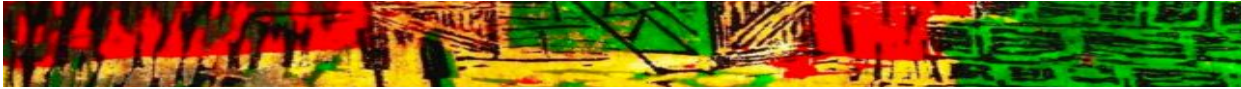


CLEMMONS FAMILY FARM IN VERMONT



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Hi-Res Photos are available upon request.

Clemmons Family Farm 2019 Humanities Speakers' Series Features Noted African-American Storytellers

"To Sing of Common Things: Making a Way Out of No Way"

(Charlotte, VT) The Clemmons Family Farm is pleased to announce its 2019 Humanities Speakers' Series, *"To Sing of Common Things: Making a Way Out of No Way"*. The five-part series, to run from Summer through Fall 2019, will feature talks with acclaimed African-American authors. Vermont-based writers **Dr. Emily Bernard**, author of *Black Is the Body: Stories from My Grandmother's Time, My Mother's Time, and Mine*; and **Naima Wade**, author of *Elbow Dreams: A Black Girl Growing Up In Vermont During The 1960s* are scheduled for talks.

In the final event of the speakers' series, 96-year-old **Dr. Jack and Lydia Clemmons**, owners of the Clemmons Family Farm in Charlotte, VT since 1962, will share family stories spanning 100 years of American history, taking listeners back to the post-slavery era of the rural southern US, to 1920s farming and oil boom towns in Louisiana and Arkansas, to the Great Migration to the mid-West and California, to the experiences of World War II African-American soldiers, and finally to the family farm that they have lovingly stewarded for nearly six decades. The talk will be moderated by **Dr. Lydia Clemmons**, eldest daughter of Jack and Lydia Clemmons. A Q&A, discussion, refreshments and socializing will follow the presentation."

The series talks are springboards to provoke meaningful conversations, and will be guided by **Dr. Wanda Heading-Grant** as moderator. This third annual speakers' series is free and open to the public at the historic Barn House on the Clemmons Family Farm in Charlotte, VT. Advance registration is required and a donation is welcome through www.clemmonsfamilyfarm.org. A Q&A and discussion will follow each presentation.

Sunday, September 14 from 4 PM - 5:30 PM: Emily Bernard, Ph.D., Author of Black is the Body: Stories from My Grandmother's Time, My Mother's Time, and Mine

Emily Bernard was born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee. She holds a B.A. and Ph.D. in American Studies from Yale University. Her work has appeared in *The American Scholar*, *The Boston Globe Magazine*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Oxford American*, *Ploughshares*, *The New Republic*, and *theatlantic.com*. Her essays have been reprinted in *Best American Essays*, *Best African American Essays*, and *Best of Creative Nonfiction*. Her first book, *Remember Me to Harlem: The Letters of Langston Hughes and Carl Van Vechten*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. She has received fellowships and grants from Yale University, Harvard University, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Vermont Arts Council, the Vermont Studio Center, and The MacDowell Colony. A contributing editor at *The American Scholar*, Emily is the Julian Lindsay Green and Gold Professor of English at the University of Vermont. She lives with her family in South Burlington, VT.

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Saturday, October 12 from 4 PM - 5:30 PM: Naima Wade, Author of *Elbow Dreams: A Black Girl Growing Up In Vermont in the 1960's*

Naima K Wade, poet, author, humanities educator and performing artist, moved to Vermont in 1964. Ms. Wade founded the ALANA Community Organization and received recognition from President Bill Clinton in 1996 for her work as a Promising Best Practice For Racial Reconciliation in America in the 21st Century. Ms. Wade has worked extensively as a performing artist in The Journey's End program series and in the Vermont Cultural Living History and Literary Program about the life of Daisy Turner and her father, Alexander Turner who was enslaved and fought in the Civil War. The series was nominated for the National Parks Service Underground Railroad Network To Freedom Program in 2017. Ms. Wade has performed her own works of poetry in New England and is a featured poet in *The Writer's Room At The Betsy* in Miami, FL, the Caribbean, USVI, and Ghana, West Africa. She published her memoir *Elbow Dreams: A Black Girl Growing Up In Vermont During The 1960's* and *War Is Over- We Are UnBound: Poetry Armor For Now*. Ms. Wade is a resident of Brattleboro, VT.

Saturday, October 19 from 4 PM - 5:30 PM: Jackson JW Clemmons, PhD, MD, and Mrs. Lydia Clemmons, RN *Making A Way Out of No Way: A Century of African-American Family Storytelling*

Jackson and Lydia Clemmons are two of Vermont's oldest living African Americans. Dr. Clemmons is an Emeritus Professor of Pathology and holds a PhD from the University of Wisconsin, an MD from the Case Western Reserve, and an Honorary PhD from the University of Vermont. He joined the University of Vermont Medical Center in 1962 as the second African-American member of faculty. Lydia Clemmons (Senior) was the first African-American nurse anesthetist at the University of Vermont Medical Center and President of the New England Association of Nurse Anesthetists. Both served as co-presidents of the Charlotte Central School PTA and remain vibrant members of their local community. In addition to their medical careers, Jack and Lydia Clemmons pursued lives as farmers, artists, and are the parents of five children and 13 grandchildren. The Clemmons are also gifted storytellers who blend gentle humor and humility with vivid descriptions of people, places and events. Their stories shine a personal light on African-American history and a culture of resilience and triumph. In the face of the dramatic loss of 93% of African-American owned land assets nation-wide over the course of their lifetimes, the couple have owned and maintained the Clemmons Family Farm for nearly 60 years. A vital land and cultural heritage asset, the 148-acre farm with six beautiful historic buildings is one of just 0.4 percent of farms in the U.S. that are still African-American owned.

Moderator: Dr. Wanda Heading-Grant is the Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs at the University of Vermont (UVM). She is the recipient of the 2018 University of Vermont Alumni Achievement Award, and the 2018 National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) Individual Leadership Award. She has been recognized in her community for social justice issues and for her sponsorship of women leaders in higher education, and she was instrumental in UVM being recognized for its commitment to diversity and well-being in the workplace and in the classroom. Dr. Heading-Grant is a Clinical Associate Professor in the College of Education and Social Services and a member of the graduate faculty at UVM. She received her Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from UVM, and her Master of Social Work degree from Adelphi University. She is a Senior Certified Professional through the Society for Human Resource Management, and has a Yale School of Management Women's Leadership Certificate.

The series is supported through grants from the Vermont Humanities Council and ArtPlace America in conjunction with the *A Sense of Place* project, which is led by the Clemmons Family Farm in partnership with Champlain College, and the Peace and Justice Center and Burlington City Arts as the fiscal agents.

About The Clemmons Family Farm

The 148-acre Clemmons Family Farm in Charlotte, Vermont, owned by Jack and Lydia Clemmons since 1962, is now one of just 0.4% of African-American owned farms in the U.S. and is one of the largest African American-owned historic farms in the state that celebrates African-American and African diaspora history, arts and culture. The *A Sense of Place* project, funded by ArtPlace America, supports the farm's transition into an African-American Heritage and Multicultural Center with the overarching goal to improve community mental health, physical health and social well-being through creative placekeeping and African-American and African diaspora arts and culture programming. *A Sense of Place* is implemented in partnership with a growing number of Vermont-based organizations.

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