



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 1, 2024

**MEDIA CONTACT**

Quanza Washington  
chsasalh@gmail.com

## **The Charleston Area ASALH Kicks off Black History Month**

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History–ASALH announces its **Black History Month theme 2024: Celebrating African Americans and the Arts**. The 109-year-old organization honors Dr. Carter G. Woodson’s vision to bring public attention to the developments of life and culture of African, Caribbean, and Black American experiences. ASALH President, Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney reminds us: “Teaching, promoting, researching, and preserving the African American experience is just as important today as it was when Dr. Carter G. Woodson and others founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1925.”

The theme of Celebrating African American Arts and Culture in the 21st century brings all citizens in harmony with Woodson’s purpose to recognize African American contributions to world culture.

ASALH/Charleston has a unique opportunity, with its Gullah Geechee peoples and Gullah adjacent African cultural origins, to share the arts and folkways as ‘cultural keepers’ of rice cultivating. Africans’ roots and cultural norms are bedrock forms of African cultural expression that enslaved populations brought to the Americas in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Charleston is the incubator for African American ‘lived experiences,’ through folk rituals and folkways that are distinctive forms of humanity embedded in diasporan DNA, making life a celebration and art the utility for preserving ancient emotional memories, linking the past to the present. True to the African tradition, the spirit and flesh are unified in movement and memory.

Dr. Woodson realized the importance of the creative cycles of African life, so he founded Negro History Week in 1926. The movement to revitalize Dr. Woodson’s vision is now celebrated as Black History Month. In 1986, Presidential Proclamation 5443 noted that “the foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity.” The complete history of Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Black History Month can be found on the National ASALH website: [asalh.org](http://asalh.org).

The Charleston chapter is mandated to: participate in the **National ASALH Conference** in September, observe **ASALH’s Founder’s Day** in October, and celebrate **Dr. Woodson’s Birthday** in December. The annual activities of the branch include celebrating **Black History Month** in February and commemorating the **Ancestor Middle Passage Remembrance** on the second Saturday in June. Cultural activities celebrating African Americans and the Arts offered by Charleston ASALH partnering with Gullah Geechee Group, Inc., The Colour of Music Festival Inc., Charleston County Public Library, The Charleston Gaillard Center, Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston, and many individual Lowcountry artisans. **The ASALH Virtual Black History Month Festival** can be viewed for the whole month of February on YouTube:

[@ASALHTV](https://www.youtube.com/@ASALHTV).

-- MORE --



Charleston ASALH begins the Celebrating African American Arts and Culture 2024 season under new leadership. Retired educator and arts consultant, Ty Collins will serve as President of the Charleston ASALH Chapter and Quanza Washinton is the new Corresponding Secretary and Media Consultant. Professor Donald West, Trident Tech., will continue his position as Vice-President.

Ty Collins and Quanza Washington were sworn in as officers by ASALH's National President, Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney during the Founder's Day Observance in October at the Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston. The new leadership has cumulative skills in arts management and digital and social media respectively. Their goal in 2024 is to utilize the tools to reach a larger audience for membership of like-minded devotees of Dr. Carter G. Woodson and his founding purpose for institution building.

'Membership has its privileges.'



Front row:

ASALH Charleston Chapter's Vice President - Dennis West, President-Elect - Ty Collins

Back row:

Dr. Marvin Dulaney - National President, Jerome Harris - Outgoing President, Dennis Muhammed, JD - Treasurer [Not shown] Quanza Washington

2024 is the Year for Celebrating African Americans and the Arts.

-- END --