



NAACP East Saint Louis announces first ever virtual gala in 96 year history

The Branch's 66th Annual Freedom Fund Awards Ceremony keynote is Illinois Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton and is free to the public.

EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES, October 7, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Almost 100 years after its founding the East Saint Louis Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) finds itself doing what it has always done: Answer to the tides of change. For the first time since 1954, the chapter will be hosting its Annual Freedom Fund Ceremony in a virtual event powered by Zoom and Live Streamed on Facebook. This year's theme is "Call for Change: Eliminating Systemic Racism in the Pursuit of Justice and Equity."

Regarding the theme and new direction, Branch president Stanley W. Franklin said, "Our branch is composed of people calling for change, we are compelled to meet the challenges of the pandemic as well as tackle the issues plaguing our communities. We are also pleased to expand the reach to include the people we serve."

Juliana Stratton, the 48th Lieutenant Governor for the State of Illinois is the keynote speaker. In this role, her portfolio includes leading the Justice, Equity and Opportunity Initiative, and chairing the Illinois Council on Women and Girls, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, the Military Economic Development Council and the Illinois River Coordinating Council.

The East St. Louis Branch of the NAACP was organized in 1924 in the wake of a period of intense racial unrest, and serves St. Clair County. They are the hosts of a series of virtual town hall meetings to support their 5-Point Agenda addressing economic sustainability, education, health care initiatives, criminal justice reform, and voter rights.

The Freedom Fund Ceremony takes place on Sunday, October 11 at 6 p.m., and can be accessed live at facebook.com/estlnaACP.

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