side just does not want to have it. They do not want to have the this conversation. So, the one thing that I absolutely love is here in Tennessee, people love the University of Tennessee basketball, the football team. I have never seen so much pride for a college team. People, players are not signing to play sports here at the University of Tennessee, and they are going to suffer because of it. People are leaving the program because there are politicians who are trying to make laws saying well we need to make sure everybody stands for the flag and do that. So, they are saying find you want to do that? Go ahead I am going to go to a school that allows me too have my voice.

>> We are at the end of our time. When did that I don't have to go? So I think our view was so much for tuning in. We will get to the questions please if you still have questions for the panelists continue to text those in. We will do our best if we don't do it online to answer you in other ways. Thank you so much for viewing freedom stories, today, and please plan to come back again on April 10 at the same time. For our story of spreading Appalachia abroad. Thank you for the panelists, thank you Bobby Norfolk for the wonderful story. We will see you in April.