



Contact:

Cindy Boyer
cboyer@landmarksociety.org
(585)546-7029 x12

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MEET ROCHESTER'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN ANCESTORS AT THE LANDMARK SOCIETY'S
"WALK THE WALK"**

FREE PUBLIC PERFORMANCE DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

ROCHESTER, NY, January 21, 2016 -- Frederick Douglas, Captain Sunfish, Bessie Hamm and many others will be brought to life at the 2016 performance of *Walk the Walk: Encounters with Rochester's African-American Ancestors* presented by The Landmark Society of Western New York on Thursday, February 11.

"*Walk the Walk* helps bring our history to life," said Cindy Boyer, Landmark Society Director of Public Programs. Vividly portrayed by Shawn Dunwoody, Captain Sunfish, a late 18th century frontiersman and formerly enslaved person, will lead the event. Moving performances show the strength of Anna Murray Douglass, the dedication of Bessie Hamm, the pride and faith of George Brown and the dignified determination of Austin Steward and Frederick Douglass. Talented local musicians enhance the event.

Now in its 20th year, *Walk the Walk* is offered FREE during a single performance only – Thursday, February 11 at 7 p.m. – at The Memorial AME Zion Church, 549 Clarissa Street in the historic Corn Hill District. The congregation is one of the oldest in Rochester, having formed in 1827. The African-American Women's service club, The Links, Rochester, NY chapter will host a cookie reception with a chance to chat with the performers.

Special Performances for School Children

Special performances of *Walk the Walk* for school children in grades 3 and above will be held on the mornings of February 11 & 12 at the Hochstein School of Music and Dance. This historic building was the location of Frederick Douglass' funeral, and also stands on the site of an Underground Railroad station. Performances for school children include one-on-one chats and interaction between the student audience and the "Ancestors," and help educators bring to life the difficult decisions faced by these historical figures. Interested educators can contact Boyer at cboyer@landmarksociety.org. Limited transportation funds are available.



The Landmark Society provides program materials for classroom use before and after the performance, including historic timelines, activity sheets on each Ancestor, and guidelines on appropriate audience etiquette for a live theatre setting. Post-event materials develop language arts and visual arts skills, as students choose from a variety of writing or illustration activities reflecting on their experiences. The activities help teachers meet NYS learning standards in language arts, social studies, and visual arts.

Started in 1996, *Walk the Walk* has become one of Rochester's premier Black History Month events, bringing to life some of Rochester's richest characters in an entertaining, engaging and educational theatrical production. The performance is a must-see for anyone who appreciates history, theatre and the ribbons of experience that tie all humans together.

About The Landmark Society: *The Landmark Society of Western New York, Inc. is one of the oldest and most active preservation organizations in America, serving nine Western New York counties. Formed in 1937, The Landmark Society continues to protect the unique architectural heritage of our region and promote preservation and planning principles that foster healthy and sustainable communities. For additional information about The Landmark Society, visit www.landmarksociety.org. The Landmark Society is supported in part by New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.*