

The Hartford Sponsors Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Hartford chose the afternoon of the 25th as part of their celebration of African American History month to announce their gift of \$1,000,000.00 toward the construction of the National Museum of African American History & Culture currently being completed on the Mall in Washington DC and scheduled to open September 24th of this year.

Begun with an Act of Congress in 2003, the last remaining site on the Mall between the Washington Monument and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History was chosen in 2006.

The Hartford was a founding sponsor of the project and has a long history of supporting diversity especially among their employees. This includes their Black Insurance Professionals Network, which was founded in 1999.

The program included remarks by Susan L. Johnson vice president of Diversity and Inclusion, Christopher Swift, Chairman and CEO, Mayor Luke Bronin and Governor Dannel Malloy, before the keynote speaker John Franklin took the stage.

Mr. Franklin is the director of Partnerships and International Programs at Smithsonian NMAAHC and his keynote address was spellbinding. It was a mix of family history, statistics and anecdotes. For example, his grandfather wrote a first person account of the burning of the Greenwood community in Tulsa Oklahoma in 1921; there are over 400,000 artifacts in the collection including a segregated Pullman car put in place during construction as well as Harriet Tubman's personal hymnal; and, after weeks of preparations and rehearsals to get presidential permission to locate on the Mall, President Bush agreed immediately.



After the keynote speech Mr. Franklin remained on stage and was joined by Katherine Kane, executive director of the Harriett Beecher Stowe Center as the moderator of the Panel that included Mr. Franklin, H. Patrick Swygert, a member of The Hartford's board of directors, as well as a NMAAHC Advisory Council member and president emeritus of Howard University, and Dr. Shayla Nunnally associate professor, Dept. of Political Science & African Studies Institute at University of Connecticut. Together they made clear the importance of the African American contributions to America and the need for all Americans to better understand and appreciate their culture and history.

This new museum will quickly become a destination for people of all races and nations wanting to learn this largely untold story.

For more information go to: <http://nmaahc.si.edu> and for photos of the event go to: <https://goo.gl/photos/W3JVK22SQpeCehyT8>