

## HISTORIAN. BUILDER. ARCHITECT OF DIGITAL MONUMENTS.

Crystal A. deGregory, Ph.D. M.Ed.

Dr. Crystal A. deGregory is a historian, storyteller, and public intellectual whose work centers Black higher education, student activism, and the intellectual traditions of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Her scholarship examines how institutions shape movements, how students reshape institutions, and how memory itself becomes a site of power.

Working at the intersection of scholarship, strategy, and cultural memory, she writes and builds at the scale of institutions. Rather than treating history as a static record, Dr. deGregory constructs what she calls digital monuments — living archives, public syllabi, and narrative platforms designed to preserve lineage, elevate under-told histories, and expand access to Black intellectual traditions.

She is the founder of *Storied Storytelling*, an intellectual and creative enterprise committed to curating memory as infrastructure. Through this work, she has launched several major public-facing initiatives. She created *HBCUstory*, amplifying the legacy and contemporary relevance of Black colleges and universities; founded *Dorian and Beyond*, documenting the lived experiences of Hurricane Dorian in The Bahamas through community-centered testimony; and established *HerDue* (forthcoming), a storytelling and media platform devoted to honoring women whose leadership and labor deserve recognition in their own time.

Expanding this architectural vision, Dr. deGregory serves as the architect and lead curator of the *Bethune at 150 Syllabus*, a living digital monument honoring the intellectual and global legacy of Mary McLeod Bethune. Designed as both scholarly archive and public classroom, the syllabus convenes historians, students, and cultural workers in sustained engagement with Bethune's institutional imagination and enduring relevance.

Her leadership within the historical profession reflects this same commitment to infrastructure-building. Most recently, Dr. deGregory was awarded the Presidential Service Award by Barber-Scotia College in recognition of her scholarship and leadership in advancing Black educational legacy. She is also the first recipient of an honorary life membership in the Southern Association for Women Historians (SAWH), honoring her sustained contributions to women's history and public engagement.

Hailed "young sister leader" by Johnnetta B. Cole, Dr. deGregory's writing and commentary have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *USA Today*, *TIME*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Tennessean*, among others. She is a frequent national commentator on race, women, education, institutional power, and the future of Black colleges.

Her contributions to scholarship and public humanities have been further recognized through her induction into the Martin Luther King Jr. Collegium of Scholars at Morehouse College. She serves in several advisory and governance roles including trusteeship with the Tennessee Historical Society; membership on the Adam Matthew Digital advisory initiative for African American Women's Histories; and service on the Mellon Fisk Portal to Rosenwald Collections Advisory Board.

Dr. deGregory is the author of *Magic and Mortal* (Juju Collective, 2022) and the forthcoming *Greatest Good: Nashville's Black Colleges, Their Students, and the Fight for Freedom, Justice, and Equality*,

under contract with Vanderbilt University Press. Her scholarship appears in edited volumes exploring global Black identity, Martin Luther King Jr.'s ethical vision, and the progressive traditions of Black college women.

She has delivered keynote addresses and invited lectures for TEDx, SXSWedu, major universities, cultural institutions, corporations, and federal agencies, bridging archival scholarship, public humanities, and cultural strategy across the nation and beyond.

A native of The Bahamas and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the historic Fisk University, she earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in history from Vanderbilt University and her M.Ed. from Tennessee State University. She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc..

She continues to build intellectual infrastructure that honors Black lineage while imagining freer futures.

Follow her work at [www.crystaldegregory.com](http://www.crystaldegregory.com) and on social media @hbcustorian.