



# ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY®

301 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, NW | SUITE 1508 | WASHINGTON, DC 20001  
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## Crystal Sanders Class of 2027

### Current Employer:

Emory University

### Professional Background:

Crystal R. Sanders, an award-winning historian of the United States in the twentieth century, is an Associate Professor of African American Studies at Emory University. Previously, she was an Associate Professor of History and the Director of the Africana Research Center at

Pennsylvania State University. Professor Sanders is the author of *A Chance for Change: Head Start and Mississippi's Black Freedom Struggle* published by the University of North Carolina Press in 2016 as part of the John Hope Franklin Series in African American History and Culture. The book won the 2017 Critics Choice Award from the American Educational Studies Association and the 2017 New Scholar's Book Award from Division F of the American Educational Research Association. The book was also a finalist for the 2016 Hooks National Book Award. Sanders's work can also be found in many of the leading history journals including the *Journal of Southern History*, the *North Carolina Historical Review*, and the *Journal of African American History*. Sanders's next book, *America's Forgotten Migration: Black Southerners, Segregation Scholarships, and the Debt Owned to Public HBCUs*, will be published by UNC Press in Fall 2024.

### Major Accomplishments:

Sanders is the recipient of a host of fellowships and prizes. These honors include the C. Vann Woodward Prize from the Southern Historical Association, the Huggins-Quarles Award from the Organization of American Historians, and the Equity Award from the American Historical Association. The latter honor was given in recognition of Professor



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



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Sanders's work in creating the Emerging Scholars Summer Mentoring Program at Penn State to expose undergraduate students from historically underrepresented backgrounds to doctoral study in the discipline of history. During a one-week summer residential program funded by the Richards Civil War Era Center, Penn State faculty and staff demystify the graduate school admissions process and educate participants about the academic profession. Students participate in a simulated doctoral seminar and attend workshops on a variety of topics, including writing, digital research, and graduate student life. The program, which started in 2016, is still in operation.

In 2018, Professor Sanders wrote and secured a six-figure grant to begin a pilot program targeted at associate professors of color at Penn State. The program, called the Midcareer Diversity Faculty Advancement Program, aims to help associate professors from underrepresented backgrounds achieve the rank of full professor.

A firm believer in to whom much is given, much is required, Professor Sanders considers one of the greatest honors of her life to be having the opportunity to collaborate with Black churches, sororities, and other civic groups to support the dissemination of African American history. Given our current political climate and attack on accurate and inclusive accounts of history, we must all put boots on the ground and partner with people in and beyond the academy.

## **Previous Service to ASALH:**

Member, Academic Programming Committee, 2014, 2015, and 2016 Annual Meetings of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (in 2015 and 2016, I co-chaired the ASALH Film Festival with Michelle Duster)

Current Assistant Editor of the Journal of African American History

I regularly attend, present at, and moderate panels at the Annual Meeting. I served as a plenary speaker at the 104th Annual Meeting.

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## **What I Hope to Accomplish as an Executive Council Member of ASALH:**

If elected to serve on the Executive Council of ASALH, I would pursue opportunities to work with local branches to create and/or continue programming focused on exposing young people to African American history. I believe the time is ripe for a new iteration of Freedom Schools that might meet once a month to ensure that no matter what happens in public schools with current curriculum battles, children (especially Black children) would still have meaningful opportunities to study their past.

I would also hope that we might create a membership campaign targeting undergraduate and graduate students. I envision some type of challenge where we ask current members to sponsor a student membership and regularly disseminate an “honor roll list” that recognizes members who have paid it forward by sponsoring the membership of a student. I think we might also officially reach out to History, Black Studies, and other appropriate departments at universities to ask them to partner with ASALH by ensuring that there are funds set aside for their students to attend our meetings and events.

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