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Two Philadelphia natives get involved with innovative back to school program



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CHICAGO – On Friday, September 17, as students across the country begin the new school year, Philadelphia natives Renee J. Amoo and Emma Chappell will join more than 200 African American HistoryMakers nationwide who will return to school as well.

The HistoryMakers, the nation's largest African American video oral history archive, is celebrating 10 years in existence by launching a program to help confront the issue of youth violence and inspire youth to greatness. The Back-to-School With The HistoryMakers program will deploy living African American HistoryMakers into schools in nearly 30 states across the country to recount their own school experiences and the struggles they encountered.

Nationwide Back-to-School With The HistoryMakers participants include: former U.S. Senator and Ambassador Carol Moseley Braun, Former Ohio Congressman Louis Stokes, Civil Rights Activist C. T. Vivian and actress Marla Gibbs (227, The Jeffersons). United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and CNN's Soledad O'Brien are also lending their support to this initiative.

Renee J. Amooore, healthcare advocate and founder of the Amooore Group, and Emma Chappell, a 30-year banking veteran and entrepreneur, will visit William Henry Harrison Elementary School. The HistoryMakers will share their perspectives on the history of the community and offer a deeper understanding of the challenges the city faces today.

The HistoryMakers' Founder and Executive Director, Julieanna Richardson, says she launched the Back-to-School With The HistoryMakers initiative to respond to President Barack Obama's call for public service in a real and meaningful way by helping youth recognize that there are alternatives to violence and the challenges they confront.

"By bringing these living legends into the schools," Richardson said, "we raise awareness about the achievements of the accomplished African Americans in local communities and bring these leaders into schools to see things firsthand."

Richardson is encouraging educators across the country to use multimedia resources such as The HistoryMakers' digital archive to enrich their students' exposure to the contributions of African Americans in every community.

The HistoryMakers is a 501 (3) (c) non-profit dedicated to recording and preserving the personal histories of well-known and unsung African Americans. To date, the organization has interviewed over 2,000 HistoryMakers, with the goal of creating an archive of 5,000 interviews (30,000 hours) for the establishment of a one-of-a-kind digital archive, and priceless educational resource. For more information, visit The HistoryMakers website at www.thehistorymakers.com and The HistoryMakers digital archive at <http://www.idvl.org/thehistorymakers/>.

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