

**City of Jacksonville Mayor's African American Advisory Board**  
**Black History Month Celebration**

*Theme: Black Resilience: Empowering Futures by Honoring Legacy*

Thursday, February 13, 2025 | 10:00 AM

City Hall Atrium - 117 W Duval St, Jacksonville, FL 32202

---

**Order of Events**

**\*Pre-Event Performance\***

Edward Waters University Band

**Welcome & Acknowledgements**

Dr. Audrianna Burgin, MAAAB Board Member

**Invocation**

Reverend Dr. Christopher McKee

**Musical Selection - Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing**

Becoming Collegiate Academy Choir

**Introduction of Mayor**

Dr. Ronetta Wards, MAAAB Vice Chair

**Mayoral Address & Proclamation**

Mayor Donna Deegan

**Presentation of Legacy Honoree Award to**

**Edward Waters University**

Kiara Nixon, MAAAB Board Member

(accompanied by Mayor Donna Deegan, Dr. Parvez Ahmed,

Dr. Ronetta Wards, and MAAAB)

**A Moment of Recognition for Duval County Public Schools**

**named after African American Figures**

**Errol White, MAAAB Board Member**

(accompanied by Mayor Donna Deegan, Dr. Parvez Ahmed,

Dr. Ronetta Wards, and MAAAB)

**Special Recognitions**

Dawn Curling, MAAAB Board Member

Kelly Frazier, MAAAB Board Member

**Closing Reflection & Remarks**

Dr. Parvez Ahmed, City of Jacksonville



A NEW DAY

---

**Mayor's African American Advisory Board (MAAAB) - Mayor Donna Deegan**

Executive Committee: Dr. Barbara Darby, Board Chair; Dr. Ronetta Wards, Board Vice Chair; Ms. Kelly Frazier, Board Secretary  
Board Members: Dr. Audrianna Burgin; Mr. Lee Brown, III; Ms. Dawn Curling; Latrina Dowdell; Ms. Kiara Nixon; Errol B. White

**Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing**  
**By James Weldon Johnson**

Lift every voice and sing  
Till earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
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 rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt 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 sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading 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 the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,  
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand.  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.

---

Our theme, "Black Resilience: Empowering Futures by Honoring Legacy," is beautifully reflected in the lyrics of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," which was written in 1899 by Jacksonville native James Weldon Johnson, and later set to music by his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson. The song was first performed on February 12, 1900, by 500 students at Edwin M. Stanton School here in Jacksonville, Florida, and will celebrate its 125 anniversary this year.