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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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February 24, 2014

Ald. Milele A. Coggs  
(414) 286-2994

## Celebration at City Hall to mark 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Dr. James Cameron

Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs and other dignitaries and community members are hosting a special event **tomorrow** to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the late **Dr. James Cameron**, a noted civil rights activist and author, self-taught historian, public speaker and consciousness-raiser.

The **free, public event** will take place at **5:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 25** in the first floor rotunda at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.

The celebration will include performances by **Oshi Adelabu, Kwabena Antoine Nixon, Ozara Odè** and the **Ina Onilu Drum and Dance Ensemble**. Sponsors for the event include Alderwoman Coggs, America's Black Holocaust Museum, **City Treasurer Spencer Coggs**, state **Rep. Leon Young** and **Maures Development**.

James Cameron founded the America's Black Holocaust Museum and was America's only survivor of a lynching. In August 1930 when Cameron was 16 years old, he was falsely accused of participating in a murder of a young white man in Mario, Indiana. As a result, Cameron witnessed a mob of 15,000 people beat and lynch (murder) his two friends. Miraculously, Cameron survived his severe beating and attempted lynching, however he was immediately sentenced to four years in state prison for "accessory."

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## **Dr. Cameron celebration/ADD ONE**

Cameron became a brilliant, well-read, self-taught historian and lecturer. He gave many interviews on national television, including on *Larry King Live*, the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, and the *700 Club*. The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), a Dutch film company, and several public television stations featured him in documentary movies made about the lynching.

Dr. Cameron's lifework focused on raising Americans' consciousness and conscience about the atrocity of lynching. He did this by publicly and tirelessly retelling his personal experience. To educate the public about the injustices suffered by people of African descent in America, Cameron founded and ran the America's Black Holocaust Museum from the mid-1980s until his death in 2006.

### **His Philosophy**

As an adult, Cameron became a devout Catholic. He was partly inspired by the devout and brave Indiana sheriff who mentored him in jail while he awaited trial. Dr. Cameron believed that hatred was a poison that corrupted the hater from within. He taught, by word and example, how to "forgive but never forget." He dreamed of our nation as "one single and sacred nationality" and fought to hold Americans to our ideals of freedom and equality for all.

Please visit America's Black Holocaust Virtual Museum at [www.abhmuseum.org](http://www.abhmuseum.org) to learn more about Dr. Cameron.