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Woods Hole Black History Month 2013 Activities Focus on Theme of Freedom and Equality

“At the Crossroads of Freedom and Equality: The Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington” is the theme for 2013 Black History Month activities in Woods Hole, which begin February 7 and conclude February 28. All events are free and open to the public and will be held at the Swope Center at the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) in Woods Hole.

On Thursday, February 7, Dr. Sheila Thomas, Assistant Dean for Diversity and Minority Affairs at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University and an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, will speak on “Diversity 2.0: Enhancing Diversity of Our Ph.D. Programs” at 12:00 p.m. at the Meigs Room, Swope Center, at MBL.

As a member of the Department of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Thomas conducts research in cancer biology focusing in understanding how disruption of normal cell networks leads to specific cancers. She has also been actively involved as a faculty member in teaching and mentoring both undergraduates and graduate students, and has served in leadership roles both locally and nationally in efforts to increase the diversity of graduate and professional programs. In her role as Assistant Dean she oversees the diversity efforts for Harvard University’s 57 Ph.D. programs.

Sheila Thomas received her B.A. in biochemistry and molecular and cellular biology from Northwestern University, Ph.D. in molecular genetics from the University of Pennsylvania, and did her postdoctoral training at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Actor, speaker and activist Cary L. Barnes will recite the “I Have a Dream” or “I’ve Seen the Promised Land” speech by Dr. Martin Luther King on Thursday, Feb. 14, at noon in the Meigs Room at MBL’s Swope Center. Barnes grew up in Plymouth, Mass., and graduated from Plymouth High School, soon enlisting in the U.S. Air Force, where he served four years. He moved to New York City and found employment as a technician for NY Telephone Company, working days and attending college at night. He became involved in the Manhattan theater scene, performing off Broadway, on national tours, and in community theater. Barnes has also appeared in film and on television.

Barnes has also been involved in numerous community activities, establishing youth programs, founding community gardens and organizing other events and programs, including a community Kwanzaa celebration and serving as president of his 5,000-member resident’s association.

“So, you study charged, floating dirt? A curious journey through plasma physics” is the focus of the February 28 presentation by Dr. Edward Thomas, Jr., a professor of physics at Auburn University. His presentation will begin at 3:00 p.m. in the Meigs Room, Swope Center, at the MBL.

Born and raised in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Professor Thomas has been fascinated in the concepts of motion and energy, two of the fundamental concepts in physics, since childhood. He earned a bachelor's degree in physics from Florida Institute of Technology, a master's degree in physics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a Ph.D. in physics from Auburn University, focusing his interests while in graduate school in the fusion process and on plasma as a "fourth state" of matter. Together with his research team at Auburn, Professor Thomas studies a plasma phenomenon known as "complex" or "dusty" plasmas which exist everywhere and can be made in laboratory settings. He will show examples of these visually stunning systems, which he says can be studied for both "practical and impractical" purposes.

Professor Thomas's presentation will be followed by the Harambee, an annual ethnic potluck feast celebrating everyone of every race. Multicultural arts, food and live music will take place from 4:30 to 8 p.m. at MBL's Swope Center.

Woods Hole Black History Month events are sponsored by the Marine Biological Laboratory, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center), U.S. Geological Survey Woods Hole Field Center, and Sea Education Association.

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Related links:

Woods Hole Black History Month Activities:

<http://woodshole.er.usgs.gov/outreach/WHBHMC/2013.html>

Association for the Study of African American Life and History: www.asalh.org

Presidential Proclamation: National African American History Month, 2013:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/01/31/national-african-american-history-month-2013>