



Central Connecticut State University

September 25, 2023

Dear Tammy Denease and Todd Levine,

On behalf of the Ebenezer D. Bassett Memorialization Committee, at Central Connecticut State University, we would like to recognize and celebrate your commitment to the mission of the Ebenezer D. Bassett Memorialization Committee and helping us preserve the legacy of Ebenezer D. Bassett. We would like to formally recognize the Connecticut Freedom Trail at the 2023 Ebenezer D. Bassett Humanitarian Award Ceremony. We would like to honor you with the Black Governor's Award for outstanding service, leadership, and for your effort to preserve Connecticut's Black History. We want to Please invite your Officers, Commissioner, and the other Freedom Trail sites.

The ceremony will take place on **Tuesday, October 17, 2023, in Founder's Hall, Davidson Hall, Central Connecticut State University**. The reception will start at 5:30 pm and the ceremony will begin at 6:00 pm. This date marks the 190th birthday of Ebenezer Don Carlos Bassett. He was the first African American student to attend and graduate from the New Britain Normal School, the parent institution of Central Connecticut State University. Mr. Bassett was an educator, abolitionist, humanitarian, and he became United States first African American Diplomat.

We hope your schedule will permit your attendance at this special event. While commemorating Mr. Bassett, we want the opportunity to celebrating your years of support. We look forward to presenting you with this special honor.

Please RSVP by contacting me, at 860.832.1639 or fothergillw@ccsu.edu; or Ms. Janet Woodruff, at 860.832.2813 or woodruffj@ccsu.edu. We look forward to your reply. Congratulations!

Sincerely,

William Fothergill, MA, MSW, CPC, LPC
Ebenezer D. Bassett Memorialization Committee, Chairperson
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EBENEZER DON CARLOS BASSETT

Connecticut's Son

Ebenezer Don Carlos Bassett was born in 1833 in Litchfield, Connecticut. His father and grandfather were both elected as Black Governors, positions of honor in the African American community. He grew up in Derby, CT, where he received his early education, then enrolled as the first African American student at the New Britain Normal School, presently known as Central Connecticut State University, graduating in 1853.

Mr. Bassett taught school in New Haven, where he formed an enduring friendship with Mr. Frederick Douglass as they both spoke out for Emancipation and Civil Rights. Later, Mr. Bassett was the Principal of Philadelphia's Institute for Colored Youth (ICY), which became Cheyney University, the nation's first Historically Black College. In 1869, he was appointed as Diplomatic Minister (ambassador), the first African American to hold this post in the U.S. State Department and served in Haiti for almost nine years. In 1877, he returned to the United States, but went back to Haiti to assist his lifelong friend Mr. Douglass during Douglass's tenure as Diplomatic Minister.

Mr. Bassett died in 1908 in Brooklyn, NY, and is buried with his wife and children in the Grove Street Cemetery in New Haven, CT.