

## ***Poppin' Patterns with Purpose* hosted by LaKeisha Wolf**

Participants of all ages will view traditional examples of brightly colored patterns found in jewelry and textile adornment from across Africa such as Kente from Ghana, and bead weaving of the Zulu in South Africa, but with a particular focus on the Maasai people of East Africa who create stunning jewelry featuring large widths of tiny glass beads on wire formed into collar necklaces and cuff bracelets. Each piece of jewelry displayed will have basic shapes of triangles, rectangles, squares and circles that together create beautiful patterns. The colors of the patterns used by the Maasai each have meaning, historically associated with cattle and nature, and these meanings will be displayed in bold lettering for participants to see and glean from. Different styles of jewelry are worn at different ages, rites of passage and special occasions. Participants will create their own Maasai-inspired jewelry: a necklace collar, a cuff bracelet or even a headband using the patterns and cultural meanings of colors found in East Africa.

**Materials:** Large Paper Plates, White Cardstock, Scissors, Markers, Colored Pencils, Crayons, Stapler/staples, String, Beads

**Participants** will be shown Maasai jewelry, as well as photographs of various African people wearing and displaying patterns in their textiles and adornments. We'll point out simple colors and shapes that repeat themselves, creating a pattern. And we'll also summarize basic cultural meanings of the colors found in Maasai jewelry including red, black, blue, yellow, orange, green and white. Additionally, we'll briefly discuss the concept of ancestors and how gifts and traditions are passed along in families.

**Step 1)** Cut out the center circle of the paper plate and cut through to open up the collar. **Step 2)** Use a dark color marker to make a pattern with shapes around the collar and also on the middle circle which was cut out. Then use other bright markers/crayons to color in the patterns. **Step 3)** Cut the middle circle into a square or rectangle and have it stapled to the bottom of the collar. Children can tie strings with beads on the end for extra decoration. (Similar basic instructions can be adapted for the cuff bracelet or a headband.)



