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Alexandria Library Recognized for ’39 Sit-In Program

JOHN COTTON DANA AWARD PROVIDES LIBRARY WITH $10,000 GRANT

Alexandria Library has been awarded the prestigious John Cotton Dana Award for last year’s program, “We Are the Alexandria Library Sit-in.” The program recognized the importance of the 1939 demonstration by Black residents to gain access to library services. The Alexandria Library Sit-In was one of the first in the country.

“It is very important for the community in Alexandria to recognize the history of its Library system,” said Executive Director Rose T. Dawson. “During this year-long celebration, the Library’s goal was to highlight the 1939 Sit-In that was led by Samuel W. Tucker and the five brave men that sparked major change in our community.”

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SICK FROM COVID-19? NEW LAW REQUIRES PAID LEAVE FOR EMPLOYEES OF SMALL COMPANIES

Work for a company of under 500 employees? You may be eligible for employee leave rights if you become sick from COVID-19 or must quarantine.

Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFRCA), a temporary rule (in effect through December 31) permits the U.S. Department of Labor to help private employers keep workers on payroll and receive tax credits. It also supports employees by making sure they do not have to choose between a check and health.

The FFRCA provides relief to people in the following situations: 1) self-quarantine or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms; 2) caring for an individual in quarantine or a child whose school or daycare is closed; 3) or experiencing another issue related to COVID-19.

The Act allows for the administration of the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act, which requires some companies to award 10 weeks paid/two weeks unpaid emergency family and medical leave to those deemed eligible.

To ask about coverage, call 866-487-9243. To learn about your eligibility, visit dol.gov/agencies/whd/ffra/benefits-eligibility-webtool.

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Celebrating Constitution Week

Constitution Week is the commemoration of America’s most important document. It is celebrated annually during the week of September 17-23. The local DAR chapters were represented at City Hall on August 28, 2020, with Mayor Justin Wilson who read a Proclamation with Councilwoman Amy Jackson.

Arianna Espiritu, a twelve-year old Francis C. Hammond Middle School student, presented a message on the U.S. Constitution. She was accompanied by her mother, Guinevere Que. The Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) members present were Debra Lindsay, Susan Palmer, Tillie Cassidy, Linda Ferrara, Linda Greenberg and Councilwoman Amy Jackson.

This celebration of the Constitution was started by the Daughters of the American Revolution. In 1955, DAR petitioned Congress to set aside September 17-23 annually to be dedicated for the observance of Constitution Week. The resolution was later adopted by the U.S. Congress and signed into public law on August 2, 1956, by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The Library hosted several events for the 80th anniversary. The descendants’ panel last October received wide praise from attendees, which included a number of community leaders. Other events included a film screening, and a bike tour of sites related to the people who participated in the Sit-In.

Perhaps the most poignant aspect of the Library’s program is that on October 18, according to the Library press release, the Alexandria Circuit Court dismissed all charges against the six men, upon the recommendation of Commonwealth’s Attorney Bryan Porter.

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From left to right: Melody Abella, Brittanie DeChino, Lyssa Seward, Anita Edwards

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ANNOUNCEMENT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

community. As the nation wrestles with the issue of racial equity today, the actions of these men are a perfect example of the positive change that occur when employing peaceful protest.”

The award, supported by the W.H. Wilson Foundation, provides Alexandria Library with a $10,000 grant. It is given based on the impact of library public relations in the community. The Library will be honored at the American Library Association’s Annual Conference in 2021.

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