

**An IndyPL Online Event**

THE CENTER FOR BLACK LITERATURE & CULTURE

# Book Fest 2020

JOIN US FOR THIS **VIRTUAL** EVENT ON

**June 13, 2020**

## Blacks and the Vote



When We all Vote - Priestley Johnson

- 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM **Featured Speaker Priestley Johnson**  
of *When We All Vote*
- 1:35 PM - 1:45 PM **"Conscious Voices"** with **Eric Saunders**, Master of Ceremonies;  
**Allyson Horton**, Poet & Author of *Quick Fire*; and  
**Gabbie Black**, Youth Poet
- 1:45 PM - 2:00 PM **"Self-care Tips"** with **Bianca L. Harris**, MS, LMCH,  
Founder of The Phoenix Nicholas Center, LLC
- 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM **Panel Discussion: "Social Action in the Age of Coronavirus"**

To attend register online at [indypl.org/book-fest](https://indypl.org/book-fest)

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## Priestley Johnson

*Deputy Director of Partnerships & Outreach with When We All Vote*

Priestley M. Johnson is a passionate advocate and relationship-builder, using her skill set of strategic partnerships, project management, fundraising, business development, and event planning to move the needle. She currently serves as the Deputy Director of Partnerships, Outreach & Engagement for When We All Vote, where she is responsible for ensuring new partners are supported and flourish in the lead-up to the next election.

**When We All Vote** is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization that is on a mission to increase participation in every election and close the race and age voting gap by changing the culture around voting, harnessing grassroots energy, and through strategic partnerships to reach every American. Launched in 2018 by Michelle Obama, Tom Hanks, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Janelle Monae, Chris Paul, Faith Hill, and Tim McGraw, When We All Vote is changing the culture around voting using a data-driven and multifaceted approach to increase participation in elections. Learn more at [whenweallvote.org](http://whenweallvote.org)

## Conscious Voices



**Eric D. Saunders** is a native of Indianapolis, a graduate of Cathedral High School, and earned his BA with a Double Major in Communication & Culture as well as African American & African Diaspora Studies at Indiana University. Currently serving as the Director of Community Engagement and physical education teacher for Vanguard College of Indianapolis. He also serves as a volunteer board member and

committee member for the following organizations: Indianapolis Public Library (African American History Committee & Center for Black Literature & Culture) and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. He is a growing artist, poet, and host and Co-Director of I AM Enough LLC alongside his wife Erica. The two are the proud parents of 2 children, Ehsan and Epyc.



**Allyson Horton** is a native of Indianapolis and received her MFA from Butler University. Her first book is *Quick Fire: Poems*. Her poetry has been published in the anthology *Turn the Page; You Don't Stop! Sharing Successful Chapters in Our Lives with Youth*; *Not Like the Rest of Us: An Anthology of Contemporary Indiana Writers*; *The Indianapolis Review*; and *It was Written: Poetry Inspired by Hip Hop*. Her work also appears in *Brilliant Flame!* and *Not Our President*. Allyson currently resides and teaches in Indiana.



**Gabbie Black** is currently a junior at Brownsburg High School where she is a proud member of the top women's show choir, Starlight Voices. This is her first time writing a poem that isn't for a school assignment and she's excited to share her work with the public.

## Panel Discussion: Social Action in the Age of Coronavirus

Social action is necessary to affect policy change and impact lives - but in the age of COVID-19, social distancing, and quarantining for at-risk groups, how does social action need to change? How should it remain the same? Learn more about our panelists and moderator:



**Denise Abdul-Rahman** serves as the Environmental Climate Justice Chair of the Indiana State Conference of the NAACP and is staff of the National NAACP Environmental Climate Justice Program, as the Regional Field Organizer for the Midwest and Plain States. Abdul-Rahman employs the program's three objectives: reduce harmful emissions, particularly greenhouse gases; advance energy efficiency and clean energy; and strengthen community resistance and

livability. She holds a BS in management, MBA in healthcare management and a health informatics designation from the Indiana University School of Informatics.



**Leon Bates** is a champion for Indianapolis sewer improvement and historian specializing in U.S. history with a focus on late 19th and early 20th-century urban history. His research interest is the urban environment, including education, labor, criminal justice, violence, police violence, and the intersection of race. Bates holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from IUPUI in Africana Studies and U.S. History, a Master of Arts Degree in Pan African Studies from the University of Louisville, and a Master of Arts in Public History from Wayne State University



**Jesseca Chatman** is a public health evaluator for the Indiana State Department of Health. She has been working in the public and private health sectors over the past eight years. Jesseca earned her bachelor of science degree in biology from Johnson C. Smith University and her master of public health degree in behavioral health promotion and education from Jackson State University. She is an avid member of the Greater Indianapolis National Association for

the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Jesseca is a certified health education specialist (CHES), children's author, and runner.



**Rev. Shonda Nicole Gladden** has a heart for affecting and energizing community change. Rev. Shonda Nicole Gladden is a mother, a scholar and a dedicated social entrepreneur who has served as a community advocate, state ambassador, clinician, and speaker throughout the world. She is one of the tri-chairs of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival in Indiana. She remains actively engaged in the landscape of religion in the public square through Crossroads AME Church, Faith in Indiana, and The Ministerium. She is currently an American

Studies PhD Student at Indiana University (IUPUI).



**Dr. Jerome Reide** is a Spirited civil rights activist with over 20 years of leadership experience with national and international non-profit organizations, legislatures, and advocacy campaigns. Highly regarded as an educator and thought leader in criminal justice, race relations, and economic development as demonstrated by stellar service as an NAACP regional director, the Director of Justice Initiatives for the State Bar of Michigan, adjunct

professor, and head of law practice that helped win a police misconduct suit with a \$1.5 million jury verdict.



## Moderator - Nichelle M. Hayes MPA, MLS

began developing and leading the Center for Black Literature & Culture (CBLC) at Central Library in 2017. Hayes graduated from Indiana University's School of Library & Information Science with her MLS. She was recently elected as the vice president of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association. Hayes currently serves on a number of local community boards, including President of Indiana Black Librarians Network, and as Assistant

Secretary of the local NAACP branch #3053.

The Center for Leadership Development awarded Hayes the 2020 Minority Achievers Award in the category of Arts & Entertainment for her work with the CBLC and the community. She is a blogger at [thietisthatbind.blog](http://thietisthatbind.blog) where she discusses genealogy and keeping families connected. Hayes is an alum (3rd cohort) of the Indiana Librarians Leading in Diversity Fellowship Program. In her spare time she is a genealogist, community leader, and lifelong learner.