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Contact Information:
Mid-Continent Public Library
Emily Brown, Public Relations Coordinator
ebrown@mymcpl.org
O: 816.503.4187  M: 816.809.9630

KCPT
Angee Simmons
VP Education & Engagement
asimmons@kcpt.org
816.398.4249

KCPT, Library, & Cultural Center Host ‘Finding Your Roots’ Event on March 14

Genealogy Event to Explore Research Tips & Tricks and Reveal Congressman’s Ancestry

Kansas City, MO – Kansas City PBS, Mid-Continent Public Library, and the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center will host a special screening and discussion of the hit PBS show Finding Your Roots on Thursday, March 14, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., at the Cultural Center (3700 Blue Pkwy., Kansas City, MO 64130).

Following the screening, a panel of local genealogy experts, including Cheryl Lang of the Library’s Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Mo., will offer attendees tips and tricks on tracing their own ancestry. The panel will highlight which local resources attendees should explore if their lineage includes African American ancestors, which can present a unique set of challenges and opportunities. Joining Lang will be Preston Washington, President of M.A.G.I.C. (the Midwest Afro-American Genealogical Interest Coalition) and Lyle Dixon, history teacher at Penn Valley.

“This event will be a great opportunity for attendees to not only celebrate their love of the show, but also to learn how they can have a ‘Henry Louis Gates moment’ of their own by utilizing genealogy resources and tools,” said Lang, who manages MCPL’s Midwest Genealogy Center. “Through our facility alone, researchers can access thousands of valuable records—both in print and online—all for free. You just have to know the right place to look!”

The event will conclude with a Finding Your Roots-style presentation to Kansas Citian and U.S. Congressman Emanuel Cleaver on his family history, which Lang and her team at the Midwest Genealogy Center have been researching over the past few weeks. Lang will reveal what they uncovered about Cleaver’s ancestry and how they made their discoveries.

The Midwest Genealogy Center, located off Lee’s Summit Road in Independence, just north of I-70, is the largest freestanding public genealogy library in the United States and boasts 52,000 square feet of resources available to researchers at no charge. With a Mid-Continent Public Library card or Midwest Genealogy Center day pass, visitors can access popular online resources like Ancestry.com and Findmypast as well as hard copies of records like maps, city directories, and periodicals. The center also offers regular classes for new and experienced researchers alike.
More information about the Midwest Genealogy Center can be found at midwestgenealogycenter.org. Additional information about KCPT can be found at kcpt.org. Finding Your Roots airs on KCPT on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

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Access Your World
Mid-Continent Public Library is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 31 branches and two Library-To-Go locations and serving more than 800,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. The Library strives to enrich our citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. MCPL is a 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winner. Connect with the Library on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

About KCPT
KCPT believes in the power of media on every platform and seeks to use that power to enrich, engage and entertain our viewers both on-air and online. We strive to advance conversations through community engagement and social media; explore complicated issues facing our region with ongoing reporting, investigative reports and informed discussions; and share the stories of people, places, and progress in our community.