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UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF VIRGINIA'S ENSLAVED AFRICAN AMERICANS

PROFESSOR WHITE AND ALUMNAE WARD APPOINTED TO SERVE ON STATE TASK FORCE

by [Jim Hanchett](#) | February 1, 2024

Read time: about 1 min

Historian Jonathan White and Del. Jeion Ward '95 have been appointed to serve on the Task Force to Assist in Identification of the History of Formerly Enslaved African Americans in Virginia.

White's appointment as one of four citizens to serve on the Task Force was [announced by Gov. Glenn Youngkin](#). Dr. White is a professor of [Leadership and American Studies](#) and one of the nation's foremost experts on the history of slavery, the Civil War, and the life of President Abraham Lincoln.

Ward is a Democrat and has served in the House of Delegates since 2004, representing the broad swath of Hampton that constitutes the 92nd District. She is one of four members of the General Assembly to serve on the Task Force.

The [Task Force](#) is assisting [Virginia Humanities](#) with these goals:

- Promote the preservation of sites significant to the history of formerly enslaved African Americans in Virginia, develop a registry of sites, and study the economic impact of tourism and development relative to such sites.
- Assess the extent to which students and the public are knowledgeable about African American history, slavery in Virginia, and the vestiges of slavery.
- Identify the contributions of African Americans to Virginia, the nation, and the world.
- Develop a roster of volunteer historians, educators, businesses, organizations, and speakers to be resources for

classroom teachers on African American history, the impact of slavery on modern society, and the contributions of African Americans to Virginia and the nation.
