



CCFA Background

The origin of CCFA goes back several years. Some of the founders came together in 2010 for a conference, celebrating the history and legacy of Freedmen from both Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations. Some in attendance, started creating their own websites and blogs and engaged with the larger community on social media platforms such as Facebook, and Twitter.

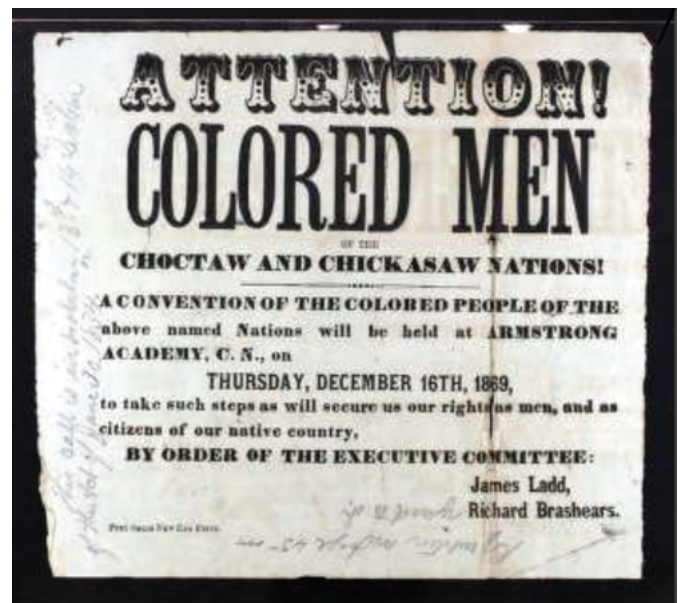
Within the past two years a community of researchers formed to meet to frequently share issues, documents and to share common interests stemming from a shared history based in Oklahoma.

Much of the dialogue became enhanced when Chief Batton of the Choctaw Nation released an open letter to the community discussing the possibility of considering citizenship for descendants of the people once held enslaved in their nation. Noting that there was no organized group or arena where many could gather and work together as a group, a decision was made to form a more cohesive group to allow for greater interaction and fellowship.

Fact Sheet: Choctaw Freedmen & Chickasaw Freedmen

- The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek signed in 1829 was the Removal treaty that began the removal of Choctaws from Mississippi West.
- The Armstrong Roll documented the removal of the first treaty party that relocated to Indian Territory. This was the first document that included the names of enslaved people being taken west with Choctaws.
- Being separated from loved ones in Mississippi, took an emotional toll on some of the enslaved people, who frequently sought freedom by running away. Ads for the capture of runaway slaves began to appear in Choctaw publications such as the Choctaw Intelligencer, in 1850-1851
- A large slave uprising occurred in the Choctaw Nation in 1861, on the Hall plantation, during the very year that the Civil War began.
- Choctaws and Chickasaws signed an alliance with the Confederate States of America, and formed ten regiments that served with the Confederate Army. Meanwhile, several African Choctaws enlisted in the Union Army to fight for their freedom. They returned to the Choctaw Nation after the war, finally to live as free men in the nation they knew as home.
- Slavery was finally abolished in Indian Territory, and Choctaw and Chickasaws signed the same treaty in 1866, in Fort Smith, Arkansas.
- From 1866 onward, Freedmen of both Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations sought to organize and pave a life for themselves. The first convention of Freedmen, occurred in 1869 at Spencer Academy, organized by James Ladd and Richard Brashear.
- Chickasaws broke the treaty and never gave citizenship to their formerly enslaved people. Choctaws offered citizenship to their former slaves in 1885.
- Freedmen were allowed to vote and act as citizens and participate in tribal affairs. Henry Cutchelow, a Choctaw Freedman ran for tribal council, and won a seat, but he was never allowed to take his seat and serve.
- Oklahoma entered the Union in 1907 and established Jim Crow laws separating the races. Many Freedmen still considered themselves part of the communities where they lived, as they were present in all 7 districts of the Choctaw Nation.
- In 1983, the Choctaw Nation quietly changed the constitution and policy to admit only those on the Dawes Roll who were on certain pages of the roll. The Dawes Roll is the base roll for membership, used by the Choctaw Nation and Chickasaw Nation, today.
- Those whose ancestors are on pages 1 to 116 of the Dawes Roll, (which includes inter-married whites) are eligible for citizenship.
- Freedmen descendants, whose ancestors are listed on pages 117 to 154 of the Dawes Roll, are not eligible for citizenship. This policy based on exclusion of people once held enslaved, is allowed and endorsed also by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, of the Department of the Interior.
- The Chickasaw Nation, signed the same Treaty of 1866, but never gave their former slaves citizenship, thus breaking the treaty. Using the same Dawes Roll as the base roll for citizenship today, those whose ancestors are on pages 167-196 of the Dawes Roll, are eligible for citizenship. Meanwhile for Chickasaw Freedmen, those whose ancestors names appear on pages 209-237 are not allowed to become citizens, though their ancestors are on the same document.

★ Today in small rural communities in southeast Oklahoma many descendants of Freedmen of both nations still live on old land allotments and embrace their legacy as being descended from Choctaw and Chickasaw citizens. However, today, they have no access to the tribe as citizens, nor as beneficiaries of education, or health services in spite of their tax dollars providing billions of Federal dollars to both nation



Founders' Bios

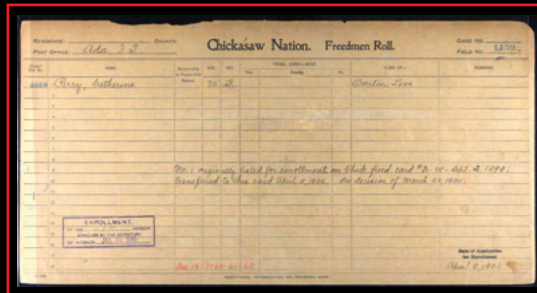
Athena Butler is a dynamic and passionate Human Resources and Organizational Development Leader. She descends from Catherine Perry, (Card #1459 Roll #468). In addition, her ancestors include Litsy Perry, Catherine Love, & Charlotte Chico (Sheco).

Athena also has DNA matches to many Choctaw natives and is excited to continue researching those connections. While exploring her own family, Athena has taken on additional community research projects related to the Choctaw & Chickasaw Freedmen.

With over 15 years of domestic and international experience, Athena is currently responsible for over \$20MM in international assets for one of the nation's foremost leaders in logistics and supply chain management. Her primary management responsibility centers around: designing, planning and implementing organizational strategies that impact the company's most valuable assets: its employees. However, she prides herself in her professional brand, which is: a strategically tactical change agent who finds common sense solutions for complex company problems.

Ms. Butler holds a degree B.S. in Organizational design with a minor in Political science from Wilmington University., and with that background, she is using that knowledge to establish a nonprofit community to reconcile disparities within the Choctaw-Chickasaw Freedmen communities.

In her free time, Athena loves to support and serve the local community and volunteers as a resource for her church. Originally from Kansas City, Kansas, Athena now resides in Delaware where her work continues.

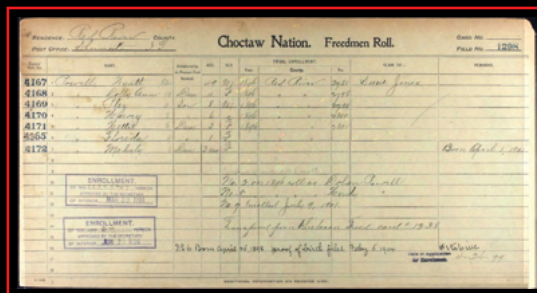


Jerry Harris Moore is a sociologist and educator from western Arkansas, with family coming from eastern Oklahoma in the Choctaw Nation. He descends from Wyatt Powell, (Card #1298, Roll #4167). He has taught and continues to teach sociology at Northwest Arkansas Community College, where he also served as Director of the college's Upward Bound program. Prior to that, he worked in Student Support Services at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville for many years. Before working in higher education he taught high school Social studies in the Fort Smith Arkansas Board of Education.

Apart from his work as an educator, Mr. Moore has played a key role in his work with the United Methodist Church. In that role, he served on the General Board of Church and Society for 8 years.

Mr. Moore has had much contact with the Native American Community in his participation in the Native American Comprehensive Plan of the United Methodist Church and for 10 years he has served as Chairperson of the Conference Committee on Native American Ministry. In addition, Chair of the AR Conference Native American Ministry for 20 years. He also served 4 years on the General Commission of Religion and Race of the United Methodist Church.

Jerry H. Moore holds degrees in History and Sociology from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. He now resides in Bentonville Arkansas where he continues to teach, research and write.



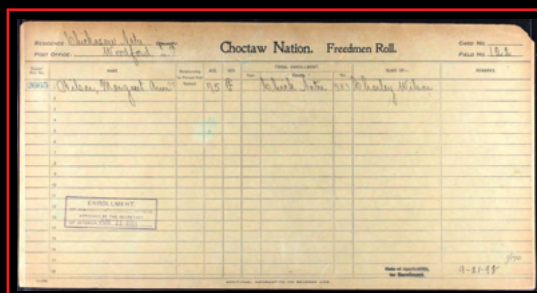
Terry Ligon began his historical and genealogical journey in 1989. He descends from Mitchell Ligon, (Choctaw Freedman Card #106, Roll #2608). He also has other Choctaw ancestors, including Elizabeth Christian (Roll #2615, and Joe Freeman #4046). In addition to those ancestors he is a direct descendant also of Bettie Ligon, (Roll #2604) who made headlines when she became head litigant in the famous case, Equity 7071, representing over 2000 Freedmen seeking enrollment on the blood roll.

Mr. Ligon is also a writer, blogger and videographer, documenting the story of both Choctaw and Chickasaw Freedmen. In 2010 Terry Ligon launched his first blog titled "The Black and Red Journal" that provided short articles on the history of Indian Territory and the "Five Slave Holding Tribes," A short time later Terry launched another blog and called it "Betties List." His blog provides some of the detailed history on what was called "The Most Important Suit in the Territory" Equity 7071, a lawsuit of almost 2,000 Freed people seeking to be citizens by blood in the Choctaw or Chickasaw Nations. Terry Ligon also serves on the faculty of the Midwest African America Genealogy Institute in the track pertaining to the Freedmen of the Five Civilized Tribes.

As a founding member of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC), Mr. Ligon has given numerous presentations about Indian Territory and Oklahoma research. He has also taught classes over the years about Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen.

As an artist and videographer, Terry Ligon has produced several videos as on his Estelusti channel. These videos pertain to the history of Freedmen from Indian Territory and Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen in particular found on his YouTube channel.

Mr. Ligon holds two bachelor's degrees in Fine Arts from the University of San Francisco and the Academy of Arts. He resides in Nevada where his research and writing continues.



Angela Walton-Raji is a nationally known professional genealogist, author and writer. She descends from Sam and Sallie Walton, Choctaw Freedmen (Card #777, roll #3747 and #3748 and their son, Sam Jr. #3750)

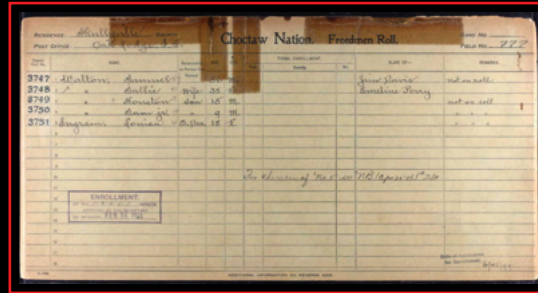
Professionally, she worked in higher education for over 30 years, retiring from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County as Director of Graduate School Recruitment. She also served as a team reader of scholarship applications for the esteemed Gates Millineum Scholars Program.

In 1991 she located the records of her Walton ancestors on the Dawes Roll as Choctaw Freedmen. Realizing that no one ever spoke of Freedmen in Oklahoma historic circles, she committed herself to studying their history, examining the records they left and telling their stories. She is the author of 3 books all pertaining to researching Freedmen from Indian Territory. Her two volume set, *Freedmen of the Frontier*, documented 52 families coming from the Five Tribes of Oklahoma. She hosts two blogs one devoted exclusively to the legacy of Choctaw Freedmen. She also hosts an extensive website devoted to the history of Freedmen from Oklahoma.

Ms. Walton-Raji's research has garnered public attention over the years. In 1999 her Choctaw Freedman story was included in a project of the National Endowment for the Humanities, *My Story is America's Story*, and was featured in a November 1999 issue of *Parade Magazine*.

In 1998 she was brought in as a professional genealogist to testify in the case for Bernice Rogers Riggs, a Cherokee Freedman descendant to share information on her family background. (see *Riggs vs. Ummerteskee*) Her ties to the Choctaw Nation have also been featured in *Smithsonian Magazine*.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from St. Louis University, and a Master of Education from Antioch University. She lives in Maryland where she continues to research and write.



Sandy Williams has researched Chickasaw Freedmen from Pauls Valley and Tishomingo for many years. She descends from Angie Chico (Card No 1039 Roll #3956.)

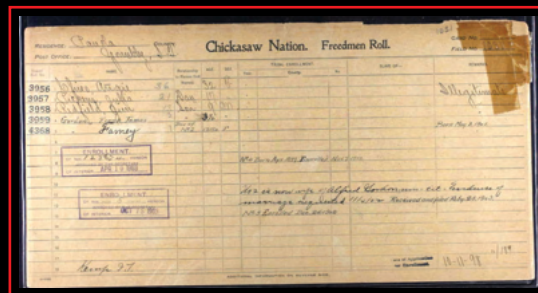
She has actively researched the Chico's from Panola County in the Chickasaw Nation, and also the family's history prior to removal. In addition, much of her research has focused on the families that resided in the Yarnaby community.

She has actively researched her family for over 10 years. She recently started a blog "Underneath The Leaves," which contains information about her Chickasaw Freedman ancestors, the Chico's, who were removed from Mississippi to Indian Territory during the 1830's as enslaved people, in the Chickasaw Nation. And historically speaking Sandy has ancestors from two of the five slave holding tribes.

Sandy has several memberships in genealogy groups, historical societies and social impact groups. She is following in the footsteps of her ancestors who were members of the original Choctaw-Chickasaw Freedmen Association from the 1800s.

She has a strong background in pharmaceutical sales, and today is co-founder of a very successful privately held corporation that features health and beauty products with two major brands sold throughout the US and abroad in numerous retail outlets. Most importantly, her love of family and family history has inspired her to continue her research in-depth.

Ms. Williams holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from Arizona State University where she also graduated with a concentration in Pre-Medical studies. She resides in southern California where she continues her research.



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