



ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY

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WHY IS ASALH GOING TO FLORIDA?

Like many of you, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) has followed the actions that Florida's Governor Ron DeSantis and other conservative lawmakers have taken against teaching Black History and the histories of other historically marginalized communities. We have especially followed the actions taken by DeSantis and the Florida Board of Education on the AP African American Studies course as well as the legislation passed against "woke" curricula in the state. Please see our statement about these actions on our website at www.asalh.org. (*"ASALH's Response to Gov. DeSantis and the African American Studies AP Censorship"*).

While we have been alarmed by these actions, we see it as an opportunity to defend the teaching of Black History in the state and to support the citizens, teachers and scholars who are on the front line against the laws that hinder the teaching of the truth in the state. So, ASALH is going to Jacksonville, Florida for its annual conference on September 20-24, 2023. We are going to Florida to make a point: that we will follow our mission to promote the study of African American life and history and to demonstrate that we will not be intimidated by the policies of Governor DeSantis and the Florida legislature.

ASALH members will converge in Florida to support the educators and scholars who are teaching or want to teach Black History, to buy from Black-owned businesses and vendors who come to the conference, and to provide space for networking and community.

Our campaign for promoting Black History will start in the spring of this year. ASALH will hold a series of workshops about teaching Black History and why it is necessary to present the truth to our children. As a part of ASALH's Social Justice Initiative, in partnership with Howard University and the Andrew Mellon Foundation, ASALH will also develop and publish a toolkit for teachers tentatively entitled "How to Teach Black History." When we arrive in Jacksonville in September, we plan to open the conference with a session on the topic of how to challenge draconian laws and to continue to teach the truth about the African American experience. Throughout the conference many of the sessions will focus on teaching Black History and empowering those who want to learn about Black Americans' contributions, challenges, and successes. Additionally, ASALH plans to provide learning resources for teachers and community members on the pedagogy and content for teaching the African American experience.

As an organization that has confronted the denial and neglect of African American history throughout our nation's history, we have always asked ourselves the question: "what would

Carter G. Woodson (ASALH's founder) do under these circumstances?" Based on our knowledge and understanding of his goal when he started the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915, we know that he would go to Florida to take on the challenge to the teaching of Black History. Thus, we will do the same. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ASALH is going to Florida "because injustice is there, and injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

So, ASALH is going to Florida with a purpose, and we invite all persons interested in sharing their scholarship, expertise and interest in the field of African American history and culture to join us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "W. Marvin Dulaney". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

W. Marvin Dulaney
President