



Date and Location for 2017 George Washington Carver Dinner Announced

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Today, the George Washington Carver Birthplace Association (CBA) announced the second annual George Washington Carver Dinner will take place at the Des Moines Area Community College's Iowa Culinary Institute in Ankeny, Iowa, on Sept. 21. The celebration begins with an hour-long reception at 5:30 pm.

The Carver Dinner is the major annual fundraising event for the George Washington Carver Birthplace Association (CBA), the 501 (c)3 Cooperating Association to the National Park Service at George Washington Carver National Monument located in Diamond, Missouri.

The Carver Dinner celebrates Carver's powerful legacy as a gifted scientist, inventor, educator, artist, musician, and liberally educated professional. It also promotes his spirit of discovery and emphasis on sustainability for the benefit of present and future generations, particularly young learners. Several awards will be bestowed at the event to honor leaders who are carrying Carver's mission into the 21st century.

"We are excited to bring the 2017 Carver Dinner to central Iowa, a place that was very important to George Carver's development," said CBA Board Chairman Larry James, noting Carver's early years in Winterset and his studies at Simpson College and Iowa State University.

James also expressed the CBA's appreciation for the dinner's hosts at Iowa Culinary Institute, led by executive chef Robert Anderson, at the Des Moines Area Community College. The appreciation was mutual.

"DMACC's recent articulation agreement with Tuskegee University, Iowa's history with the Tuskegee Airmen, and the fact that Dr. Carver was such a significant contributor to Iowa and Tuskegee, makes it an honor for DMACC to be able to participate in this celebration," DMACC President Rob Denson said. "We are writing the next chapter in the history of George Washington Carver."

His enthusiasm was echoed by Simpson College President Jay Simmons, who said, "All of us at Simpson College are honored to participate in the second annual George Washington Carver Dinner. Issues of diversity and inclusion have been at the forefront of our national dialog in recent months, and Dr. Carver's legacy reminds us of the critical importance of supporting and including all persons who share in our common quest for dignity, knowledge, and equality."

Wendy Wintersteen, the endowed dean of the ISU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, added, "The person and the legacy of George Washington Carver is important to all of us at Iowa State University. His story speaks to the values we strive to embrace and who we seek to be as Iowans and as a land-grant university. Through programs and various initiatives, we try to build upon Carver's work both as a scientist and a humanitarian, and we appreciate the work the Carver Birthplace Association does in this regard as well."

"Tuskegee University is delighted to participate in the 2017 ceremony," said Walter Hill, dean of the TU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. "Our faculty and students were actively engaged in the 2016 inaugural event in St. Louis and have great memories."

Hill added that he found inspiration in the pre-dinner discussions among the students on how to address local and global challenges facing our food and agricultural systems. "With the life of George W. Carver as the catalyst for our coming together," he said, "we expect to share, learn and have a grand time."

Catherine Swoboda and Paxton Williams are co-chairing the planning committee for this year's Carver Dinner, where several honored guests will receive the Carver Distinguished Service and Innovation Award, the Carver Rising Leader in Service and Innovation Award, and the Carver Spirit of Innovation Award.

"This event will be a fine tribute to the Carver legacy in Iowa and to the role Iowa and Iowans played in George Washington Carver's development," Swoboda said. "I think the dinner attendees will be excited to learn about new initiatives being done to continue the Carver legacy," Williams added.

Luther S. Williams, who has served as assistant director of the National Science Foundation and chair of the White House Biotechnology Coordinating Committee, will be on hand to provide an update on the effort to restore the school first attended by Carver.

Eulanda Sanders, the Donna R. Danielson Professor in Textiles and Clothing at ISU, said Carver would be pleased with his namesake dinner's multidisciplinary approach. She pointed out that Carver included recipes in many of the bulletins he produced for Southern farmers.

"As someone who teaches in the state where Dr. Carver completed his formal education and who works in one the fields in which he worked, and given his interest in instructing students and the larger community in the culinary arts and his appreciation for Iowa," she said, "I think he would be pleased with the collaborations embodied in this year's Carver Dinner."

In addition to Swoboda and Williams, the 2017 Carver Dinner Planning Committee includes CBA Executive Director Ann McCormick; Dean Jim Stick and Executive Chef Robert Anderson from DMACC; Dean Walter Hill and Dr. Olga Bolder-Tiller of Tuskegee University; Interim President-elect Ben Allen, Dr. Eulanda Sanders and Dr. Theresa Cooper from Iowa State University; Dr. Kent Eaton, Dr. Heidi Levine and Walter Lain from Simpson College; and Pioneer Hi-Bred retiree Thomas Phillips.

The inaugural Carver Dinner was held on September 20, 2016, at Washington University in St. Louis and included the presentation of several awards to K-12 and undergraduate students, in addition to the conferral of the George Washington Carver Distinguished Service and Innovation Award to the Hon. Thomas J. Vilsack, 30th U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and 40th Governor of Iowa, and Dr. Luther S. Williams, distinguished educator, scientist, and administrator.

The second annual Carver Dinner will support signature CBA programs, in particular the renovation of the 1872 Colored School attended by a young George and the continued development of an accompanying distance-education enabled educational and interpretative center.

"My wife and I attended the inaugural Carver Dinner in St. Louis," planning committee member Thomas Phillips said. "We've long been aware of the work of the CBA, and in fact, attended the Carver Symposium they produced in 2008 and have been pleased to see the work they do sharing and continuing Dr. Carver's legacy. I'm pleased to be a part of this effort because I know the Carver Dinner and the larger Carver-related efforts have the potential to impact the nation and abroad."

Tickets for this year's event may be purchased at <https://2017carverdinner.eventbrite.com> or by writing CBA at the address below. Individual tickets to the dinner cost \$125, with tables of eight being offered for \$800. Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

For more information on CBA, please see www.carverbirthplaceassoc.org or write: Ann McCormick, CBA Executive Director, at 5646 Carver Road, Diamond, MO 64840 or cba.volunteers@gmail.com. For more information on the Carver Dinner, please write 2017 Carver Dinner planning committee co-chair Paxton Williams at williams.pax@gmail.com.

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