FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 21, 2021

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History Announces New National Program Celebrating the Black Family

WASHINGTON (June 2021) — In continuing its theme of “The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity,” the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) is excited to announce a new national campaign, “The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling” launching June 26th. Designed in collaboration with NY Life and Archival Alchemy®, the campaign encourages participants to host intergenerational Black family reunions—virtual or in person—to explore their unique African American heritage and family history.

The year 2020 began on a high note with many African Americans having just returned from Africa to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first enslaved Africans to reach North American shores in 2019. The “Year of Return” marked a closing of many gaps among the African diaspora, scattered in the wake of the triangular trade.

Just a few months later, the global Black family itself was disbanded by the COVID-19 pandemic. We wrestled with grief—from the loss of jobs, health, and family members and numerous deaths at the hands of police—but we also celebrated graduations, weddings, and births of the next generation.

With “The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling,” ASALH hopes to inspire families to reconnect and re-emerge stronger, through archiving, storytelling, and breaking bread. This program highlights the legacy of Black family reunions and encourages families of all backgrounds to build or create their own family reunion traditions.

“The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling” will include pre-recorded workshops, Q&A sessions, panel discussions, and a certificate program to guide participants through tools of oral storytelling, genealogy, and familial archiving that may serve as a roadmap to their reunions, after a year apart.

Established on September 9, 1915, by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History founded Black History Month and carries forth the work of the Father of Black History.

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To learn more about the Association for the Study of African American Life and History and “The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling,” please contact us at familyhistory@asalh.org.