



For Immediate Release

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Influential Attorney, Law Professor Amanda Frost to Give Free Lecture on the History of Birthright Citizenship

October 23 event to be hosted by LancasterHistory, Franklin & Marshall College at Lancaster County Convention Center

LANCASTER, Pa. – On Thursday, October 23, **LancasterHistory** and the **Center for Politics and Public Affairs at Franklin & Marshall College** will host **Amanda Frost**, an immigration attorney and law professor at the University of Virginia. In her lecture, “Dred Scott’s Daughter: Birthright Citizenship and the Meaning of ‘American,’” Frost will explore the legal and historical importance of birthright citizenship—and what it means for the nation’s future.

The United States has long grappled with the question: *Who counts as an American?* In 1857, the Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision denied citizenship to all Black people, enslaved or free. After the Civil War, Thaddeus Stevens and other Radical Republicans fought to secure birthright citizenship in the Fourteenth Amendment for anyone born in the United States, including more than four million recently emancipated people. Although the Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld this principle in landmark rulings, the debate over birthright citizenship continues today.

“After the Civil War, Congressman **Thaddeus Stevens** fought to ensure that freedom meant more than emancipation,” said **Robin Sarratt**, President & CEO of LancasterHistory. “He championed the 14th Amendment, which established birthright citizenship and guaranteed equal protection under the law. Stevens helped redefine what it meant to be an American and secured the rights and protections of citizenship for all Americans. We’re thrilled to have Amanda Frost join us for an in-depth look at a historical issue that affects all of us today.”

Amanda Frost is a professor of law at the University of Virginia, where she specializes in immigration and citizenship law, as well as U.S. Constitutional law. Her scholarship has been cited by the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as dozens of federal and state courts, and she has been invited to testify on the topics of her articles before both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees. Her non-academic writing has been published in *The Atlantic*, *The New Republic*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Slate*, *USA Today*, and *The American Prospect*. Her book, *You Are Not American: Citizenship Stripping from Dred Scott to the Dreamers* (2021), was named as a “New & Noteworthy” book by *The New York Times Book Review* and was shortlisted for the Mark Lynton History Prize. She is currently at work on a second book on the history of birthright citizenship, which will be published by One Signal (Simon & Schuster) in 2026.

Registration & Additional Information

The event, “Dred Scott’s Daughter: Birthright Citizenship and the Meaning of ‘American,’” will take place on Thursday, October 23, 2025 in Freedom Hall A at the Lancaster County Convention Center, 25 S. Queen Str., Lancaster, PA. It is free and open to the public, but **registration is required**. To register, please visit bit.ly/afrostlecture online or call 717.392.4633, ext. 100 to register over the phone.

LancasterHistory is committed to making our events accessible to everyone. An ASL interpreter will be on-site for the event. If you require additional accommodations or services to fully participate in this event, please contact Robin Sarratt at info@lancasterhistory.org at least 7 days prior to the event. LancasterHistory is currently working on adding a livestream option. Please check back to their website for a future update and registration for said option.

About LancasterHistory

LancasterHistory is a community-based, not-for-profit organization established to educate the public on the history of Lancaster County and its place in the history of Pennsylvania and the United States, to advance the missions of regional historical organizations, and to promote the acquisition, preservation, and interpretation of resources representing the history of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania within the broader context of state and national history, including the life and legacy of Congressman Thaddeus Stevens, his house manager, Lydia Hamilton Smith, and America's 15th President, James Buchanan.

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