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For

For Immediate Release

## Boone Local Celebrity Awarded by the US Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs

### *Local Veteran And Renowned Storyteller, Raymond Christian, Receives the Prestigious Fulbright Specialist Scholar Award After an Extensive Application Process and Review by an Elite Panel of Experts*

Dr. Raymond Christian, a resident of Boone NC for sixteen years, has been chosen as a Fulbright Scholar as an expert in Education and Storytelling Narrative, a prestigious and highly competitive award gifted by the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Chosen specialists serve three year appointments as expert consultants on research, curriculum, faculty development and related subjects in over 140 countries around the world.

Dr. Christian began his life in the urban slums of Richmond VA and escaped through the US army at the age of 17, serving as an infantryman and paratrooper for twenty years. After retiring, Dr. Christian went back to school and earned a BS in Liberal Arts, an MA in public history, and a EdS/EdD in Education Leaderships, researching the relationship between parental behavior and African American academic success. He then moved to Boone NC in 2004 and worked as an adjunct professor at Appalachian State University in the Departments of History and General Education teaching among other course "The Souls of Black Folks: An Examination of African American Social Culture" and "Storytelling: Life in the Narrative."

Dr. Christian began his storytelling career in Boone and has gone on to have record breaking success in the industry:

- He was recognized by The Bitter Southerner magazine as the most well-known southern storyteller in the country.
- He is a 12 time Moth Story Slam Champion.
- He was the winner of the 2016 National Storytelling Festival Story Slam.
- His stories have appeared twice in Reader's Digest, both the 2016 Best Stories in America and the 2017 American Hero's issues.
- He was selected as the 2017 Serenbe France Focus Storytelling Fellow.
- His stories have been featured regularly on several NPR radio shows including The Moth Radio Hour, Snap Judgement and Backstory.
- He has made several appearances on the Moth Mainstage.
- He was a featured performer on the 2018 Snap Judgement Live! Tour.

About his work, Dr. Christian says “Because my cultural heritage is steeped in a strong value for oral traditions and storytelling, I am deeply interested in preservation of oral traditions while embracing new applications in an education, cross-cultural and global context.”

Dr. Christian believes that his combined academic training and professional experience have given him unique expertise in the use of personal narrative and storytelling as a pedagogical tool, a research method, a method of cultural transmission, a historical artifact and a method of global cultural engagement. He hopes to use his expertise to teach faculty and students at institutions abroad about narrative as a tool both in qualitative research and as a tool to enhance global cultural understanding.

Dr. Christian currently lives in Boone, NC where he produces his own podcast “What’s Ray Saying” where he uses history, storytelling and social commentary to explore the Black experience in America.