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***James Oglethorpe, Father of Georgia* by Michael L. Thurmond**

The Georgia Archives Lunch & Learn presentation, *James Oglethorpe, Father of Georgia*, by Michael L. Thurmond, will be held onsite. The presentation is on Friday, February 9th, 2024, from noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Georgia Archives, 5800 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, GA.

The Lunch and Learn presentation is free, and no registration is required.

This presentation will delve into Michael L. Thurmond's upcoming publication, *James Oglethorpe, Father of Georgia*, which unveils the fascinating and often overlooked narrative of Georgia's founding and Oglethorpe's central significance in shaping its unique social experiment. Highlighting the colony's foundation on February 12, 1733, as a haven for England's "worthy poor" and persecuted Christians, the session will explore how Oglethorpe's vision aimed to foster economic stability through small-scale farming rather than the exploitation of enslaved labor. Through meticulous research and compelling storytelling, Thurmond's book uncovers the deep-rooted connections between Oglethorpe's moral growth and his association with influential black figures, reshaping the narrative of abolitionism's early origins. Attendees will gain fresh insights into Georgia's origin story and the pivotal role of interracial antislavery activism in reshaping the colony's history, offering a new perspective on Oglethorpe's legacy and Georgia's place in the abolitionist movement.

Michael L. Thurmond is the chief executive officer of DeKalb County, Georgia, one of the largest and most diverse counties in the Southeastern United States. He is also an attorney, author, and motivational speaker. Thurmond's book *Freedom: Georgia's Antislavery Heritage, 1733-1865*, was awarded the prestigious Georgia Historical Society's Lilla Hawes Award. In 2004, the Georgia Center for the Book listed *Freedom* as "One of the Twenty-Five Books All Georgians Should Read." CEO Thurmond, a sharecropper's son, holds a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and religion from Paine College and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of South Carolina's School of Law. Thurmond also completed the Political Executives program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He earned the reputation of being a "turnaround expert" after transforming the culture and operations of the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services, the Georgia Department of Labor, and the DeKalb County School District. In 1986, Thurmond became the first African American elected to the Georgia General Assembly from Athens/Clarke County since Reconstruction. In 1998, he was elected Georgia Labor Commissioner, becoming one of the first African Americans to be elected to statewide office in Georgia.

The Georgia Archives is a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The Georgia Archives identifies, collects, manages, preserves, provides access to, and publicizes records and information of Georgia and its people, and assists state and local government agencies with their records management.