

THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF
MEDIA, JOURNALISM AND FILM PRESENTS:



THE 2019

Paul Robeson Awards

HONORING PROFESSOR EMERITUS
ABRAHAM "ABIYI" FORD

ALONG WITH SOME OF THE BEST STUDENT WORK

THE AFI SILVER THEATER & CULTURAL CENTER

8633 Colesville Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20910

TUESDAY OCTOBER 8, 2019 @ 7:00PM

ADMISSION IS FREE

Reception immediately following the awards ceremony



ABRAHAM "ABIYI" FORD

PROFESSOR EMERITUS AND FILM EDUCATOR



Professor Emeritus Abraham "Abiyi" Ford was the founding Chair of the Department of Radio, Television and Film in Howard University's School of Communications.

A graduate of Columbia University, Professor Ford was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to Barbadian parents who during the 1920's and 1930's were prominent members of Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Harlem, New York. Inspired by Garvey's 'Back to Africa' movement, Ford's parents repatriated to Ethiopia where his father, an accomplished

musician, played at the 1930 coronation of Haile Selassie. Ford's mother, an esteemed educator, would later fight in the resistance efforts against Italian military invasion of Ethiopia. It was this family legacy of international activism, education, music and resistance that would inform Professor Abiyi Ford's creative and academic career.

A documentary filmmaker and two-time Fulbright scholar, Professor Ford's approach to filmmaking and education was that of elevating the African, Caribbean and African American experiences. Ford produced several documentary films on the African experience along with being heavily involved in FEPACI (Panafrican Federation of Filmmakers) and FESPACO (Panafrican Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou) in Burkina Faso, the continent's leading international film festival. In terms of academic leadership at Howard University, Ford would later go on to head the MFA in Film Program, the only graduate film program at an HBCU. In addition to filmmaking, education and service, Professor Ford was known in Washington, D.C. as a "master drummer" percussionist who regularly played West African and Caribbean drums during Sunday sessions in Malcolm X Park. After retiring from Howard in 2006, Professor Ford returned to Ethiopia where at Addis Ababa University, he was instrumental in establishing the School of Journalism and Communication where he served as its founding Dean. By 2011, Professor Ford led the creation of the University's first ever, graduate film program housed in the Alle School of Fine Arts and Design.

Pursuing his passion in education and service, Professor Abraham "Abiyi" joined the ancestors on May 9, 2018.

PROGRAM ORDER

VIDEO: Paul Robeson Tribute

Welcome

Opening Remarks: Dr. Gracie Lawson-Borders, *Dean, Howard University,
Cathy Hughes School of Communications*

Introduction of Tribute Video: Dr. Montré Missouri, *MFA Program Coordinator*

VIDEO: Abraham "Abiyi" Ford Tribute

Tribute: Dr. Mbye Cham, *Professor Emeritus*

Tribute: Dr. Bishetta Merritt, *Professor Emeritus*

Tribute: Alonzo Crawford, *Professor Emeritus*

Award Presentation: Dr. Montré Missouri

Acceptance Speech: Miniabiyi T. Ford

VIDEO: Student Showcase

Closing Remarks/Credits: Jami Ramberan, *Film/TV Sequence Coordinator*

Student Honorees: Sonja Williams, *Interim Chair,*

Department of Media Journalism and Film

and Miniabiyi T. Ford

RECEPTION

Sonja Williams, Interim Department Chair

Ingrid Sturgis, Assistant Chair

2019 Paul Robeson Awards Committee

Montré Missouri, Co-Chair

Jami Ramberan, Co-Chair

Vicci Saunders

Sonja Williams

Colin Campbell

Mark Beckford

Carolyn Malachi

Candace Shannon Lewis, Awards Host

Srikanth Nandigama, Technical Director

Special Thanks To: AFI Silver Theatre, DC Chapter of the Links, Time Warner Inc.
Howard University, Cathy Hughes School of Communications, Maori Karmael Holmes,
Idit Dvir, Tina Morton, Jennifer Thomas, Shirley Carswell



PAUL ROBESON

(1898-1976)

Robeson was an African American artist who attained worldwide celebrity achieved by few. Despite his considerable fame as a singer and star of the stage and screen, Robeson's greatest achievement was to selflessly serve as a champion of the battle for human rights on a global scale. He was both praised and damned for his outspoken activism and dedication to social justice.