



ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY, INC.®

301 RHODE ISLAND AVE., NW SUITE 2204, WASHINGTON, DC 20001

P 202.238.5910 | W www.asalh.org

Hello, I am Barbara Spencer Dunn, Vice President for Membership for the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, now known as ASALH. Branches of ASALH were our founder, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson's idea. Dr. Woodson early on recognized the value of immersing the entire community with a body of knowledge that disseminated the truth about our rich and global history.

The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History founded in 1915 was the first national organization with such an expansive vision of Black History. As Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, our current president of the Association has stated, "Woodson and the Association, unlike previous groups, began a Black History Movement led by professionally trained historians whose mission it was to research, promote, publish, and disseminate the history of African-descended people. No other organization before, during, or since the organization's founding has come close to the breadth and scope of the Association and its inclusiveness of the community at large in a way that has impacted people of all cultures around the world. Woodson, and his many collaborators, made the Association the most successful and longest running organization of its kind, with his life dedicated to 'the cause'." So it is not, then, an exaggeration that Dr. Woodson is known as the "Father of Black History". He developed the idea of a Black History Movement for all and dedicated more than thirty-five years of his life to creating multiple platforms that would make Black History a national and global phenomenon. Dr. Woodson successfully provided the foundation that African Americans needed to advance their study and understanding of history in ways that would inspire the collective to achieve a greater significance. The "life" side of this Association is spurred and sustained by our Branches. Only ASALH has annual meetings that bring together scholars, trained and lay historians, and lovers of history from all walks of life, and many cultures, in one space to share their research and expand the knowledge of our history.

My why for joining and supporting this organization is simple--this Association belongs to us as a people and it must be preserved for future generations. Learning about ASALH as a preteen when I noticed a copy of *The Mis-Education of the Negro* on my Dad's bookshelf, and after inquiring about its title, I realize now more than ever the wisdom my Dad had when he told me to read it and ask him any questions. Growing up as a Pastor's daughter and spending numerous amounts of time in church, Sunday School and BTU (Baptist Training Union), I recognized immediately the sprinklings of scriptural references throughout Dr. Woodson's writings. That triggered something in me that sparked the integration of my biblical knowledge and an understanding of its connection to historical truths. Dr. Higginbotham's quote above says it all--no other organization with a mission similar compares to what Dr. Woodson and others accomplished in the founding of ASALH. It is ours to preserve.

Our meeting next month will be held on Thursday, September 9, 2021, the Founders' Day of this great Association. We will celebrate Dr. Woodson, ASALH, and the importance of the Carter G. Woodson Historic Site where the majority of the work on behalf of this Association and the movement was accomplished. He purchased this now Historic Home (389th Unit of the National Park System) in 1922 and was there until his transition in 1950. Over the next few weeks, leading to our 106th Anniversary, think about your Why? What will you do or what are you already doing, to preserve this organization for future generations?

This year's theme, *The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity* could not be more appropriate in our present day and time. Through the work of the International Subcommittee of the NMC, we began following Dr. Woodson's footsteps to connect with our family around the globe. Be sure you register for this year's Annual Meeting and Conference to engage in the many panels and discussions around this year's theme. See you on September 9, 2021, as we celebrate the 106th Anniversary of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, known first as **The Association (because it was the Association of Associations at the time)**, now known as ASALH. See you there!

ASALH MISSION

To promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community