



Celebrating 100 Years of Black History

The story of Black History Month begins in Chicago during the summer of 1915. An alumnus of the University of Chicago with many friends in the city, **Carter G. Woodson** traveled from Washington, D.C. to participate in a national celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of emancipation sponsored by the state of Illinois. Thousands of African Americans travelled from across the country to see exhibits highlighting the progress their people had made since the destruction of slavery. Awarded a doctorate in Harvard three years earlier, Woodson joined the other exhibitors with a black history display. Despite being held at the Coliseum, the site of the 1912 Republican convention, an overflow crowd of six to twelve thousand waited outside for their turn to view the exhibits. Inspired by the three-week celebration, Woodson decided to form an organization to promote the scientific study of black life and history before leaving town. On September 9th, Woodson met at the Wabash YMCA with A. L. Jackson and three others and formed the **Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH)**.

Black History Month is an annually observed month-long celebration of African American life, History, and culture. Founded by **Dr. Carter G. Woodson** in **February** 1926, what was Formerly known as **Negro History Week** became a month-long celebration as a way to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, History, and culture to the global community.

Each year the question is asked: **Why does Black History Month occur in February?** The relevance of February goes back to 1926, when ASALH's founder Dr. Carter G. Woodson first established "Negro History Week" during the second week of February. And why that week? Because it encompasses the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass—both men being great American symbols of freedom. Woodson chose February for reasons of tradition and reform. It is commonly said that Woodson selected February to encompass the birthdays of two great Americans who played a prominent role in shaping black history, namely **Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass**, whose birthdays are the 12th and the 14th, respectively. More importantly, he chose them for reasons of tradition. Since Lincoln's assassination in 1865, the black community, along with other Republicans, had been celebrating the fallen President's birthday. And since the late 1890s, black communities across the country had been celebrating Douglass'. Well aware of the pre-existing celebrations, Woodson built Negro History Week around traditional days of commemorating the black past. He was asking the public to extend their study of black history, not to create a new tradition. In doing so, he increased his chances for success.

However, **Woodson never confined Negro History to a week.** His life's work and the mission of ASALH since its founding in 1915 represent a living testimony to the year-round and year-after-year study of African American history.

Read more on th ASALH Website: <https://asalh.org/about-us/about-black-history-month/>

"Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history."

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Founder



2025: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LABOR

2024: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE ARTS

2023: BLACK RESISTANCE

2022: BLACK HEALTH AND WELLNESS

2021: THE BLACK FAMILY: REPRESENTATION, IDENTITY, AND DIVERSITY

2020: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE VOTE

2019: BLACK MIGRATIONS

2018: AFRICAN AMERICANS IN TIMES OF WAR

2017: THE CRISIS IN BLACK EDUCATION

2016: HALLOWED GROUNDS: SITES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MEMORIES

2015: A CENTURY OF BLACK LIFE, HISTORY, AND CULTURE

2014: CIVIL RIGHTS IN AMERICA

2013: AT THE CROSSROADS OF FREEDOM AND EQUALITY: THE
EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION AND THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON

2012: BLACK WOMEN IN AMERICAN CULTURE AND HISTORY

2011: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE CIVIL WAR

2010: THE HISTORY OF BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

2009: THE QUEST FOR BLACK CITIZENSHIP IN THE AMERICAS

2008: CARTER G. WOODSON AND THE ORIGINS OF MULTICULTURALISM

2007: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: AFRICANS IN THE AMERICAS

2006: CELEBRATING COMMUNITY: A TRIBUTE TO BLACK FRATERNAL, SOCIAL, AND
CIVIL INSTITUTIONS

2005: THE NIAGARA MOVEMENT: BLACK PROTEST REBORN, 1905-2005

2004: BEFORE BROWN, BEYOND BOUNDARIES: COMMEMORATING THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

2003: THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLKS: CENTENNIAL REFLECTIONS

2002: THE COLOR LINE REVISITED: IS RACISM DEAD?

2001: CREATING AND DEFINING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY: FAMILY,
CHURCH POLITICS AND CULTURE

2000: HERITAGE AND HORIZONS: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEGACY AND
THE CHALLENGES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

1999: LEGACY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP FOR THE PRESENT AND
THE FUTURE

1998: BLACK BUSINESS

1997: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND CIVIL RIGHTS; A REPRISAL

1996: BLACK WOMEN

1995: REFLECTIONS ON 1895: DOUGLASS, DU BOIS & WASHINGTON

1994: EMPOWERING BLACK AMERICANS

1993: AFRO-AMERICAN SCHOLARS: LEADERS, ACTIVISTS AND WRITERS

1992: AFRICAN ROOTS EXPERIENCE NEW WORLDS, PRE-COLUMBUS TO SPACE
EXPLORATION

1991: EDUCATING AMERICA: BLACK UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES, STRENGTHS AND CRISIS

1990: SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SCHOLARLY EXCELLENCE: A HOMAGE TO OUR FOREBEARERS

1989: AFRO AMERICANS AND RELIGION

1988: CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS OF AFRO AMERICANS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

1987: AFRO AMERICANS AND THE CONSTITUTION FROM COLONIAL TIMES TO THE PRESENT

1986: AFRO AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: INTERNATIONAL CONNECTION

1985: AFRO AMERICAN FAMILY

1984: AFRO AMERICANS AND EDUCATION

1983: AFRO AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

1982: AFRO AMERICAN SURVIVAL

1981: BLACK HISTORY: ROLE MODEL FOR YOUTH

1980: HERITAGE FOR AMERICA

1979: HISTORY: TORCH FOR THE FUTURE

1978: ROOTS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROJECTIONS

1977: HERITAGE DAYS: THE BLACK PERSPECTIVE; THE THIRD CENTURY

1976: AMERICA FOR ALL AMERICANS

1975: FULFILLING AMERICA'S PROMISE: BLACK HISTORY MONTH

1974: Helping America Understand

1973: Biography Illuminates the Black Experience

1972: African Art, Music, Literature; a Valuable Cultural Experience

1971: African Civilization and Culture: A Worthy Historical Background

1970: 15th Amendment and Black America in the Century (1870-1970)

1969: Changing the Afro American Image through History

1968: The Centennial of the Fourteenth Amendment Afro American History Week

1967: Negro History in the Home, School, and the Community

1966: Freedom from Racial Myths and Stereotypes Through Negro History

1965: Negro History: Freedom's Foundation

1964: Negro History: A Basis for the New Freedom

1963: Negro History Evaluates Emancipation (1863-1963)

1962: Negro History and a New Birth of Freedom

1961: Freedom and Democracy for the Negro after 100 years (1861-1961)

1960: Strengthening America Through Education in Negro History and African Culture

1959: Negro History: A Foundation for a Proud America

1958: Negro History: A Factor in Nationalism and Internationalism

1957: Negro History

1956: Negro History in an Era of Changing Human Relations

1955: Negro History: A Contribution to America's Intercultural Life

1954: Negro History: A Foundation for Integration

1953: Negro History and Human Relations

1952: Great Negro Educators (Teachers)

1951: Eminent Negroes in World Affairs

1950: Outstanding Moments in Negro History

1949: The Use of Spirituals in the Classroom

1948: The Whole Truth and Nothing but the Truth

1947: Democracy Possible only Through Brotherhood

1946: Let us Have Peace

1945: The Negro and Reconversion

1944: The Negro and the New Order

1943: The Negro in the Modern World

1942: The Negro in Democracy

1941: The Career of Frederick Douglass

1940: Negro Labor

1939: Special Achievements of the Race: Religion, Education, Business, Architecture, Engineering, Innovation, Pioneering

1938: Special Achievements of the Race: Oratory, Drama, Music, Painting, Sculpture, Science and Inventions

1937: American Negro History from the Time of Importation from Africa up to the Present Day

1936: African Background Outlined

1935: The Negro Achievements in Africa

1934: Contribution of the Negro in Poetry, in Painting, in Sculpture and in Science

1933: Ethiopia Meets Error in Truth

1932: What George Washington Bicentennial Commission Fail to Do

1931: Neglected Aspects of Negro History

1930: Significant Achievements of the Negro

1929: Possibility of Putting Negro History in the Curriculum

1928: Civilization: A World Achievement

**** 1927: Dr. Carter G. Woodson solidified the foundational, week-long celebration of Black History, known as "Negro History Week".**

**** 1926: Dr. Carter G. Woodson devotion to showcasing the contributions of Black Americans was identified in the second week of February as "Negro History Week".**