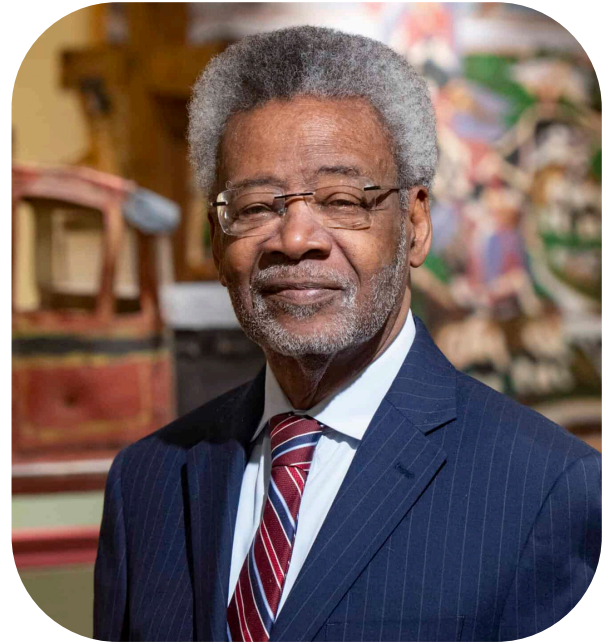


Dr. Harry Robinson, Jr.

AAAM Board President: 1982–1984



Dr. Harry Robinson, Jr. is the visionary founder of the African American Museum of Dallas. A native of New Orleans, he grew up in rural Louisiana and earned his B.A. degree from Southern University and graduate degrees from Atlanta University and the University of Illinois at Champaign–Urbana.

After working at several HBCUs, including Alabama State University and Atlanta University, in 1974, Dr. Robinson became the chief librarian of Bishop College. Dr. Robinson was asked to create an area in the Library to display African artwork that the College had obtained from two local donors. He created a 30' x 30' space for the exhibit. But he soon moved the display to the Library's basement and created the Southwest Art and Museum of African American Life and Culture. The Museum became one of Bishop College's most important community outreach efforts, as it not only displayed African and African American art, but also presented lectures and programs and sponsored a children's summer camp.

Dr. Robinson also had a grand vision for the College's Museum. He sponsored Dallas's first biennial Black Women's Conference, courses on African American history, exhibitions featuring local artists, and conferences on various aspects of the African American experience. When Bishop College closed in 1988, Dr. Robinson found space for the Museum's activities at multiple venues in Dallas, such as the Dallas Public Library, St. Luke "Community" United Methodist Church, Lincoln High School, and First National Bank in downtown Dallas. After the completion of the African American Museum's building in November 1993, Dr. Robinson focused on two critical activities: improving and developing the Museum's archives and raising money to sustain the Museum's programming and ongoing activities. In 1992, Dr. Robinson acquired the Museum's first significant archival collection, the Sepia Magazine Photographic Archives, consisting of 52 boxes containing approximately 20,000 black-and-white photographs. The second significant archival collection that Dr. Robinson obtained was the Bishop College Archives. Dr. Robinson literally saved the vital records of Bishop College.

After leading the Museum for nearly five decades, in December 2024, Dr. Robinson retired as President and Chief Executive Officer and now serves as Chief Operating Officer Emeritus of the African American Museum, Dallas.