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We Are Running to the Fight!

ASALH Brings its Conference to Jacksonville, Florida with Annual Theme: “Black Resistance”

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.— **The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)** is proud to announce the 108th Annual Meeting in Jacksonville, Florida, from September 19th to the 24th. The conference will feature a rich program of scholarly sessions, workshops, historical tours, a film festival, an author’s book signing series, and many other events that illuminate the importance of the current struggle of resistance. Black Resistance has taken many forms throughout history. As the late Congressman John Lewis advised, “Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble.”

With all of the recent political upheaval, ASALH’s annual theme for 2023, “**Black Resistance**” has never been more timely, nor more deserving of study. African Americans have resisted historic and ongoing oppression, in all forms, especially the racial terrorism of lynching, racial pogroms, and police killings since our arrival upon these shores. These efforts have been to advocate for a dignified self-determined life in a just democratic society in the United States and beyond the United States’ political jurisdiction. The 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s in the United States were defined by actions such as sit-ins, boycotts, walkouts, and strikes by Black people and white allies in the fight for justice against discrimination in all sectors of society from employment to education to housing. Black people have had to consistently push the United States to live up to its ideals of freedom, liberty, and justice for all.

During these uncertain times in which the very nature of the ways in which Black history can be legally taught are in peril, the conference provides an opportunity to explore various aspects of Black life and history. According to ASALH President **W. Marvin Dulaney**, “We are actively attacking the leadership stance of the DeSantis administration and legislative bills restricting the teaching of Black History which Dr. Carter G. Woodson gave his life's work with the founding of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH).” Programming will take place “in person” in Jacksonville as well as virtually on [ASALH-TV](#) (ASALH’s YouTube channel) throughout the five days of the conference.

For more than 100 years, ASALH has fought to uphold the ideals of our founder, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who worked his entire career—sacrificing so much—to make the case for the contributions of African Americans to this country. He knew and understood that African American history is American history. To that end, ASALH will sponsor a meeting at **The Bethel Church** in Jacksonville entitled “The Value of Black History: A Community Forum” which will feature panelists who will address the community with

diverse perspectives for enlightenment, empowerment and alternative options. Remarks will be given by the President of ASALH, **Dr. Marvin Dulaney**, the **Rev. Kim McKissick**, **Cliff Albright** of Black Voters Matter, **Sundiata Cha-Jua** and many others. ASALH will also offer innovative programming on the topic of Florida itself including a panel session on Freedom Schools featuring members of ASALH Florida Branches, also known as the ASALH Florida Coalition as well as a session on “The Life of James Weldon Johnson & John Rosamond Johnson” and the History of the Black national anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”

ASALH’s plenaries this year will also feature themes of “Black Resistance” with the **National Park Service** leading the conference off on Wednesday the 20th with a discussion of “The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program.” Thursday’s plenary will be an examination of how Black Resistance has manifested in schools and education, with some of the nation’s leading historians of the Black student movement. This plenary will begin with a discussion by **Darius Young**, **Jelani Favors**, **Shirletta Kinchen**, **Zebulon Miletsky**, **Stefan Bradley**, and **Brian Jones**, and then attendees will convene in the James Weldon Johnson Park for a Banned Book “Readout” jointly sponsored by the Howard University Social Justice Consortium. Friday the 22nd offers a plenary on Florida’s own A. Phillip Randolph featuring Chair, **Lionel Kimble**, **Omar Eaton-Martinez**, **Mark Anthony Neal**, and **Andre E. Johnson**, Saturday the 23rd is a discussion of “Black Women Resistance” featuring presenters **Ula Y. Taylor**, **Jasmin A Young**, **Blair LM Kelley**, **Natanya Duncan**, and **Robyn C. Spencer**.

As the largest African American learned society in America, we take special exception to the series of bills and laws passed by the state legislature in Florida such as the Stop W.O.K.E. Act, and will be offering luncheons that feature speakers who are part of the struggle for “the right to learn” including **Kimberlé Crenshaw**, **Kaye Wise Whitehead**, **Yohuru Williams**, **Khalil Gibran Muhammad**, and **Hasan Kwame Jeffries**. You don’t want to miss this year’s John Blassingame Luncheon on Saturday, the 23rd, which will feature Guest Speaker, **Lonnie Bunch**, **Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution**, and **James Grossman**, Executive Director of the American Historical Association.

Dulaney continues, “Florida is ground zero to roll back the gains of the 1960s as a model for other states to follow. Radical changes and extremism are happening more and more each day. People of African descent across the globe have been relentless in standing for liberation and against racism in the struggle for an inclusive democracy, freedom, and equity in order to not be left behind resulting from white supremacists ideology. This is a battle which all concerned persons and groups must go to the front lines to defend the value of Black History, Black Studies, and educators for generations to come in the fight for justice, equality, and equity.”

We look forward to seeing you in Florida from **September 19th to the 24th!** Registration for in-person as well as virtual attendance is open to all at the following address: <https://asalh.org/conference>.

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