

QUINTARD TAYLOR TO RECEIVE WESTERN WRITERS OF AMERICA'S OWEN WISTER AWARD

Leading scholar of African American West to be honored at WWA convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma, June 19-22

TULSA, OKLAHOMA, UNITED STATES, February 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Quintard Taylor](#), a leading scholar in the history of the African American West, has been named the 2024 recipient of the Owen Wister Award for Lifetime Contributions to Western Literature.

The award, given annually by [Western Writers of America](#) as the organization's highest honor, is to be presented to Taylor at WWA's annual convention, scheduled for June 19-22 in Tulsa.



Quintard Taylor

Taylor is the author of *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 to the Civil Rights Era*, published by the University of Washington Press; *In Search of the Racial Frontier, African Americans in the American West, 1528 to 1990*, published by W.W. Norton and Company; and editor of the anthology *African American Women Confront the West, 1600-2000*, published by the University of Oklahoma Press. He is also the author of, or editor and contributor to, many other works. He is professor emeritus and the Scott and Dorothy Bullitt Professor of American History at the University of Washington, Seattle.

"I am delighted to honor Dr. Quintard Taylor as this year's Owen Wister Award Winner," WWA president Melody Groves said. "His research and enthusiasm for the racial American West has spotlighted an area of history that has been underrepresented."

Taylor was born in 1948 in Brownsville, Texas, where his great-grandfather was born into slavery. His father, Quintard Taylor Sr., managed a cotton plantation and his mother worked menial jobs. He grew up during the Civil Rights movement and graduated with a degree in American history



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Max McCoy

from St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, North Carolina. He received his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

In 2007, Taylor founded BlackPast.org, an online encyclopedia of Black history. It has had 55 million users since its launch.

"Dr. Taylor's work reflects the evolving and dynamic understanding of the Black experience in the American

West, a topic that had been long overlooked," said Max McCoy, WWA's executive director. "As a pioneer in the effort to bring that experience to a wider audience, he richly deserves this, our highest award."

Previous Wister recipients include the late Pulitzer Prize winner, N. Scott Momaday, late historian Robert M. Utley and bestselling novelists such as Tony Hillerman.

"My intellectual interest in African American history in the west began when I was an assistant professor at Washington State University in 1971," Taylor has written. "That interest continues to be driven by my desire to understand African American communities in a region which historically has not been identified with Black history and culture. Understanding that history allows challenges to long held paradigms about both the history of the west as a region and the history of African America."

The Wister Award is a bronze statue of a bison, Lord of the Plains, by the late Texas sculptor Robert Duffie. It was created especially for WWA by Duffie, and each year's Wister award is cast from the original mold.

Western Writers of America is a nonprofit organization established in the early 1950s to promote the literature of the American West. It has approximately 600 members worldwide, including writers and editors of fiction, nonfiction, songs, poems and screenplays.

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