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**H**ARVARD LAW AND HISTORY PROFESSOR Annette Gordon-Reed visited the James Branch Cabell Library on Thursday, Feb. 10 to deliver VCU's 21st annual Black History Month Lecture about her most recent 2021 publication, "On Juneteenth."

Juneteenth, celebrated on June 19, honors the day Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas, in 1865 and announced that the over 250,000 enslaved African Americans had been freed by the Emancipation Proclamation. The proclamation had been decreed over six months prior, according to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The audience included VCU alumni, students and staff to hear Gordon-Reed's lecture — including VCU alumna Stephanie Holt, who said she has a connection to the VCU library's book club and staff.

"The event was wonderful and very informative. I learned a lot about Texas history, which isn't generally taught in Virginia, as well as the African American viewpoint which is always interesting in understanding between people," Holt said.

The lecture discussed the historian's viewpoint on the journey the United States has taken to reach the prevalence of Juneteenth today, including Texas' origins as a state and discrimination against African Americans with personal accounts and anecdotes from Gordon-Reed.

Juneteenth became a state holiday for Virginia after former Gov. Ralph Northam proposed the executive order in 2020, according to the Governor of Virginia's website.

University spokesperson Sue Robinson stated that the VCU library's office compiled a list of potential speakers before selecting Gordon-Reed. Gordon-Reed offers one of the most authoritative voices on race and history in America, according to Robinson.

As the first African American recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for history, Gordon-Reed is recognized as a nationally significant public intellect and a leading scholar of U.S. history, according to Robinson.

Dean of Libraries and university librarian Irene Herold helped coordinate this event for students and faculty members in the community, according to Robinson. Herold supervises the James Branch Cabell Library on VCU's Monroe Park Campus and the Health Sciences Library located on the MCV Campus, according to VCU library's website.

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## "ON JUNETEENTH" author gives Black History Month Lecture in Richmond

The  
Black History Month  
Issue



Illustration by Bailey Wood

## First to get fired, last to get hired: The dilemma of Black coaches in the NFL

“

We need change. That was a number one reason. I know there's a sacrifice there's a risk to that but, at the end of the day, we need change.”

Brian Flores, Former NFL head coach

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