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Third Annual African-American Read-In at the Orlando Public Library

[Orlando, Fla.] Paralympic Games Gold medalist April Holmes, XL106.7 host Johnny Magic and others will perform African-American stories, poetry, songs and dance at the Orlando Public Library on February 11 for the annual African-American Read-In. The annual event celebrates and promotes diversity in literature by highlighting work created by African-American authors.

This year, the African-American Read-In includes special guests April Holmes, Paralympic Games Gold medalist; Johnny Magic, host of *Johnny's House* on XL106.7; Bianca Blair and Montez Ford, WWE NXT Superstars; Jazmin Bailey, news anchor for WESH 2 and CW 18; LaFontaine Oliver, President and General Manager of 90.7 WMFE; Avido Khahaifa, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the *Orlando Sentinel*; and Ginger Gadsden, news anchor for News 6 WKMG. Previous years guests include Dr. Julian Chambliss, Brooke Obie, Dr. Kevin Meehan and Commissioner Regina Hill. The media sponsor for this year's event is *Onyx Magazine*, a local publication that celebrates the accomplishments and contributions of African-Americans to the community.

The African-American Read-In is open to all ages and will be taking place on Sunday, February 11, 2–4 p.m at the Orlando Public Library, 101 E. Central Ave. For more information and a complete listing of readers and performers, visit www.ocls.info/readin.

“For some Black students, encounters with African American characters at a Read-In may be the first time they’ve ever seen themselves reflected in a book,” Lorna Collier wrote in the National Council of Teachers of English’s *The Council Chronicle* in 2016. “The experience can show them that they matter and can also entice them into a love of reading. The stories can be inspiring too, showing that others have endured and overcome problems they may themselves be facing.”

The African-American Read-In is hosted annually at the Orlando Public Library in conjunction with the National African-American Read-In, the nation’s first and oldest event dedicated to diversity in literature, established in 1990 by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) to make literacy a significant part of Black History Month.

For a complete listing of Black History Month events at the Orange County Library System, visit www.ocls.info/blackhistorymonth.

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