



CONNECTING THE DOTS: REMEMBRANCE AND RECONCILIATION PROJECT



The winners of the Lowndes County Racial Justice Essay Contest were announced on July 30, 2016. Photo by C. Chancey.

RACIAL JUSTICE ESSAY CONTEST

The **Equal Justice Initiative** in partnership with **Connecting the Dots Anne Arundel County** is pleased to announce its second **scholarship contest** open to 9th–12th grade students attending public high schools in Anne Arundel County during the 2021-2022 school year. **Prizes totaling at least \$5,000** will be awarded to winning participants.

The [Equal Justice Initiative](#) (EJI) offers this opportunity in connection with its [Community Remembrance Historical Marker Projects](#), which focus on confronting the legacy of racial and economic injustice and inequality in America. EJI and local Community Remembrance coalitions who work to erect historical markers, recognize that the legacies of the era of American enslavement of African descendants included the era of racial terrorism that was defined by [more than 4,400 racial terror lynchings](#) between the end of Reconstruction in 1877 and World War II in the 1940s and 50s, the era of Jim Crow segregation and discrimination that produced the civil rights movement, and our present-day era of mass incarceration. Each of these eras and legacies have had profound impacts on African American communities and people of color, and have created continuing challenges for all Americans. We believe that a deeper understanding of our nation's history of racial injustice is important for addressing contemporary questions of social justice and equality.

2021 Racial Justice Essay Contest for Anne Arundel County

This scholarship contest coincides with a **forthcoming memorial ceremony and soil collection for King Johnson, the most recent of the five known lynching victims from Anne Arundel County**, in Brooklyn, Maryland. This ceremony would give him the memorial that he deserved and collect soil from the location of his lynching as a part of EJI's [Community Remembrance Project](#).

Scholarship winners will be announced and recognized at the memorial and soil collection on **December 11th in Brooklyn, Maryland. Essays are due on November 15th.**

To Learn More about Participating in this Contest, please visit the Essay Contest website [here](#).

Questions? Please contact your local organizer, Connecting the Dots, point of contact: Emma Buchman, (emma@marchonmd.org).

King Johnson's Story

King Johnson was an African American man born sometime in the early 1880s. He lived in Fairfield, Maryland, a small neighborhood in Brooklyn, near Baltimore. At one point, Johnson worked at the Rasin Monumental Chemical Company.

On December 24, 1911, Johnson was playing pool with several white men. During the game, one of the men alleged that Johnson had insulted his brother. After leaving the saloon, Johnson was approached by the same man. Johnson reportedly had previous encounters with the man before and was scared for his life. Once the man started throwing punches, Johnson brandished his pistol and shot the man once, killing him instantly. He also fired two shots at the man's brother.

Both Johnson and his friend Hubert Chase, who witnessed the incident, were arrested later that night and taken to the Anne Arundel County jail in Brooklyn. Upon his arrest, Johnson did not resist and stated that he acted out of self-defense. There was discussion of sending Johnson and Chase to Annapolis for safekeeping.

At around 2AM on December 25th, a mob of eight white men stormed the jail looking for Johnson. The jail was completely unguarded at the time. Initially, the lynchers mistook Chase for Johnson, but after Chase told them that they had the wrong man, they left and found Johnson's cell. Johnson attempted to fend them off, but the mob beat him with an iron rod to subdue him. Johnson was then dragged down the jail stairs and across a field, where he was shot four times in the chest. The lynchers shot Johnson at such close range, there were gunpowder burns on his clothes. His body was discovered at 5:45AM by 14-year-old George Coulborne.

No one was ever held accountable for Johnson's lynching, as no one came forward claiming to have seen or heard anything of the attack. The investigation into his murder lasted two weeks, and concluding with a ruling from a grand jury that Johnson was lynched by persons unknown.

Resources:

- <https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc3500/sc3520/013700/013760/html/13760bio.html>
- <https://news.baltimoresun.com/maryland-lynchings/>
- <https://medium.com/time-passages/king-johnson-marylands-governor-took-bold-action-to-end-lynchings-in-1912-caeb4285e7be>