

The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling

In 2019, after 400 years of displacement, African-Americans descended upon West Africa for the Year of Return. As Black people gathered to memorialize our coming home, just a few months later, the global Black family was disbanded yet again by the Covid-19 pandemic. Over this last year, the Black family has wrestled with grief, stemming from the loss of jobs, health, and family members due to the pandemic, compounded by the numerous deaths at the hands of police. However, this year we also celebrated graduations, weddings, and births of the next generation. Through this programming, we hope to inspire families to reconnect and reemerge whole through archiving, storytelling, and breaking bread.

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History in collaboration with Archival Alchemy® presents a national program, *The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling*, which encourages participants to host intergenerational Black family reunions—virtual or in person—to explore their unique African American heritage and family history. *The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling* will include pre-recorded workshops, Q&A sessions, panel discussions and a certificate program that will guide participants through the tools of oral storytelling, genealogy, and familial archiving that may serve as a roadmap to their reunions, after a year apart. This program highlights the legacy of Black family reunions and encourages families of all backgrounds to build or create their own family reunion traditions.

To register for the upcoming program, please visit [website]. For more information, contact [contact info]

This project is supported by a grant from New York Life.

Project Overview

To adapt to new environments, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History has worked to amend the original agreement between NY Life and the Association. Although the schedule and dissemination has changed, the objectives of the grant have stayed the same. The project has been reimagined as virtual pre-recorded workshops, live Q&A sessions, and panel discussions. The programming from this project will be offered free of charge to all who are interested. We will have registration in order to track attendance and for security. The webinars will be stand alone sessions with no prerequisites. The speakers for the majority of the sessions will be different and they will be presenting on different topics.

In alignment with ASALH's 2021 Black History Theme, "The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity," our intention for [Project Title] is to inspire participants to host their own family gatherings utilizing the information and resources shared during the project's workshops and programming. We aim to demonstrate how oral storytelling, genealogy, and familial archiving can serve as a return and a way forward. We want to empower individuals to reunite with their families to uncover more about themselves, and to uplift the ordinary and extraordinary folk within their unique heritage. We want to remind people to connect with each

other just because awakening to a new day is worthy of celebration, and reunions provide a tangible reminder that they are supported and not alone despite the extended periods of isolation many have endured during the COVID-19 pandemic. These family reunions could be virtual or in person depending on current circumstances. The former is encouraged to include more far reaching family members. We want to ensure that intergenerational Black families will be able to answer the familiar question “who ya people?” and know how to preserve and amplify their legacies for many years to come.

Timeline

- April - May:** Visioning & Production
- June - July:** Production & Programming
- August - September:** Black Family Reunions
- September 9, 2021:** Culminating panel discussion

Deliverables

1. **Programming:** 6 Pre-recorded Workshops, 1 Live Workshop, 2 Live Facilitated Discussions, 1 Live Panel Discussion
2. **Resources:** Workbook with resources on genealogy, oral history, and archives compiled from the workshops and should complement the ASALH 2021 Black History Theme Guide
3. **Certification:** Families or individuals can receive certification after the completion of the workshops
4. **Acquisitions:** Participants will be encouraged to submit oral stories, family recipes and photos from their family reunions.

Programming Outline

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| <p>Project Launch (Sept. 2020)</p> | <p>Family History Writing Workshop during the 105th Annual Meeting and Conference: Frazine Taylor (permissions granted for video reuse, awaiting workbook materials)</p> |
| <p>Workshop 1 Live - June 26, 2021 12:00pm-3:00pm (Confirmed)</p> | <p>Project Re-launch</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project Overview 2. At the Kitchen Table (Planning Black Family Reunions) 3. “We Came to Eat” or “Gon’ Fix Yourself a Plate” (Preserving Black Family Recipes) <p>Facilitators: Black Family Reunion, (Unconfirmed), Black Culinary History (Confirmed)</p> |

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| <p>Workshop 2 (Record week of June 14)</p> | <p>Recording Oral Stories (Basics)</p> <p>Facilitator: Ryan Heathcock (Confirmed)</p> |
| <p>Workshop 3 (Record June 2021)</p> | <p>Preserving Family History (Basics)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preserving Documents 2. Preserving Family Photos <p>Facilitator: Nomadic Archivist Project declined. Identifying and inviting another facilitator week of June 7th.</p> |
| <p>Workshop 4 (Record June 2021)</p> | <p>African American Genealogy 101</p> <p>Facilitator: Tony Burroughs unresponsive. Invitation sent to Preston Washington on June 4th.</p> |
| <p>Workshop 5 (Record week of June 28)</p> | <p>Recording Oral Stories (Advanced)</p> <p>Facilitator: Ryan Heathcock (Confirmed)</p> |
| <p>Workshop 6 (Record week of June 28)</p> | <p>Finding your Family in Governmental Records</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. African American History in the Freedman's Bureau 2. Using Census Records to Locate Your Family 3. Civil War Pension Records <p>Facilitator: Denyce Peyton from the African American Genealogy Group of Kentucky (Confirmed)</p> |

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| <p>Workshop 7 (Record week of June 28)</p> | <p>African American Genealogy 201</p> <p>1. DNA Research</p> <p>Facilitator: Gina Paige (Confirmed)</p> |
| <p>Facilitated Discussions (Live - July 31, 2021 tentative)</p> | <p>Facilitated Discussion 1</p> <p>Give former and new attendees of webinars a chance to talk about what they have found and to ask questions.</p> <p>Facilitators (Unconfirmed): Ryan Heathcock (confirmed), Nomadic Archivists Project, Tony Burroughs</p> <p>Facilitated Discussion 2</p> <p>Give former and new attendees of webinars a chance to talk about what they have found and to ask questions</p> <p><i>Certificates Awarded</i></p> <p>Facilitators (Confirmed): Ryan Heathcock, Denyce Peyton, Gina Paige</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Workbook and Acquisitions</p> <p>Workbook: The Black Family Workbook will include resources on genealogy, oral history, and archives provided by workshop facilitators and compiled by program organizers. Resources should supplement the information provided in the workshop, and can include discussion prompts, words of advice, how-to guides, research resources, creative expressions, or interesting examples of the skills introduced in the workshop.</p> <p>Acquisitions: Sample form for acquisitions/submissions has been drafted, and will be shared soon Aaisha for review week of June 7th.</p> | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">~ Black Family Reunions ~</p> <p style="text-align: center;">August - September, 2021</p> | |

Panel Discussion (Live-
September 9, 2021
8:00PM-9:15PM
(Confirmed)

You Gathered Your Family History, Now What to do With It?!

1. Discussion about varying ways to advance, celebrate, engage, and activate familial memories, legacies and archives.

Potential Panelists:

[At Their Feet](#)

[Tamara Lanier](#)

[Myiti Sengstacke](#)

[Timothy Prolific Edwaujonte](#)

[Arianne Edmonds](#)

[Dennis Richmond Jr.](#)

Anne Malone's family

Nomadic Archivists Project

Invitations to potential panelists will be sent out the week of June 7th.

This will serve as a culmination to the project and as a pre-conference event. For the messaging, linking it to the conference will be necessary. September 9th is ASALH'S founder's day, so it will also be good to incorporate that into the beginning remarks.