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ABFE Contact:
Edward Jones, VP, Programs
202-255-5659
ejones@abfe.org

**ABFE: A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities
Announces 2020 James A. Joseph Lecturer and Annual Award Winners**

[April 17, 2020, New York, NY] ABFE, A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities, celebrates the recognition of our 2020 honorees as part of the 29th Annual James A. Joseph Lecture and awards:

- James A Joseph Lecturer: **Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson**, President & CEO of Deaconess Foundation, in St Louis, MO.
- Institutional Award: **North Star Fund** of New York
- Emerging Leader in Philanthropy: **Danielle Shoots**, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, The Colorado Trust
- Trailblazer: **Valaida Fullwood, Philanthropist, Speaker & Author**

ABFE is at the center of a movement that inspires grantmaking entities, philanthropic individuals and nonprofits in the US to work collectively towards a brighter future for Black communities and the country as a whole. ABFE is committed to helping empower philanthropy, by leveraging our collective action, as a unified and strategic force.

“This is an amazing slate of awardees! They have provided unwavering philanthropic support for Black communities and exemplify the reasons these awards were created”, said ABFE President and CEO, Susan Taylor Batten. “As the world is fighting COVID-19 and seeing, first-hand, how racial inequities have multiplied the impact of the virus on our communities, we need people and institutions, like these, now more than ever. This is the type of important work that shines, even in the midst of so much uncertainty,” she added.

ABFE is a membership-based philanthropic organization that advocates for responsive and transformative investments in Black communities. Partnering with foundations, nonprofits and individuals, ABFE provides its members with professional development and technical assistance resources that further the philanthropic sector's connection and responsiveness to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion. Established in 1971 as the Association of Black Foundation Executives, the organization was credited with many of philanthropy's early gains in diversity. It since has evolved into an influential network. In 2013, the organization shed its descriptor and adopted the simpler ABFE (ab-fee) to better reflect its broadening membership. For more information, visit www.abfe.org.



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The Annual James Joseph Lecture and Awards is ABFE's signature event at its annual conferences. The conference, this year, was shifted to a virtual format, due to the domestic and global challenges caused by COVID-19. While the official awards program will take place in the fall, in Washington DC, ABFE wanted to still celebrate the exemplary work of these individuals and organization as part of its first virtual conference.

ABFE would like to congratulate the 2020 James A. Joseph Lecturer and award recipients:

James A. Joseph Lecturer on Philanthropy

The James A. Joseph Lecture was established in 1991 in honor of ABFE's co-founder and distinguished philanthropic leader, Ambassador James A. Joseph. Each year, this award recognizes an outstanding individual whose visionary leadership and stewardship of progressive philanthropic ideals advance ABFE's mission. The Lecture is considered ABFE's annual signature event and an illustration of our continuing commitment to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas about the role of philanthropy in addressing the concerns of Black communities.

Presented to: Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson, President & CEO, Deaconess Foundation

Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson is president & CEO of Deaconess Foundation, board chair for the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (NCRP) and vice chair of the Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE). Deaconess is a faith-based grantmaker advancing child well-being in St. Louis through philanthropy, advocacy and organizing for racial equity and public policy change. Under his leadership since 2011, Deaconess constructed the Deaconess Center for Child Well-Being, a community action tank which engages more than 15,000 citizens annually and sponsors a network of Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools. From 2008 through 2018, Dr. Wilson pastored Saint John's Church (The Beloved Community), an inter-racial, inner-city congregation related to the United Church of Christ. After the police killing of Michael Brown, Jr., the church hosted the *#BlackLivesMatter Freedom Ride* to Ferguson and served as the welcome center for the *#FergusonOctober*. In service of community healing, he co-chaired the Ferguson Commission. In 2015, they released the *Forward Through Ferguson: A Path Toward Racial Equity*' Report, calling for sweeping changes in policing, the courts, child well-being and economic mobility. Dr. Wilson serves boards for the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Sojourners, Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, and St. Louis Children's Hospital. He is an advisor to the Democracy Fund.

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ABFE A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities - 55 Exchange Place, 4th Fl, NY, NY 10004, T | 646-392-9877 | E info@abfe.org



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Institutional Award for Philanthropic Leadership

The ABFE Institutional Award for Philanthropic Leadership was established in 2002 to recognize significant efforts and contributions of grant-making organizations to promoting philanthropy as a means for social change in Black communities. This award recognizes an exemplary grant-making institution that models effective and responsive grant-making practices.

Presented to: North Star Fund, New York

North Star Fund brings together a community of New Yorkers who care about social justice, who combine myriad resources to funding locally grown movements for change. In its 40th year, the Fund has sustained a community that has made over \$57 million in grants to thousands of organizations working locally for justice on issues from immigration to racial justice to gender justice. Of particular note is their “Let us Breathe”, developed after the death of Eric Garner and has given over \$860,000 to Black-led and multiracial organizations and movements fighting police violence and structural racism in New York City.

Trailblazer Award

In 2014, ABFE established the Trailblazer Award to honor and recognize Black donors who selflessly contribute to important causes for Black people and in our communities.

Presented to: Valaida Fullwood

Valaida is a philanthropist, writer, speaker and thought leader in the sector of giving. She is the award-winning author of *Giving Back*, a book profiling stories of philanthropy among African Americans that was developed with photographer Charles Thomas. *Giving Back*, her first book, was named one of the [10 Best Black Books of 2011](#) and received the prestigious [2012 McAdam Book Award](#), which recognizes “the most inspirational and useful new book for the nonprofit sector.” In collaboration with Johnson C. Smith University, an HBCU in Charlotte, NC, she attracted grant funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and other contributors totaling more than \$240,000 to reimagine the book *Giving Back* as a multimedia, touring exhibition. Titled [Giving Back: The Soul of Philanthropy Reframed and Exhibited](#), the exhibit is now traveling to college campuses, public libraries and museums, nationwide. Valaida is a founding member of [New Generation of African American Philanthropists](#)—a giving circle that gives back through grantmaking and civic engagement.

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Emerging Leader in Philanthropy

The Emerging Leader in Philanthropy Award was established in 2002 to recognize and encourage the accomplishments and contributions of people under the age of 40, and who have served as staff, donors and trustees in the philanthropic sector for no more than 7 years. This award recognizes an outstanding individual whose innovative leadership promotes philanthropy as a means of social change in Black communities and advances ABFE's mission.

Presented to: Danielle Shoots, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, The Colorado Trust
Ms. Shoots has been recognized in the Denver Business Journal's "40 Under 40" awards; was a 2019 honoree in the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce 25 Most Powerful Women in Business; and is a past TedX speaker. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Colorado Denver Business School.

The James A. Joseph Lecture and Award recipients were nominated by peers and chosen, based upon a set of criteria covering their experience in philanthropy, their goals for the future and their interest and passion for making systemic change in Black communities.

This distinguished group offers amazing insights about navigating philanthropy, critical for producing a more equitable nation and world. They offer some of the best and most promising practices in the field of philanthropy to strengthen Black families and communities.

To learn more about ABFE-A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities, visit ABFE.org
To learn more about ABFE's first Virtual conference, visit <https://www.abfe-conference.org/>
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