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THE TRUTH UNBRIDLED

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## Supreme Court troubled by DA's rejection of black jurors

**By Mark Sherman**  
WASHINGTON (AP) - The Supreme Court signaled support Tuesday for a black death row inmate in Georgia who claims prosecutors improperly kept African-Americans off the jury that convicted him of killing a white man.

At least six of the nine justices indicated during arguments that black people were improperly singled out and kept off the jury that eventually sentenced defendant Timothy Tyrone Foster to death in 1987.

Foster could win a new trial if the Supreme Court rules his way. The discussion Monday also suggested that a technical issue might prevent the justices from deciding the substance of Foster's case.

Georgia Deputy Attorney General Beth Burton had little support on the court for the proposition that prosecutor Stephen Lanier advanced plausible "race-

neutral" reasons that resulted in an all-white jury for Foster's trial. Foster was convicted of killing 79-year-old Queen Madge White in her home in Rome, Georgia.

Several justices noted that Lanier's reasons for excusing people from the jury changed over time, including the arrest of the cousin of one black juror. The record in the case indicates that Lanier learned of the arrest only after the jury had been seated. "That seems an out and out false statement," Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said.

Breyer drew an analogy with a grandson who was looking for any reason not to do his homework, none of them especially convincing.



## Wreath-Laying Program Remembers Founder Dr. James E. Shepard

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) continued its upcoming celebrations on Friday, Oct. 30, with a Founder's Convocation in McDougald - McLendon Arena that honored the life and contributions of Dr. James E. Shepard.

Shepard, who founded the university in 1910, was educated as a pharmacist at Shaw University in Raleigh and created the Central Religious Training School and Chautauqua for the Colored Race in Durham focusing on "character and sound academic training."

Shepard believed deeply in education and once said, "It is the belief that education is not a philanthropy, not an expediency, but the bone and the sinew, the life or the death, of democracy..."

He was praised in a resolution from the North Carolina State Legislature in February 1949, which called him "a man who lived without servility, spoke without guile, fought without rancor and could lose with dignity and win with humility."

July 10, 2015, marked a significant milestone for North Carolina Central University," said Chancellor Debra Saunders-White during her 2015 Convocation remarks. "We entered our 105th year of serving as a hub for intellectual dialogue and discourse and a source of academic distinction for North Carolina, this region, the nation and the world."

Other significant milestones in the life of Shepard and the university are being celebrated this year:

November 3, 2015, marked the 140th birthday of Shepard and his family, which served as the home for the first African-American family in Durham, was completed.

In 1925, NCCU became the nation's first, liberal arts, state-supported, four years institution for African-Americans.

Delivering the address was Class of 1965 member The Honorable A. Leon Stanback Jr., who is a Double Eagle, holding two degrees from the university. Stanback graduated from NCCU School of Law in 1968. During his career, he served as the first African-American assistant prosecutor, served as the assistant district attorney in Guilford County, was named to the North Carolina Parole Board, and was appointed to the Superior Court Bench for the State of North Carolina, where he served for 21 years.

Stanback took the assembled guests through a historical time-line beginning with the opening of the university in 1910, through events that were occurring in the country when the Class of 1965 stepped onto the campus in 1961 as freshmen, and ending with their involvement in the racial challenges and protests of the 1960s.

NCCU and its students were instrumental in forcing change in laws in Durham and North Carolina," said Stanback. "We should all be proud of being part of this time in the ensuing years. The lives of many of our classmates are a testament to intellect and courage of the members of the Class of 1965. It is indeed a privilege and an honor to be a member of this Golden Year Class."

A wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Shepard Circle on campus near Brant and Fayetteville streets immediately following the Convocation.



Mrs. Sybrina Fulton



Trayvon Marton

## Trayvon Martin's Mother, Sybrina Fulton, to Visit NCCU

North Carolina Central University's Department of Student Engagement and Leadership in the Division of Student Affairs presents activist Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin, Wednesday Nov. 11, for the third installment of its Rock the Mic speaker series.

Fulton has become known as an inspirational spokesperson on behalf of parents and concerned citizens after the death of her 17-year-old son, Trayvon Martin, in February 2012. Fulton and Trayvon's father, Tracy Martin, founded the Trayvon Martin Foundation to advocate against violence towards children and on behalf of healthier, safer communities.

Fulton has traveled throughout the United States and internationally to bring her message of hope and change, create awareness of how violent crime impacts the families of the victims and provide support and advocacy for those families.

Fulton holds a bachelor's degree in English from Florida Memorial University. She worked for the Miami-Dade County Housing Development Agency for more than 25 years.

The event will begin at 7 p.m. in B.N. Duke Auditorium and is free and open to the public. Doors open at 6 p.m.

## Voter Rights Forum Set For Fayetteville; Protecting and Expanding Rights

Efforts to protect and expand voting rights in North Carolina continue to gain strength. A plan by Black elected officials and a coalition of Black publishers to convene a series of voting rights forums has taken shape. It is designed to help address the need to protect and expand Black voters access to the ballot. Our plan has been well-received and the first forum is scheduled in Fayetteville on Nov. 7. It will be held at the Westvive Recreation Center located at 267 Bonanza Dr. Fayetteville, NC 28303 from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

The forum is free and open to the public.

The NC Caucus of Black School Board Members (NCCBSBM) and a coalition of Black publishers are cosponsoring the Fayetteville forum. Participating Black publishers will continue to update their readers with agenda specifics and vision ideas as our planning continues. We plan to analyze the political landscape and identify areas that need attention or shoring up.

As previously noted, while holding the forums, publishers will engage in messaging and outreach in order to ensure that all who wish to get involved with the task of protecting and expanding our voting rights will know how to get involved. Educating, organizing and mobilizing Black voters are inherent in our efforts to succeed in protecting voting rights. Because we're planning multiple forums leading up to the November 2016 General Elections, leaders and communities will be able to engage in ongoing dialogues to plan and evaluate community engagement strategies.

We believe that the way we address the issue of protecting the voting rights of Blacks will go a long ways with effort to bring economic equity to black communities. The challenges to protect voting rights are the same as those we face in creating economic equity. Both challenges require ongoing effort of interaction between all segments of our communities and the leadership of Black elected officials. We've found that fundamental to solving problems is the ability to accurately define them and to educate constituents. Because Black elected officials represent the reservoir of political and economic empowerment potential of our communities, it is essential that they describe our strategies, goals and objectives in these arenas and lead efforts to achieve them.

## Gates hoping to inspire love of STEM through genealogy

**By Jesse J. Holland**  
WASHINGTON (AP) - Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. hopes to trigger a love for science, technology and math among American students by turning them on to searching for their family roots.

Gates, the Harvard University scholar and host of a genealogy show on PBS, and fellow researchers from Spelman College and Pennsylvania State University recently received a \$355,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to create a genealogy and genetics summer camp for middle school children, as well as a \$304,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for college-level courses.

The summer camps will start at Penn State University and the University of South Carolina this summer, and at the American Museum of Natural History in 2017. The college courses, in biology with a genetics and genealogy-centered approach, will be held at Spelman College and Morehouse College in Atlanta, and North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina.

"Ancestry chasing through genealogy and genetics is about one thing ultimately and that is you," Gates said in a phone interview. "And what's your favorite subject? Your favorite subject is yourself."

Gates, host of "Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr." on PBS, said the curriculum he is developing would teach social science, history, interview skills, archival skills and biology. The goal is to help students discover an innate love of science, technology, engineering and math that may lead to careers in STEM fields.

Hispanics, blacks, and Native Americans together comprise only 10 percent of workers in science and engineering jobs and 13 percent of science and engineering degree holders, according to the National Science Board's Science and Engineering Indicators 2014 report, though they represent 26 percent of the population.

The popularity of genealogy and finding ancestors would get children hooked, potentially inspiring future professors, scientists and mathematicians, said Gates. He said he wasn't worried about being able to keep the attention of young people.

"We're going to teach them about Y-DNA if you're a man, how you get that from your father who got that marker from his father and his father," said Gates, referring to the Y chromosome. Students also will learn about mitochondrial DNA, "which you get from your mother and her mother and her mother, whether you're a man or a woman."

Gates will work with Penn State University professor Nina Jablonski on the summer camps. Jablonski said the grants will make the camps affordable for parents, and help to right an imbalance in STEM fields.

"This new approach seeks to improve the retention of minority students in the sciences by inviting students into biology education with the discovery of unique facts about themselves," Jablonski said.

We would be "taking this whole idea of asking the question of 'Who am I?' into the classroom and getting students of varying ages to investigate themselves, leading to - we would hope - a whole cascade of positive things," she added.

"Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr." starts its third season on PBS on January 5.

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