



## Dr. Harvey Amani Whitfield Appointed Centennial Carnegie Chair in the History of Slavery in Canada

For immediate release

September 9, 2024

King's is proud to introduce Dr. Harvey Amani Whitfield as the inaugural appointee to the Centennial Carnegie Chair in the History of Slavery in Canada at Dalhousie and King's. The Chair was created in 2023 to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of King's and Dalhousie's association. It will advance important scholarship worldwide, contribute to the commitments both universities have made to redress historical exclusions and chart a course for a more inclusive and diverse future—key priorities found in Dalhousie's [Third Century Promise](#) and in the [President's Mandate](#) at King's.

An eminent scholar on the history of Canadian and American slavery, Dr. Whitfield has authored many books on the topic, including *Blacks on the Border: The Black Refugees in British North America, 1815–1860*, *North to Bondage: Loyalist Slavery in the Maritimes* and *Black Slavery in the Maritimes: A History in Documents*. Dr. Whitfield's *Biographical Dictionary of Enslaved Black People in the Maritimes* received the Canadian Historical Association's 2023 CLIO Award for the History of the Atlantic region.

"I am very excited to be taking on this role. It is a wonderful opportunity to teach engaged and curious students about the history of slavery in Canada and beyond," says Dr. Whitfield. "My goal is to teach our students about the individual experiences of enslaved Black people and their encounters with human bondage."

Dr. Whitfield recently returned to Halifax where he completed both his Master of Arts and PhD in History at Dalhousie. He was previously a professor in the History department at the University of Calgary for four years and spent 17 years as a professor at the University of Vermont. As a member of Dalhousie's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS), Dr. Whitfield will teach courses that cover topics including African Nova Scotian history, the rise and fall of the slave-holding republic, slavery and freedom in the Americas and slavery and American political culture. He will also have teaching responsibilities in King's [Foundation Year Program](#) (FYP).

"We at King's and Dalhousie are exceedingly fortunate to have attracted a scholar of Dr. Whitfield's calibre," says King's Vice-President Dr. Sarah Clift. "King's Foundation Year Program will benefit immeasurably from Dr. Whitfield's expertise. He will bring a perspective to our students' understanding of the global evil of the transatlantic slave trade, one that emphasizes its local, regional and national dimensions. The global history of enslavement is also *our*—Canada's—history, and Dr. Whitfield will contribute to our collective understanding of its implications."

Both Dalhousie and King's are signatories to [The Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Higher Education](#) that explicitly calls on universities to address their historical connections to slavery. This appointment is one way the universities are responding to the urgent calls demanding higher education to address anti-Black racism and ensure Black flourishing, by supporting models of "inclusive excellence."

In recent years, both King's and Dalhousie have deeply engaged with the difficult legacies of their respective institutions, beginning with two inquiries to determine the connections of the universities and their respective leaders and founders to the practices and economics of the transatlantic slave trade. The results of these inquiries were published in the [Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race](#) and [King's & Slavery: A Scholarly Inquiry](#).

Dr. Whitfield has already been an important part of this ongoing process—he contributed to the King's inquiry in 2018 and was a keynote speaker at the [2023 Universities Studying Slavery Conference](#) co-hosted by King's and Dalhousie in partnership with the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia. The Centennial Carnegie Appointment addresses recommendations and commitments stemming from these processes of historical reckoning.

"With the launch of the Black and African Diaspora Studies major last year, we're thrilled to be partnering with King's in hiring Dr. Whitfield, whose work in documenting and analyzing the existence of slavery, particularly in Atlantic Canada, rewrites traditional understandings of the region—and the nation," says Dr. Jennifer Andrews, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Dalhousie. "Dr. Whitfield's dynamic presence in the classroom and scholarly acumen will undoubtedly enhance the courses and programs that we offer. We are delighted to welcome him back to Dalhousie!"

### **About Dalhousie University**

Dalhousie University is Atlantic Canada's leading research-intensive university, a key driver of the region's intellectual, social and economic development for over 200 years. Located in the heart of Halifax—in the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq—with an Agricultural Campus in Truro/Bible Hill, Dalhousie is a truly national and international university, with more than half of our 20,000 students coming from outside of the province. Our 6,000 faculty and staff foster a diverse, purpose-driven community, one that spans 13 faculties and conducts more than \$194 million in sponsored research annually.

[dal.ca](http://dal.ca)

### **About the University of King's College**

Established in 1789, King's College is Canada's oldest chartered university and is associated with Dalhousie University. A small and extraordinarily lively academic community located in Halifax (Kjipuktuk), Nova Scotia, King's is known nationally and internationally for its highly acclaimed interdisciplinary programs in the humanities, including its renowned Foundation Year Program, its professional programs in journalism and its fine arts programs in creative writing.

[ukings.ca](http://ukings.ca)

### **For more information contact:**

Karen Eull, Associate Director, Communications, University of King's College

[karen.eull@ukings.ca](mailto:karen.eull@ukings.ca) | 902.943.0409

Lindsay Dowling-Savelle, Media Relations Manager, Dalhousie University  
[lindsay.savelle@dal.ca](mailto:lindsay.savelle@dal.ca) | 902.222.8810