

42<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL PROFILES IN EXCELLENCE PRESENTS

# UNTOLD STORIES

**DUNN** MUSEUM

Sunday, February 2 ● 3:00pm



# Welcome



Lake County  
Forest Preserves

# Program

- Welcome
- Invocation
- *Lift Every Voice and Sing*
- Poem by Paula Denise Johnson
- Keynote Speaker- James Ciccone
- Affirm Christian Academy Choir Performance
- Recognition of Honorees



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# Invocation



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# Recognition of Dignitaries



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# *Lift Every Voice and Sing*

Lead by Shirley Hughes



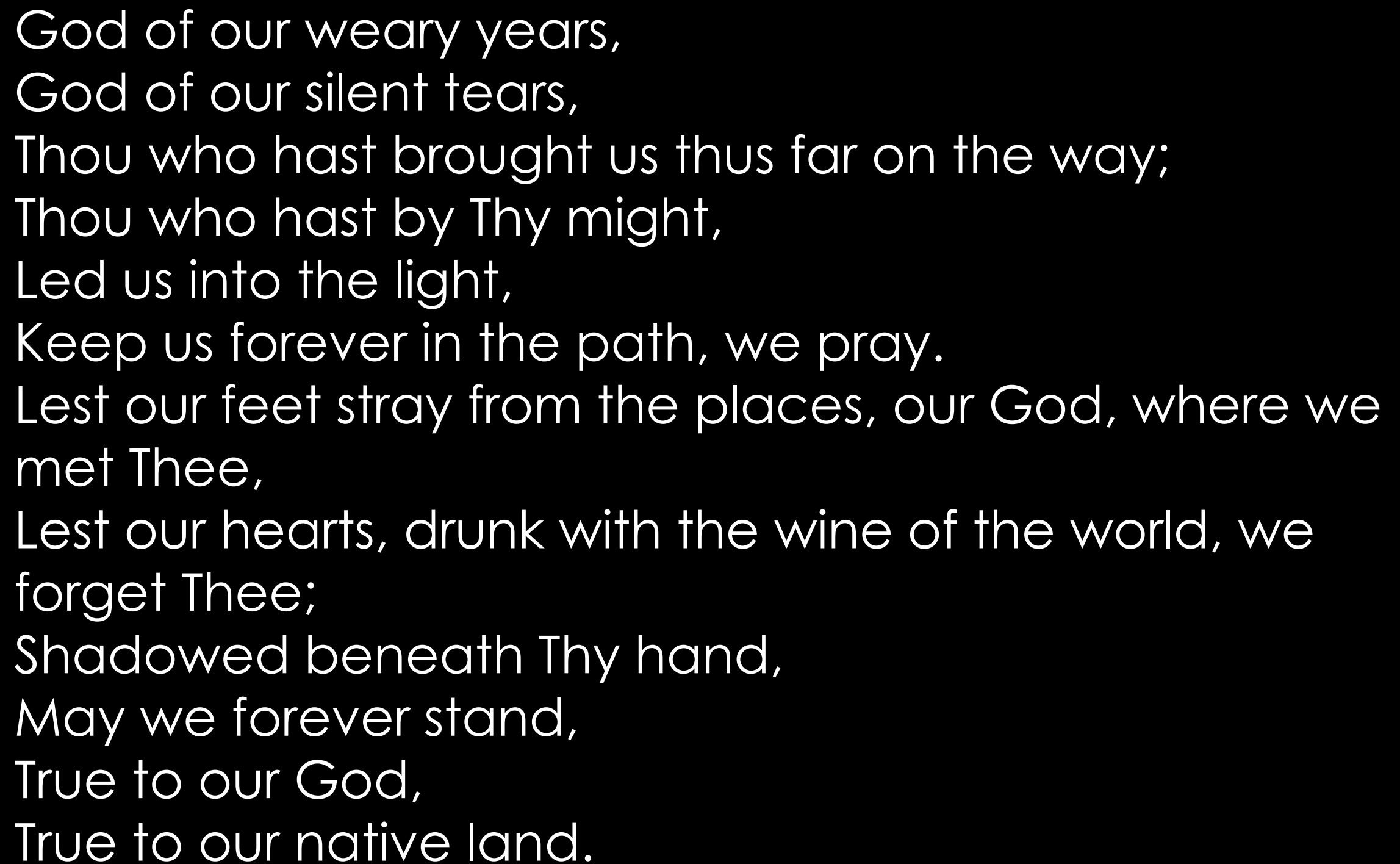
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# *Please Sing Along!*

Lift every voice and sing,  
Till earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the list'ning 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 chast'ning 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.



The image features a black background with white text. On the left and right sides, there are vertical decorative borders. The left border consists of a series of green and black geometric shapes, including triangles and rectangles, arranged in a pattern. The right border consists of a series of yellow and black geometric shapes, also arranged in a pattern. The text is centered and reads:

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.

# *Freedom Seekers*



Paula Denise Johnson, Poet



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# James Ciccone, Author



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Tales of the "first white man to plant corn in Lake County"

# THE LAKE COUNTY TRILOGY



Introduction by DIANA DRETSKE

**JAMES CICCONI**

Wang & Jean Publishers  
New York  
2024

"What a gut punch of a book! Very well written and impossible to put down..."

—James Reasoner, *New York Times* and *USA Today*  
bestselling author

# THE HORSE

A Novel



**JAMES  
CICCONI**

**JAMES CICCONI**



# BARN FIRE

10 Western Stories

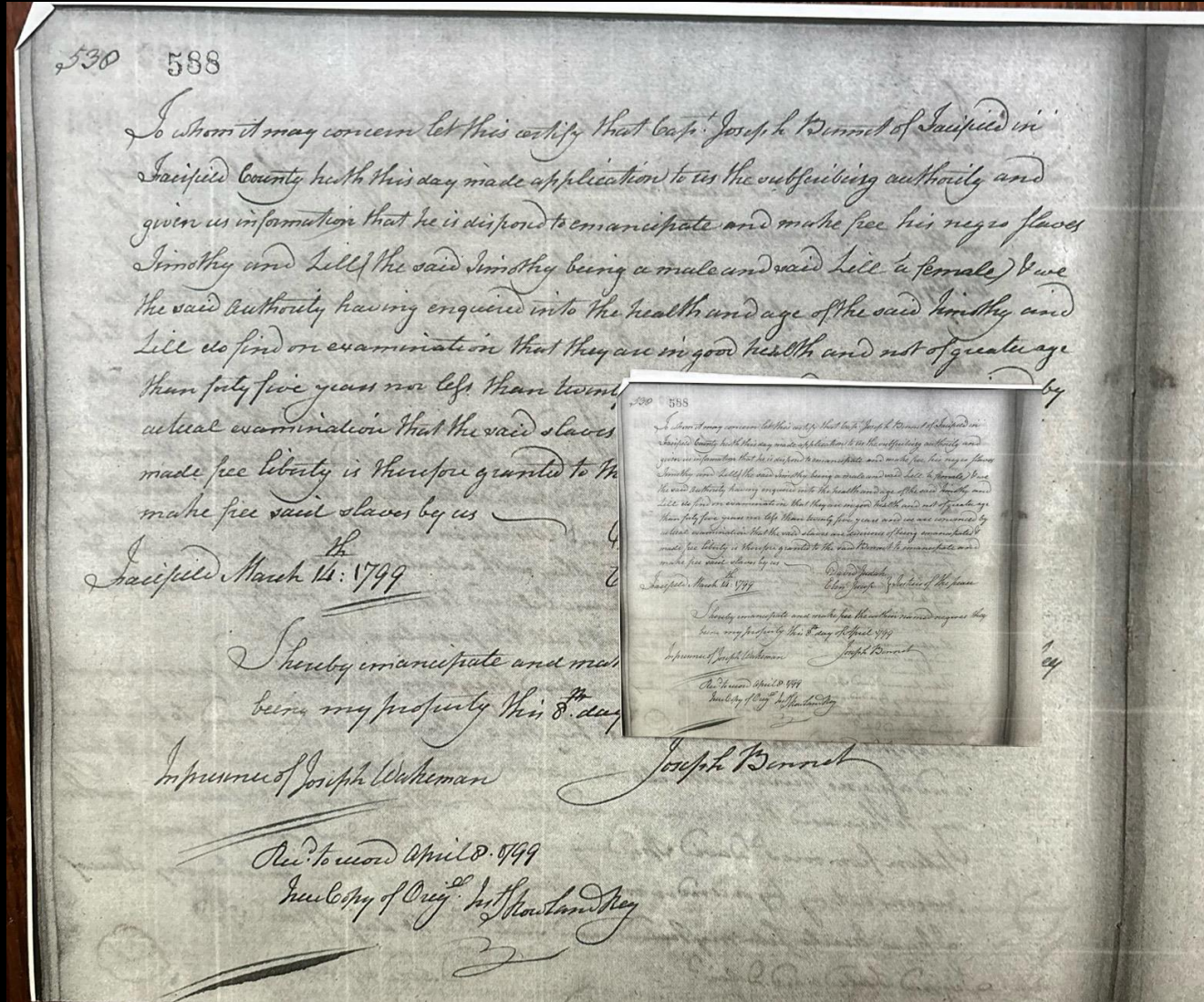


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# Bennett Manumission Petition

filed March 14, 1799  
Fairfield County, CT





# Bennett house, Fairfield County, CT



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**In 1864, Henry O. Flipper  
graduated West Point.  
[sample sentence]**



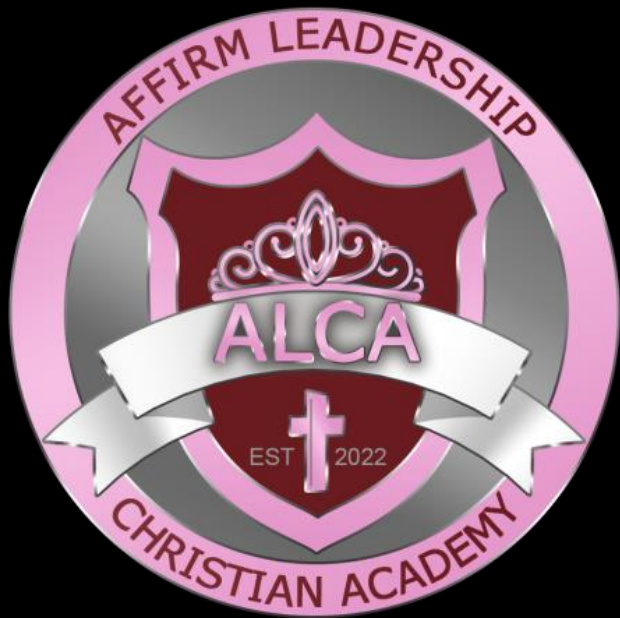
**In 1864, Henry O. Flipper, who was  
born enslaved, graduated West Point.  
[sample sentence]**

# Thank you!



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# Affirm Leadership Christian Academy Choir



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# 2025 Honorees



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# Sylvia England



- 36 years as an educator, administrator and Dean of Students
- Passionate about travel, research, and civic leadership.
- Founder of the African American Museum at England Manor
- Hope is to teach the youth who will go on to share history and duty of citizenship.



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# Tynisha Gardner



- 10 years in education and 20+ in business
- President and CEO of Affirm Leadership Christian Academy
- Transformative leader and community activist.
- Has helped place more than 500 students into schools



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# Gregory Gordon

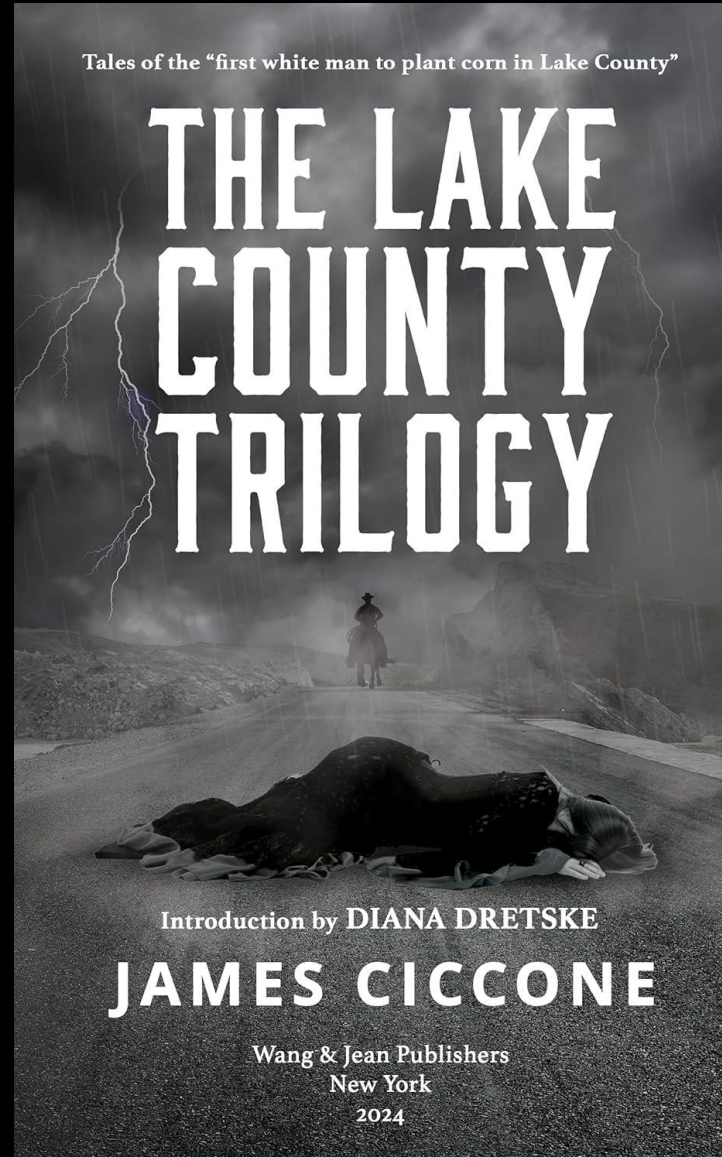


- Tenured History Professor at College of Lake County
- Profiles in Excellence committee since 1992
- Published author with a paper out in 2025
- Passionate about sharing history and expanding knowledge



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# Book Raffle



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Thank you for coming!

