

JAMES FARMER MULTICULTURAL CENTER

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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JFMC Mourns Passing of First Director



The JFMC is saddened by the passing of Mr. Forrest Parker. He was truly a visionary leader in establishing the mission and programs of the original Multicultural Center (now the James Farmer Multicultural Center). He created a space where students from diverse backgrounds felt supported, valued, and celebrated.

He was a mentor to and advocated for so many students throughout his tenure at UMW. In addition, he established longstanding traditions, including the highly anticipated Multicultural Fair and the Cultural Awareness Series events, that serve to showcase the importance and cultural richness embraced by the campus and broader community. The JFMC is deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Parker and very grateful for the legacy and commitment he gave to our ongoing mission and purpose. May he rest in peace.

2024 Black History Month Celebration

For centuries, African Americans have used the arts as a powerful medium for cultural expression, community resonance, and social critique. Each generation, within the African diaspora spanning from the Harlem Renaissance to present day, has transformed the globe through their numerous contributions in literature, fashion, film, theater, music, architecture, and language. Join the James Farmer Multicultural Center's celebration and recognition of these memorable stories.

Join us for plenty of engaging events including our Major Speaker event featuring Junior Marvin, Manny Kellough, and Bill McGee.



The JFMC Welcomes New Associate Director

The James Farmer Multicultural Center is pleased to welcome its new Associate Director, Derrick Jones.

"I am truly honored and thrilled to become part of the JFMC family at UMW. It is my privilege to contribute to the Center and uphold the legacy of Dr. James Farmer. For me, this means supporting a community that cherishes the diversity of our identities, values justice for all, and acknowledges everyone's contributions in promoting solidarity and achieving freedom through action."



For information about upcoming events and programs at the JFMC, visit our website at students.umw.edu/multicultural or follow us on social media!



Fredericksburg Civil Rights Trail

The Phase Two Unveiling of Historic Milestone

For the past 3 years, the James Farmer Multicultural Center's Assistant Director, Chris Williams, has partnered with Fredericksburg's Economic Development and Tourism Department's Sales Manager, Victoria Matthews, on developing and implementing a historic Civil Rights Trail in the city of Fredericksburg. This trail tells the comprehensive story of local African-American residents participating in the civil rights movement from 1862 to present. Throughout the developmental process, Williams conducted 16 interviews with African-American elders who played prominent roles during the civil rights movement in the city of Fredericksburg and on the University of Mary Washington's campus. From these interviews, UMW professors Dr. Christine Henry and Dr. Steve Hanna, alongside Williams and Matthews, were able to locate and pinpoint places throughout the city of Fredericksburg to map out the civil rights trail. Along with the trail, Williams and Matthews co-authored a written narrative that has been published online with GIS interactive maps highlighting the stops on the trail, photographs of seminal figures and places, and quotes from the interviews conducted to showcase the depth of the stories about sacrifice, perseverance, and dedication in the face of insurmountable odds.

Additionally, the written narrative has been published into a brochure/booklet that is currently distributed at the Fredericksburg Visitor Center in downtown Fredericksburg. Another component to this project has been the cultivation of the oral histories project. The interviews conducted have been compiled and put into the University of Mary Washington's Special Collections and Archives inside Simpson Library. The final component has been the installation of five new wayside panels in the city of Fredericksburg, two state historical markers about Fredericksburg being the first stop on the 1961 Freedom Rides and the self-emancipation of over 10,000 enslaved people when Union forces arrived in Fredericksburg during the spring of 1862, and the forthcoming installation of four wayside panels on the University of Mary Washington's campus. On February 8th, the Fredericksburg Civil Rights Trail will be added to the United States Civil Rights Trail.

34th Annual Multicultural Fair

Saturday, April 13 | 10 am – 5 pm

The Multicultural Fair attracts 5,000 to 6,000 people each year, and exemplifies the University of Mary Washington's commitment to enhancing multicultural awareness.

The Fair provides an entire day devoted to multicultural entertainment, children's activities, international and American food, and ethnic craft vendors.

