

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT



## AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

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**Date:** June 17, 2009

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION HOSTS NEW ENGLAND SLAVE TRADERS' DESCENDENT FOR APOLOGY

**HARTFORD** – On June 26, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 2D of the Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT, the State of Connecticut African American Affairs Commission (AAAC) will lay out recommendations it says should follow the passage of **Resolution 632: Resolution Expressing The Profound Regret Of The Connecticut General Assembly For The History Of Wrongs Inflicted Upon Black Citizens By Means Of Slavery, Exploitation And Legalized Racial Segregation, And Calling On All Citizens To Take Part In Acts Of Racial Reconciliation.** **Katrina Brown will be present.**

It is hoped that Resolution 632,(viewed by critics as a mostly ceremonial act), will have impact on how people relate to one another. **Specifically the General Assembly's resolution**

urges educational, religious, civic, and business entities to acknowledge and learn from Connecticut's past, including as a leading state in the abolition efforts to promote racial equality and reconciliation; and

calls on residents to recommit their state, communities and themselves to work daily to promote equality, as proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence; treat all people with respect and eliminate racial prejudices and injustices.

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## **AAAC/ SLAVERY APOLOGY**

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Racial reconciliation is a task to which Katrina Brown has dedicated her life. **Brown is a descendent of the DeWolfe family (of Rhode Island,) one of New England's most prominent slave trading families. Her documentary "Traces of the Trade" chronicles the practices and effects of the family business.** Brown uses the film to acknowledge the past and pave the way for greater mutual respect and understanding.

**"This information has practical applications" says AAAC Executive Director Glenn Cassis. "Systemic barriers are based in history and culture. We need to understand our history and change institutional practices so that the greatest number of people can achieve their highest potential."**

Brown will include excerpts from the documentary in her presentation. Event participants will receive suggestions about how to use the film to open the discussion about difficult topics such as race, class and privilege. Other invited speakers include, Senator Eric Coleman ( 2<sup>nd</sup> District), Representative Kenneth Green ( 1<sup>st</sup> District), Civil Rights Attorney Cynthia Jennings, NAACP President Scott Esdaile, University of Hartford Associate Professor Jay Stewart, David Warren of the Anti-Defamation League and AAAC Chair George Logan.

To learn more about the African American Affairs Commission go to [www.cga.ct.gov/aaac](http://www.cga.ct.gov/aaac).

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### **African-American Affairs Commission Mission**

*To improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well being of the African-American Community in the State of Connecticut through advocacy, information sharing, cultural awareness, community networking and influencing legislation.*