



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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<http://dorothycottonjubileesingers.com>

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**City and County to issue proclamations for Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers Day,
Chorus to preview DC Kennedy Center concert May 12 at Ithaca College**

ITHACA, NY: The Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers (DCJS) will present “An Evening of Negro Spirituals and African-American Sacred Music,” Friday, May 12 at 7:30 in Ford Hall at Ithaca College. The concert is a preview of their Mother’s Day (May 14) performance, at 6 p.m. on the Millennium Stage of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., which will be [live streamed](#). The group also will perform the preview concert May 7 at 3 p.m. at the Park Church in Elmira.

The Mayor of the City of Ithaca will issue a proclamation later this week making May 12 The Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers Day. The Tompkins County Legislature also will issue a proclamation later this week making May 12 the Dorothy Cotton and Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers Day to recognize Cotton for her longtime work promoting social justice, and the chorus for the work it does and its premiere on the national stage May 14 in Washington, D.C.

Unlike other spiritual choruses, DCJS is unique in that:

- It is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, whose sole mission is education, the preservation of the Negro Spiritual, and the use of its themes of sorrow, despair and hope to promote racial healing and social justice.
- It has many affiliations with the world-renown School of Music at Ithaca College, including the directorship of [Baruch Whitehead](#), IC associate professor of music education, and about 20 Ithaca College voice students who perform many of the solos.
- It hosts about 80 members of different ages (18 to 78), heritages and backgrounds, including; numerous Cornell deans, faculty, staff, alumni and retirees and a host of community members.

“The Negro Spiritual has an honored place in American history as the voice of a uniquely American experience -- the perseverance and triumph of an oppressed people through its indomitable spirit and incomparable ability to sing through its anguish with steadfast faith to a God above, with a joy and sorrow unparalleled in our history,” says Whitehead, who founded the chorus seven years ago. “Our mission is to raise our voices once again in these words and harmonies and to reach for these redemptive powers in our own times.”

DCJS is named in honor of civil rights pioneer Dorothy Cotton, an Ithaca resident who worked in Dr. Martin’ Luther King, Jr.’s inner circle as education director in the 1960s. In 2007 the U.S. Congress officially designated African American spirituals a “national treasure.”

The Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers sponsors include The Community Arts Partnership, Dorothy L. Allen Black Gospel Music Fund and Kraut Family Fund of the Community Foundation of Tompkins County, and Legacy Foundation of Tompkins County.

The concert is free with donations suggested.