

Alfred University's Russell Lecture dedicated to memory of Vicki Eaklor

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Edward Baptist

ALFRED, NY Alfred University's annual Russell Lecture, scheduled for Wednesday, March 21, will be dedicated to the memory of late history professor Vicki Eaklor, who passed away last week.

The lecture, by Edward Baptist, professor of history at Cornell University, is titled "Myths and Realities of the Underground Railroad." It will be delivered at 7:30 p.m. in Nevins Theater, Powell Campus Center.

Baptist is among the top historians of American slavery; in 2014, he wrote a critically-acclaimed book on the subject, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*.

Eaklor, who retired from AU in 2014 following a 32-year teaching career, passed away on Thursday, March 8. She had been asked by the Division of Human Studies to introduce Baptist as the Russell Lecture speaker. Dedicating the lecture to Eaklor's memory is appropriate in that her first book, *Antislavery Songs*, dovetails with Baptist's interests.

The Russell Lecture, sponsored by the AU College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the Division of Human Studies, has been conducted annually since 1970. It honors the memory of Willis Russell, former historian and department chair, who taught at AU from 1926 until his retirement in 1964. Each year, the lecture brings a nationally recognized historian to campus to deliver an address.