



NEWS RELEASE

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Lynching memorial to be unveiled in Towson on Saturday, May 8

Students from nearby BCPS schools involved in memorial project

Towson, MD – For more than a year, students at Dumbarton Middle School, Loch Raven Technical Academy, and Towson High School have been studying the lynching of 15-year-old Howard Cooper in Towson in 1885. Some students drafted possible language for a planned memorial marker for the site.

The historical marker is now a reality and will be unveiled on Saturday, May 8, at 11 a.m., at the site of Cooper’s murder, the old Baltimore County Jail at 222 Courthouse Court, Towson, MD 21204.

Development of the memorial has been a project of the Baltimore County Coalition of the [Maryland Lynching Memorial Project](#) in partnership with the national [Equal Justice Initiative](#) and Baltimore County government.

During the unveiling ceremony, the winner of the Equal Justice Initiative-sponsored Racial Justice Essay Contest, an area high school student, will read his or her winning essay. Contest finalists will receive scholarships from the Equal Justice Initiative totaling at least \$5,000.

The public ceremony will feature comments from dignitaries, including Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, Maryland House Speaker Del. Adrienne Jones, Baltimore County Executive John A. Olszewski, Jr., and Baltimore County Police Chief Melissa Hyatt. Capacity at the event is limited due to COVID-19, and strict precautions will be observed. The public is encouraged to view a [live-stream feed](#) of the event rather than attending in person.

One example of the work BCPS students have done related to this project is that of Michelle St. Pierre's Grade 8 law and finance class at Loch Raven Technical Academy. St. Pierre is magnet coordinator and social studies department chair at the school. Last year and this year, her students worked with the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project on the Howard Cooper Project. Last year, students created and taught lessons about Howard Cooper and other racial terror lynchings and contributed to the historical marker that will be placed at the site.

This year, students focused on petitioning to have Howard Cooper's conviction overturned posthumously due to the numerous violations of his due process.

The Equal Justice Initiative has documented the lynching of at least 6,500 Black Americans in the United States between 1865 and 1950. The Maryland Lynching Memorial Project has identified at least 40 racial terror lynchings in the state between 1854 and 1933. Cooper was dragged from a cell in the old Baltimore County Jail by 75 masked men and hanged from a sycamore tree next to the building.

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