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2021 Black Graduation Celebration Committee

LACCD encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation, or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact Betina Valin at Vallinb@laccd.edu as soon as possible, but no later than seven (7) business days prior to the event.

LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
BLACK GRADUATION CELEBRATION
A CULTURAL CELEBRATION RECOGNIZING GRADUATES

Rising On the Wings Of The Past To Meet The Challenge Of The Future

TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2021 | 3:00 PM-5:00 PM
A VIRTUAL CELEBRATION #AAOIBGC #LACCDDBGC

African American Outreach Initiative Sponsored by
Los Angeles Community College District Chancellor’s Office
770 Wilshire Blvd. | Los Angeles, CA 90017 | laccd.edu/aaoi
ABOUT THE BLACK GRADUATION CELEBRATION

Black graduation ceremonies are annual cultural celebratory events held near the month of college graduations. It is an additional celebration that recognizes the accomplishments of graduates while helping them remember the people who came before them, which include those who were enslaved through the middle passage from Africa to America, who experienced racial segregation during the Jim Crow era, and more.

The mission of the Los Angeles Community College District African American Outreach Initiative Black Graduation Celebration is to commemorate the historical migration and educational milestones of graduating students through a complementary cultural ceremony that expresses African and African American traditions and rituals such acknowledging God through prayer, the singing of the Negro National Anthem, African dance and drumming, processionals, culturally-relevant music, (slave and Negro spirituals, gospel, rhythm and blues, jazz, and more), libation ceremonies, and kente draping—all of which are symbolic representations of the soul and spirit of a rich Black heritage.

The celebration is also an acknowledgement of the village, reminding us of the Yoruba proverb, that “If we stand tall, it is because we stand on the shoulders of many ancestors.” It is a way to pay homage to those who paid the price and paved the way to make this day possible.

So, we celebrate you class of 2021—just over 400 years after Africans first landed in Hampton, Virginia in 1619—for realizing so many goals that your ancestors could only dream of. They paid the price, and you are the recipients of that weighty sacrifice.

This ceremony is for YOU! You have made us proud. Let this day be an inspiration to you to continue working to become your best possible selves—physically, emotionally, spiritually, and educationally.

Nate KEYNOTE

Nate Howard is a professional speaker, poet, educator, and social entrepreneur. In May 2013, Nate made the front page of the LA Times for sparking a movement against racial profiling after 79 LAPD officers shut down his event at USC. Realizing someone was attempting to tell his story, he founded Movement BE, a non-profit organization that conducts workshops to help young people discover their story.

With the motto of “tell your story before they do,” Movement BE has directly impacted thousands of students across the country. Nate was selected on the inaugural NBCBLK28 list as one of the top 28 black leaders in the nation under 28 years old. He was later featured on the Today Show as one of the “Best and Brightest: Game Changers Making History.” Most recently Nate was honored in his hometown of San Diego as the “Young Entrepreneur of the Year.”

Nate’s belief is that we should focus our activism on education, empowering youth to create change so that the movement is proactive and sustainable. Seeing poetry as a means of self-expression, he challenges school systems to see its use as vital for the development of youth, giving them the courage to find their story to challenge the status quo. Nate has recorded his poetry on songs with artists Ty Dolla Sign, Kendrick Lamar and political activist Dr. Cornel West.

Nate is a graduate of the University of Southern California. His biggest inspirations are Martin Luther King Jr. and Maya Angelou.

THE NEGRO NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Lift Every Voice and Sing,” was written as a poem by James Weldon Johnson in 1899 and set to music by his brother John Rosamond Johnson in 1910. In 1931, the NAACP selected the song as the “Negro National Anthem,” and in the 1990s, it was entered into the Congressional Record as the “Black National Anthem.” Proper etiquette is to sing all 3 stanzas and to sing it in unison.

Lyrics:

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and Heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing, high as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling waters.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us,
Facing the Hymn of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Story the road we trod, bitter the chasening rod,
Fell in the days when hope unborn had died.
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,
Come to the place for which our fathers died.
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treasuring our path through the blood of the slaughtered.
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou Who hast brought us thus far on the way,
Thou Who hast by Thy might led us into the light,
Keep us forever in Thy path, we pray.

Lettest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Letest our hearts, daun with the sin of the world, we forget Thee,
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.

Bryant Woodert

Nate Howard BIOGRAPHY

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THANK YOU
The Los Angeles Community College District’s African American Outreach Initiative Program Presents

2021 Virtual Black Graduation Celebration

A Cultural Ceremony Honoring Students!

CITY • EAST • HARBOR • MISSION • PIERCE • SOUTHWEST • TRADE-TECH • VALLEY • WEST

SAVE THE DATE

TUESDAY MAY 25, 2021

3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

For more info, contact 2021 Black Graduation Celebration Co-Chairs:
Dr. Elliott Coney
AAOI Co-Chair; Signature Events Committee Los Angeles Valley College | Coneye@laccd.edu
Ms. Nicole Flores
AAOI Co-Chair; Signature Events Committee Los Angeles Trade Technical College | Floresn3@laccd.edu

LACCD faculty, staff, and administrators are all invited to celebrate student achievement

Pre-register today for the Virtual Black Graduation Celebration

Graduating LACCD students are encouraged to pre-register for the celebration

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