

GRIOTS' CIRCLE OF MARYLAND, INCORPORATED
AMENDED CONSTITUTION
July 2000

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Griots' Circle of Maryland, Incorporated.

Article II: Purpose

- Section 1. To perpetuate and to promote the art of Afro-American storytelling, folklore, and history.
- Section 2. To provide programs for the preservation, dissemination, and research in the African folkloric tradition as it supports Afro-American storytelling.
- Section 3. To facilitate the presentation of Maryland's Afro-American folklore, history, and storytelling research.
- Section 4. To use the oral tradition to pass down the Afro-American folk heritage through special programs and training sessions, as well as other appropriate means.
- Section 5. Said corporation/organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code).

Article III: Membership

- Section 1. Membership shall be opened to anyone who professes an interest in Afro-American storytelling and the purposes of this organization.
- Section 2. Membership shall be of two (2) classes: Full and Associate.
- Section 3. Full members will be those persons paying the required dues while Associate members pay half of the required dues. The Associate membership is opened to students and senior citizens only.
- Section 4. Honorary membership shall be bestowed by the Executive Committee.
- Section 5. All financial members are eligible to participate in business meetings and can serve in any elected or appointed position.
- Section 6. Annual dues shall be determined by the Executive Board.
- Section 7. The dues shall be for a twelve (12) month period, starting January 1st through December 31st. Any dues paid after October 1st will be applied to

the next year's membership.

Section 8. Inactive members may be readmitted to active status at any time upon payment of current dues.

Article IV: Executive Board

Section 1. The governing body shall include the six (6) officers and one (1) representative from the Council of Elders.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall meet six (6) times a year or more frequently when necessary.

Section 3. A quorum will consist of fifty percent (50%) of the body being present.

Article V: Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Griots' Circle of Maryland, Incorporated shall be president, vice-president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, financial secretary, and treasurer.

A. The duties of the President are as follows:

1. The executive officer of the organization.
2. Develop the agenda and preside over all meetings of the organization and the Executive Board.
3. Appoint and delegate responsibilities to the committees.
4. Will be an ex-officio member of standing and special committees, except the Nominating Committee.
5. Plan, with the aid of the other officers and Executive Committee, the objectives and programs of the local organization.
6. Present the views of the organization to the National Association of Black Storytellers and/or public affairs.
7. Represent the organization at the National Association of Black Storytellers and/or public affairs.
8. Support and conduct fund raising activities and initiate external outreach that will prove mutually beneficial for the organization and the National Association of Black Storytellers.

B. The duties of the Vice-President are as follows:

1. To preside in the absence of the President assuming all

his/her powers and duties.

2. Chairperson of the Program Committee which shall be presented at the first of the year.

C. The duties of the Recording Secretary are as follows:

1. Maintain a Ledger.
2. Take minutes on meetings of the organization and the proceedings of the various committees.
3. Keep a file of approved minutes and reports, communications received, copies of letters sent, roster of members, committees, officers, organization representatives, and other personnel.

D. The duties of the Corresponding Secretary are as follows:

1. Send out all notices of general and special meetings of a the Body and Executive Committee.
2. Collect all mail from the organization's Post office box on a weekly interval.
3. Ensure that all correspondence be made known to the president in a timely manner.
4. Notify persons and committees affected by actions taken.
5. Send reminders to members assigned special duties.
6. Answer correspondence promptly.
7. Send letters of thanks to speakers, guests, etc.
8. Maintain a supply of stationary and letterheads.

E. The duties of the Financial Secretary are as follows:

1. Shall receive all monies of the organization, issue receipts, keep separate records, and deposit monies with the Treasurer.
2. Ensure that all monies are counted and recorded accurately with the assistance of two (2) other persons appointed by the President.

F. The duties of the Treasurer are as follows:

1. Shall receive all monies from the Financial Secretary and deposit them in the name of the organization.

2. Shall disburse funds according to the budget provided that said funds are authorized for payment by the President.
3. Shall keep separate records of various funds, i.e. general fund, financial members, donations, etc.
4. Shall present at each organizational meeting a report of the financial statements to the Executive Board and the Body.

Section 2. All officers will serve for a two (2) year term of office and can be elected to a second term of office. After a second term of office an individual must remain out of that office for one (1) term before being eligible for re-election to that office. No person shall hold more than one elected office at a time.

Section 3. All newly elected officers shall assume their official duties at the beginning of the fiscal year which commences January 1st.

Section 4. All officers of the organization must be members in good standing during their terms of office.

Article VI: Election of Officers

Section 1. Officers shall be elected every two (2) years by ballot.

Section 2. A Nominating Committee shall be composed of volunteers from the Body.

Section 3. The Nomination Committee shall select a spokesperson for the committee who will seek the assistance of the Correspondence Secretary to send out confirmations and the Official Ballot.

Article VII: Removal from Office

Section 1. The Executive Board by two-thirds (2/3) vote Shall have the power to remove any member of the Executive Board for neglect of duty, conduct unbecoming to such an office, of actions prejudicial to the best interest of the organization.

Section 2. All charges shall be preferred in writing at least thirty (30) days in advance and the accused provided with a copy thereof and given a fair and impartial preliminary hearing, if so desired.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall report its findings, conclusions, and recommendations back to the general Body for its consideration and disposition.

Article VIII: Vacancies

Vacancies in office shall be filled by the Executive Board. These appointees shall serve the unexpired term of office.

Article IX: Affiliation

The Griots' Circle of Maryland, Incorporated shall maintain affiliation with the National Association of Black Storytellers.

Article X: Council of Elders

- Section 1. The Council of Elders shall serve in an advisory Capacity to the organization and to the Executive Board.
- Section 2. The Council of Elders will be composed of persons with a minimum seven (7) years of experience in the arena of the oral tradition. There will be up to six (6) members of this August body.
- Section 3. The membership of the Council of Elders will be recruited through the executive board. Each elder will be asked to serve a two (2) year term of office.
- Section 4. The Council of Elders will convene at least two (2) times a year and more frequently when necessary to discuss the vision, mission, and operations of the organization.

Article XI: Meetings

The regular meetings of the Griots' Circle of Maryland, Incorporated shall be the first (1st) Saturday of each month unless otherwise authorized by the Executive Board or by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at a scheduled meeting. Time and place are to be determined by the Executive Board.

Article XII: Amendment

- Section 1. This Constitution may be amended at any regular business meeting by a simple majority vote of those present, provided notice was given at the previous meeting.
- Section 2. They may also be amended at a special meeting called for that purpose, with previous notice and a simple majority vote.
- Section 3. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing.

Article XIII: Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the Robert Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of this organization except in such cases as are covered by the Constitution of the Griots' Circle of Maryland, Incorporated.

Article XIV: Dissolution

Upon dissolution of this organization assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code , i.e., charitable, educational, religious or scientific, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the Federal government, or to a state or local government for a public purpose.