



For Immediate Release

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Feb. 24, 2026

Novel hosts conversation on the founding of Memphis with author Scott Williams, moderated by Memphis broadcast veteran Joey Sulipeck

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 24, 2026 — On Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 6 p.m., independent Memphis bookstore [Novel](#) will host author Scott Williams for a conversation focused on the founding and early development of Memphis. The program will center on Williams' recent biography, "Townmania: Marcus Winchester and the Making of Memphis." Books may be preordered in advance at novelmemphis.com.

Business leader, broadcasting veteran and Emmy Award winner Joey Sulipeck will moderate the discussion exploring the city's origins, its civic milestones and the importance of preserving local history. Sulipeck is an investment adviser headquartered in Memphis.

The evening will feature an exploration of:

- The life of early business and community leader Marcus Winchester and his wife, Amarante Loiselle, a free woman of color from St. Louis
- The broader political, economic and social forces shaping the frontier city
- The significance of major 2026 civic anniversaries
- The role museums, libraries and local community groups play in preserving community history

The program is intentionally timed to align with major anniversaries in 2026, including:

- May 28 — 230th anniversary of Marcus Winchester's birth
- June 1 — 230th anniversary of Tennessee statehood
- December 19 — 200th anniversary of Memphis's incorporation
- The national America250 commemoration marking 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence
- Tennessee America250 — the state's official initiative to commemorate the 250th anniversary

"These anniversaries offer a unique opportunity to look beyond familiar narratives and reconsider how Memphis began," Williams said. "Understanding the city's earliest years helps us better understand who we are today and why preservation of local history matters."

Marcus Winchester devoted his life to transforming the small settlement on the fourth Chickasaw bluff into a thriving center of transportation, commerce and industry that became Memphis. He was sent to the bluff, barely out of his teens, at Andrew Jackson's request, and then went on to become the city's first real estate agent, mayor, store owner, banker and postmaster.

Despite his significant contributions, Winchester and his family faced relentless attacks because his wife, Amarante Loiselle, was a free woman of color during a time when the debate over slavery was becoming increasingly polarized and deadly. He was ultimately forced to move his wife and children outside the city limits of the community he built.

Williams, who grew up in Memphis and graduated from the University of Memphis, is CEO of Discovery Park of America in Union City, Tennessee. He previously served as COO of the Newseum in Washington, D.C. and worked in leadership roles at Elvis Presley's Graceland. His earlier biographies include works on Richard Halliburton, Odd McIntyre and David Crockett.

The program at Novel is open to the public. Books are available for presale, and an autograph session will follow. [RSVP on Novel's event calendar.](#)

Novel is located at 387 Perkins Ext., Memphis, TN 38117.

For media inquiries, interviews or additional information, contact Scott Williams at 731-885-5455 or rscottwilliamsemail@gmail.com.

Photo caption: On Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 6 p.m., independent Memphis bookstore [Novel](#) will host author Scott Williams (left) for a conversation about his recent biography, "Townmania: Marcus Winchester and the Making of Memphis," moderated by business leader, broadcasting veteran and Emmy Award winner Joey Sulipeck (right).

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About Scott Williams

Scott Williams is an author dedicated to extensive research that focuses on uncovering overlooked stories in American history and culture. His books include biographies of Richard Halliburton, Odd McIntyre and David Crockett. In his latest work, he explores early Memphis settler Marcus Winchester. Williams has led teams at the Newseum and Elvis Presley's Graceland and is now CEO of Discovery Park of America. He serves on several historical and tourism boards and committees across Tennessee and is the current president of the Tennessee State Library and Archives Friends.