



## NEWS RELEASE

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*Mobile, Alabama* – This fall, the Mobile Medical Museum continues its recently expanded programming schedule with a new special exhibit, three commissioned sculptures, and two guest lectures by distinguished medical historians.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, the Museum opens *Dreaming at Dawn: African Americans and Health Care, 1865-1945*, an original exhibit that tells the story of African American medical practitioners in Mobile during the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras. Drawing from the museum's own collection as well as rarely seen photographs and artifacts on loan from other local collections, the exhibit will be on view in the Mary Elizabeth and Charles Bernard Rodning Gallery through July 2019. The centerpiece of the exhibit will be a new cast-iron sculptural portrait of Dr. James A. Franklin, Sr., one of Mobile's earliest and most distinguished African American physicians, created by local sculptor April Livingston.

"This exhibit represents a major dimension of the multigenerational civil rights struggle that has only recently been rediscovered," says Dr. Glassbrook, Executive Director of the Mobile Medical Museum. "Mobile's first formally trained African American doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists faced enormous legal, financial and social barriers in working to improve the quality and range of health care services available in their communities. Progress was slow, but it was made possible by the courage, toil and sacrifices of these extraordinary men and women."

The exhibit will be supported by two guest lectures, part of the 2018 Sally Clark Green Memorial Lecture Series:

- Dr. Deirdre Cooper Owens, Professor of History, Queens College, City University of New York. "Medical Bondage and the Birth of American Gynecology." USA Marx Library Auditorium, Wednesday, October 17, 2018, 6-7 pm.
- Dr. Pia Jordan, Project Director of the Tuskegee Army Nurses Project. "The Tuskegee Army Nurse Project." USA College of Nursing, Room 1013, Thursday, November 8, 2018, 6-7 pm.

Also in September, the Museum will be unveiling two additional cast-iron sculptures by Ms. Livingston, which will be permanently installed in the Museum's Robert Thrower Medicinal

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Garden: *Motherwork*, a piece that honors the contribution of Alabama's midwives to the field of obstetrics; and *Portrait of Bessie McGhee*, which commemorates the legacy of a beloved healer from the Poarch Creek tribal community. Following the run of the *Dreaming at Dawn* exhibit, *Portrait of James A. Franklin, Sr.* will take its permanent place alongside the other two sculptures.

The new sculptures and exhibit have been designated a bicentennial project by the Alabama Bicentennial Commission. The Mobile Medical Museum will be offering curriculum-based tours and other public programs throughout the year so that visitors of all ages can engage with the presented historical themes on many levels.

These projects have been made possible through the generous support of the Franklin Primary Health Center, the Franklin Finley Family Fund, the Christian Benevolent Funeral Home, Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment of the Arts. Funding for the 2018 Sally Clark Green Lecture Series is provided by Dr. Byron Green, Dr. Elizabeth Mancini, and the Department of History and the Gender Studies Program at the University of South Alabama.

"We cordially invite you to attend and experience these powerful and meaningful exhibitions and lectures," says Dr. Charles B. Rodning, President, Mobile Medical Museum Board of Trustees. "We are most grateful for the sponsorships provided and received, which have enabled us to feature these poignant artifacts and narratives. You will surely be educated and enlightened by them."

#### **About the Mobile Medical Museum**

Founded in 1962, by Dr. Samuel Eichold, II, the Mobile Medical Museum preserves and exhibits medical artifacts and archives to commemorate Mobile's prominent place in the history of medical education and public health within the state of Alabama and the Gulf Coast. The Museum's collections and exhibitions provide the public with a broad understanding of the evolution of the art and science of health care.

Since 2004, the Museum has been located at the Vincent-Doan-Walsh House, Mobile's oldest extant private residence, which is located on the midtown campus of the University of South Alabama Children's and Women's Hospital. Included on the National Register of Historic Places of the National Park Service, the house was built in 1827 by Captain Benjamin Vincent, who commanded several cargo vessels that sailed between New Orleans and Mobile.

The Museum's collections include thousands of medical artifacts, photographs, and documents from the past 300 years. The Museum also houses the J.L. Bedsole Archives and Ben May Library, which together contain over 50 cubic feet of letters, doctor's registers, photographs, and rare books.

The Mobile Medical Museum is a locally supported 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and does not receive any funding from federal, state, county, or city taxes.