

# **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

## **A PLAN FOR ASALH IN 2024**

**15 February 2024**

Welcome to the February 15, 2024 meeting of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. We have a full agenda and I am asking all of the officers and committee chairpersons to summarize their reports in order to complete this meeting in one hour. Our goal is to prevent a meeting of the whole. All of the reports are on ASALH's website. So, if you need more information about them, please go to the website. In addition, if you need more information about what ASALH plans to do in 2024, please feel free to call me. My number is 682-717-7287 and I welcome the opportunity to answer your questions and gain your input.

This edited report is on the EC private page.

My report is also on the website. But I need to add just a few caveats to make more inclusive of the members of the Council and the branches.

**Development** – This part of the plan will expand ASALH's fundraising efforts in order to increase its capacity. It will explore developing partnerships with: Toyota, Ford, Bank of America and other corporations. It will explore renewing partnerships and sponsorships with the Ford Foundation and other foundations. It will also include writing at least one grant to the National Trust for Historic Preservation planning in the Woodson House. It will require completion of the case brochure started by the Marketing committee and other EC members in 2022. Our success will be based on all members engaging in and raising funds for ASALH.

Development objectives will include:

- Linking fundraising to ASALH's social justice initiatives
- Planning for the Centennial Anniversary of Negro History Week/Black History Month
- Linking fundraising to Membership Campaign goals
- Raising funds for ASALH Freedom School Initiative.

**Freedom Schools** – At its September 18, 2023 meeting the Executive Council to have the Strategic Planning Committee and the Program Cluster to work on the Freedom Schools.

The Strategic Planning Committee has developed the following plan:

To work with Florida Branches, Indianapolis and other entities that have Freedom Schools to gather curriculum and best practices in order to develop a model or other branches interested in Freedom Schools. Two Freedom School.

**ASALH TV** – This part of the plan will review and consider the proposal from Ty Collins, the new president of the Charleston Branch, to provide content for ASALH TV that will attract funding support. The content will include programs produced by Windy Crest Media and the Gullah Geechee Group, Inc. It consists of the Mende Film & Cultural Arts Festival, oral history interviews and other programming related to the arts. I have shared the proposal from Ty Collins

the chair of ASALH TV, Lopez Matthews, and the Vice President for Programming, Aaisha Haykal.

**2024 Conference in Pittsburgh** – In September we are going to Pittsburgh for the 109<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Association. Now, we did not choose Pittsburgh arbitrarily; we were seeking a place where the state legislature had not passed legislation to restrict the teaching of Black History as we had confronted in Florida last year and as we have seen occurring in other states. So, in July, the president of the Pittsburgh branch agreed to work with the national organization to plan the conference and his branch welcomed the conference enthusiastically. Thus, in September we signed contracts with hotels in Pittsburgh. Then, in November because of his disagreement with us, he withdrew his branch's support for the conference. But I say it again we are going to Pittsburgh. Next month I am going to spend a week in Pittsburgh meeting with local supporters and friends of ASALH and working with them to establish a Local Arrangements Committee and to raise the \$200,000 for our conference. I plan to spend as much time as needed on the ground in Pittsburgh to plan our conference. I hope that, at some point, that the local branch will work with us.

**February Executive Council Work Session in DC** – Next week we will have the Black History Month Luncheon in Washington, DC. This year our February meeting is being held today virtually, and on February 23<sup>rd</sup> we will hold an Executive Council private work session. We will have a day of workshops in order to learn and brainstorm as we move forward as an organization in 2024. Ms. Willis will do a workshop on Parliamentary Procedure. We will break into groups in order to discuss how we can start ASALH's Freedom School Initiative, jumpstart our membership campaign, and assess our programs. I look forward to seeing all of you there.

**May-June meeting** – ASALH's next Executive Council meeting will be in Washington, DC on May 31 and June 1st. Committee Reports will be due on April 26, and we will have our Planning meeting on May 6.

**Committee Appointments** – I have appointed our three new Corporate members to the following committees:

John E. Adams – Audit and Finance

Norla Blackman-Richards – Awards

Walter Lanier – Governance

I will entertain a motion to confirm the appointment of these new members to these committees.

I have appointed Dr. Kay White head as the chair of the Human Resources Committee.

I will entertain a motion to confirm the appointment of Dr. Whitehead as the chair of the Human Resources Committee.

**Membership Campaign** – We are developing an active campaign to add new members to ASALH. I have been talking about increasing ASALH’s membership for two years. So, over the course of the next 10 months we are going to start a membership campaign. I will re-establish the Houston Branch of ASALH. It will work with the three universities in and around the Houston area—Prairie View, Texas Southern and the University of Houston--to solicit faculty, student and community members for the Houston Branch. I want to make sure that when we start the Membership campaign everybody is on board. So, instead of having the Membership meeting next Thursday on February 22 when some of us will be traveling to Washington, DC for the Luncheon and the Friday workshops I am postponing that meeting until March. We will not have another Membership meeting until Dr. Jones, Ms. Ms Cyrus, Ms Shepherd and I meet to plan an agenda for a Membership Meeting. I will entertain a motion for postponing this meeting until March 28.

This completes my report.