

# THE 2022 BLACK HISTORY THEME BLACK HEALTH AND WELLNESS



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## **ASALH 107th Annual Conference Proposal** 2022 Theme: Black Health and Wellness

### **History of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History**

In the early twentieth century, it was commonly presumed that African American people had little history besides the subjugation of slavery. Yet, today, it is clear that Black people have significantly impacted the development of the social, political, and economic structures of the United States and the world. Credit for the evolving awareness of the true place of Black people in history can, in large part, be bestowed on one man, Carter G. Woodson. Recognizing African Americans' rich history and culture and the vast amount of research missing from academia, Dr. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, now called the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), in 1915.

Woodson fervently believed in studying and disseminating information about African American life, history and culture throughout the global community and its ability to raise our collective consciousness. Under Woodson's pioneering leadership, the Association created research and publication outlets for black scholars by establishing the *Journal of Negro History* (1916) and the *Negro History Bulletin* (1937), which garners a popular public appeal.

In 1926, Dr. Woodson initiated the celebration of Negro History Week, which corresponded with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, this celebration was expanded to include the entire month of February, and today Black History Month garners support throughout the

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#### **ASALH MISSION**

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

country as people of all ethnic and social backgrounds discuss the Black experience. ASALH views the promotion of Black History Month as one of the most critical components of advancing Dr. Woodson's legacy.

In honor of all the work that Dr. Carter G. Woodson has done to promote the study of African American History, an ornament of Woodson hangs on the White House's Christmas tree each year.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH®) is to promote, research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community.

## **107th Annual Conference**

The 107th Annual Conference will be held September 29, 2022 – October 2, 2022, at the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa Convention Center. We anticipate over 1,000 scholars, educators, civic leaders, and students from around the country will attend to discuss this year's timely theme ***Black Health and Wellness***. The conference will feature a robust lineup of activities accessible to the general public in a hybrid format. Those activities include:

### **Health Fair**

In alignment with this year's Black Health and Wellness theme, participants will enjoy a health fair that features information desks and presentations on a wide range of topics, including nutrition, mental health, preventative care, and more.

### **Film Festival**

ASALH works with studios, production companies, and filmmakers to bring current short films and historically significant film projects to conference attendees. The Film Festival is FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC and generally attracts approximately 400 participants.

### **Black History Heritage Tours**

The guided bus tours (3 tours) are organized to help participants learn about the heritage of Montgomery and the surrounding area's historic sites. Participants visit local historical or culturally significant places, including the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum, the Edmund Pettus Bridge, and Tuskegee, Alabama. We provide tour transportation, information tour bags, snacks and beverages.

### **Academic Sessions**

The academic sessions provide a unique opportunity for educators and scholars to present papers, workshops, roundtables, posters on current research, projects, and studies related to the theme. In addition, this provides a rich opportunity for seasoned scholars and students to receive peer feedback on papers before their submission to scholarly journals.

### ***Journal of African American History Reception***

The reception is an excellent opportunity to meet ASALH members, conference presenters, build networks and increase collaborations among attendees. First published in 1916 by Dr. Woodson, the Journal is the oldest and most prestigious scholarly journal on the Black experience published in the United States.

## **Black Health & Wellness**

ASALH's theme for 2022 focuses on the importance of Black Health and Wellness. This theme was chosen because it not only acknowledges the legacy of Black scholars and medical practitioners but doulas, midwives, herbalists, etc., throughout the African Diaspora. We know that despite the inherent challenges of accessing healthcare as a historically under-resourced community, Black communities have cultivated mutual aid networks and social support initiatives to build hospitals, medical schools, nursing schools, and community clinics to foster good health and wellness. These institutions continue to provide spaces for Black people to counter the economic and health disparities and discrimination often found at mainstream institutions. Moreover, they serve as educational institutions for people of all backgrounds who desire to work towards more equitable health systems across the country.

### **The Impact of COVID-19 on African American Alabamians**

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the social and health inequities our community members face and has had significant and negative impacts on the state's healthcare infrastructure. As a result, families are grappling with an unprecedented loss of income, loss of health coverage and loss of access to life-saving preventable care.

Although devastating impacts have spanned across the lines of race and class, a closer look at the data shows that **COVID-19 has caused disproportionate health concerns for African Americans.**

- At the height of the pandemic, Black Alabamians accounted for as many as 55.2% of Alabama's daily COVID-19 deaths, more than double their 26.8% share of the population.
- Although Black Alabamians made up 25% of the state's workforce, they accounted for 47% of unemployment insurance claimants in 2020, reducing access to health insurance for struggling families across the state.

Despite these unprecedented challenges, Alabama is home to a diverse community of healthcare professionals, community organizations, and grassroots leaders committed to reducing health disparities across the state.

## **The importance of Montgomery, AL & Alabama State University**

Montgomery, Alabama, the state capital, is home to Alabama State University (ASU), one of the country's oldest Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and one of the key partners in convening our 107th annual conference. The Alabama State University began with the impetus to establish a school for Black Alabamians. The Civil War resulted in the end of chattel slavery and the

opportunity for African Americans to have the right to education. ASU was born because of the fortitude of nine formerly enslaved people from Marion, Alabama, who sought to build a school for African Americans previously denied the right to an education. The foresight of these men, now remembered as the “Marion Nine,” alongside white American missionaries created what is now known as Alabama State University.

## **107th Annual Conference Schedule**

Below is a high-level breakdown of the daily conference schedule.

### **Wednesday, September 28, 2022**

- Heritage Bus Tour

### **Thursday, September 29, 2022**

- Montgomery heritage bus tour\*
- Film Festival
- Plenary Session on Social Justice
- Book talks
- Academic sessions
- Luncheon
- Conference Exhibition (featuring book presentations/signings, vendor marketplace, sponsor tables)

### **Friday, September 30, 2022**

- Plenary Session on Historic Sites
- Luncheon
- JAAH reception/Friday Night Out (with the Alabama Department of Archives and History)
- Film Festival
- Book talks
- Academic sessions
- Film Festival
- Conference Exhibition (featuring book presentations/signings, vendor marketplace, sponsor tables)

### **Saturday, October 1, 2022**

- Conference Exhibition (featuring book presentations/signings, vendor marketplace, sponsor tables)
- Plenary Session on Black Health and Wellness
- Film Festival
- ASALH Annual Awards Banquet
- Academic Sessions

- Book Talks
- Luncheon

**Sunday, October 2, 2022**

- Heritage Bus Tour\*

\*Bus tours will take participants to Selma, Alabama (home of the famous Edmund Pettus Bridge, crossed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and John Lewis), the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) Legacy Museum, and Tuskegee, Alabama)