

# NEWS RELEASE

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September 30, 2015 Geri Sanders

Kansas Institute for African American and Native American Family History (KIAANAFH)

816-529-2510 or [Msgs2004@aol.com](mailto:Msgs2004@aol.com)

**Presentation Explores Unique Kansas Connection to Vice President**

**Kansas Institute for African American and Native American Family History (KIAANAFH) –** in Kansas City, Kansas will host “The Nicodemus Connection to a Vice President,” a presentation and discussion by Angela Bates on October 31, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at Metropolitan Baptist Church, 853 Washington Blvd., Kansas City, KS. Members of the community are invited to attend the free program. Contact KIAANAFH at 816-529-2510 or [msgs2004@aol.com](mailto:msgs2004@aol.com) for more information. The program is made possible by the Kansas Humanities Council.

Before homesteading as free men in the African American settlement of Nicodemus, Kansas, Tom Johnson and John Samuels were enslaved by U.S. Vice President Richard M. Johnson. This presentation explores their lives on the Johnson plantation, the tragic split of their families, and their migration and settlement on the western plains of Kansas.

Angela Bates is the executive director of the Nicodemus Historical Society. She presents educational programs across the nation covering Nicodemus, Exodusters and black towns in the West, Buffalo Soldiers, and black women in the West.

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“The slave experience in America was not as simple as black and white, as we might want to believe,” said Bates. “It was experienced on many levels, by many diverse groups of people and individuals black as well as white, and varied geographically and individually from one state and plantation or household to the next. Slavery *should* be looked at, explored, and discussed without blame, shame, guilt, or anger, which cloud our views and limits our understanding.”

“The Nicodemus Connection to a Vice President”is part of the Kansas Humanities Council’s *Humanities* Speakers Bureau, featuring presentations and discussions that examine our shared human experience—our innovations, culture, heritage, and conflicts.

The Kansas Humanities Council conducts and supports community-based programs, serves as a financial resource through an active grant-making program, and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities. For more information about KHC programs contact the Kansas Humanities Council at 785/357-0359 or visit online at [www.kansashumanities.org](http://www.kansashumanities.org).

For more information about “The Nicodemus Connection to a Vice President”inKansas City, Kansas contact the KIAANAFH at 816-529-2510 or visit our website at KIAANAFH.org.

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