



SAN FRANCISCO
*African American
Historical & Cultural Society*

PRAISESINGER NEWSLETTER, Winter 2020

continued, Black History Month 2020

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings, Society family and friends in this New Year, 2020! It's time to renew your Society memberships. If possible, meet the Preston Challenge, and provide needed financial assistance to our legacy organization.

In Memoria:

Let us honor the late **Congressman Elijah Cummings** and pray for the health of **Congressman John Lewis**, both of whom dedicated their lives for the right to vote. Let's help get out the vote!

Please join us at the **Black History Month Kickoff** at City Hall Rotunda on Friday, February 7, 2020 at noon. We honor the national theme selected by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History: *"African Americans and the Vote."*

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2020

African Americans & The Vote: The Movement Lives On

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History, has set the theme for Black History Month 2020 as *"African Americans and The Vote."* The Society's city-wide Black History Month Committee has diligently worked since Fall 2019 to plan an inspirational Kick Off event. Our keynote address will be delivered by Alicia Garza, President of the non-profit, *Black Futures Lab*, and, co-creator of the *Black Lives Matter Movement*. We are excited to hear Ms. Garza's passionate insight on the importance of African Americans engaging in political processes. We will also have special performances by *Project Level*, members of *Glide Memorial choir*, and more. The Kick Off will begin February 7, 2020 at 12 noon in the City Hall Rotunda.

Following the Black History Month Kick Off, there are several other dynamic events through February. The Society has collaborated with *Citizen Film* to produce a short documentary focusing on African Americans and The Vote, focusing on San Francisco. The documentary features well-known personalities including Willie Brown, and paints a picture of San Francisco politics from different perspectives. The premiere will take place on Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 6 pm. Following the premiere, the Society hosts an opening and reception for our Black History Month Exhibit, 7:30 pm. Both events are at the African American Arts and Culture Complex, 762 Fulton Street.

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) is contributing to the Society's Black History Month program with a series of educational curriculum workshops based on the recently published book, *Changemakers*. Researched and written by students at the University of San Francisco, *Changemakers* consists of brief bios of African American men and women featured on the murals painted on the Ella Hill Hutch Community Center. The documentary *"African Americans and The Vote"* will also be screened at each workshop. The initial workshop will be held on February 27, 2020.

Black History Month Kick Off

Friday, February 7, noon, City Hall Rotunda

African Americans and the Vote documentary

Thursday, February 13, 6 pm, AAACC

Black History Month Exhibit Opening / Reception

Thursday, February 13, 7:30 pm, AAACC

For more information, contact Marisa Williams at marisa@sfaahcs.org or contact the Society at 415-292-6172 or info@sfaahcs.org

... Marisa Williams, Board member



BLACK STUDENT UNIONS and THE VOTE, 2019

High school students active in nine Black Student Unions in San Francisco took advantage of information that the California Secretary of State issued about the opportunity to vote. Faculty sponsors for the Black Student Unions at each school provided the following information to students at BSU meetings:

- . African Americans history of and the right to vote
- . The California State Student Ambassador Program
- . Opportunities to work at the polls and earn money
- . How to pre-register to vote at ages 16 and 17
- . How to register to vote at age 18 and above
- . How to complete an application to vote

The nine schools are: Abraham Lincoln, Balboa, Phillip & Sala Burton, Galileo, George Washington Mission, Saint Ignatius, Thurgood Marshall, and Raoul Wallenberg. As a result of this information, some students decided to pre-register to vote and some who were age 18 decided to register to vote.

.... Mae Threadgill, member

MORE BLACK HISTORY MONTH ACTIVITIES

Introduction to Genealogy - Resources!

The Society, with our partners at the San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) and the African American Arts and Culture Complex, is bringing back a series of workshops focused on resources for African Americans seeking to explore their family trees. Learn about the resources specifically tailored to African Americans and share your story with others.

Trailblazer!

Delilah Beasley, an early 20th century African American journalist and her book, Negro Trail Blazers of California will be featured in a presentation led by the SFPL and the Society. Learn why her book is unique and the arguable contribution the book made to documenting

more Black History Month activities:

the history of African Americans in the Golden State.

All workshops will be held at the Society, 762 Fulton Street, 2nd floor. Please register as space is limited. Call 415-292-6172 or email at info@sfaahcs.org

Resources:

- Wednesday, February 12, 2020, 2 - 4 pm
- Wednesday, February 19, 2020, 6 - 7:30 pm
- Wednesday, February 26, 2020, 2 - 4 pm
- Saturday, February 22 or 29, 10 am - 1:00 pm

Trailblazer!:

Saturday, February 29, 2020, 2 pm.

... Ginger Smyly, Board member

COMMENDATION FOR FRANKLIN MARSHALL



photo featuring l-r: Jameel Patterson, Supervisor Valle Brown, Franklin Marshall and Majied Crawford

Our own Franklin Marshall was recognized at City Hall on Tuesday, December 10. Supervisor Vallie Brown, District 5, presented a commendation recognizing his work in organizing a number of events at the Fillmore Heritage Center to honor 400 years of African American History in the United States. To learn more about the 400 years see our last edition of the *Praisesinger* newsletter.

... Eldoris Cameron, member



Remember Martin Luther King, Jr. January 20, 2020

Keep the Dream Alive

AFRICAN AMERICAN CONTEXT STATEMENT UPDATE

In our summer 2019 edition, we reported that the Society is engaged in a relationship with the San Francisco Department of City Planning (DCP) for the roll-out of the very important *African American Citywide Historic Context Statement* (Context Statement); the Society’s president, Al Williams and secretary, Carl Williams are leading the Society’s participation in this effort.

As the 293-page Context Statement is nearing completion, DCP staff requested that the Society write the Foreword; the Society consented to this request. At its board meeting on May 2, 2019, the board reviewed the draft forward and unanimously voted to approve it. Additionally, the board adopted a resolution for the Society’s possible role and participation in the Context Statement as it progresses to become a significant fixture in the land-use planning process of San Francisco.

In early September, Al Williams and Carl Williams were informed that the DCP staffer assigned to the Context Statement was leaving the department at the end of the month; consequently, the work on finalizing the document and plans for discussion of it in the African American community has been suspended.

As the Winter 2020 *Praisesinger* goes to press, the Society has not received any further communication from DPC. But the Society remains vigilant to ensure this important document is finally approved and used to reinforce the African American presence in San Francisco.

... Carl Williams, Secretary

AWAABA, YEAR OF THE RETURN

Welcome home to members, Ginger Smyly, and Dinah Blanson, who participated in the (Amos and Jane) Brown Family December trip to Ghana and

continued, Awaaba, Year of the Return

Senegal in the “Year of the Return.” This historic year commemorated 400 years of presence of people of African descent on the continental United States. The year was also named the “Year of Return” by Ghana. The Brown Family visitors were among hundreds of thousands of Diasporans to “return” to Ghana in 2019, where all were greeted with warm a “Akwaaba” (“welcome” in the Akan language.) Awaaba to all returning home!



... Eldoris Cameron

WEBSITE UPDATE

Thanks to those of you who reviewed the new and improved website. If you haven’t seen it yet, please visit www.sfaahcs.org and check it out. We have added the 2019 Black Immigration video produced by the Society and Citizen Film. This *Praisesinger* edition will be uploaded soon. If you have any comments or additions to the website, please contact us at info@sfaahcs.org.

ARCHIVE UPDATE

The archive inventory volunteers are on hiatus during these cold days. We are seeking funding for this activity to accelerate our pace. Once completed we will have a comprehensive, searchable inventory of the Society’s holdings. The Society was entrusted these items by generations of African Americans in order to document and tell our story, thereby creating a legacy.

If you are interested in a Society committee or other task related to helping the Society thrive, please contact a Board member for more information. Volunteers are appreciated!!!!

... Ginger Smyly, Board member



CROWNS OF GLORY CLOSING and HOLIDAY RECEPTION

Members and friends enjoyed the “Crowns of Glory” Closing Exhibit and Holiday Reception on the evening of December 12. They were treated with a video on church hats, viewed the hats’ exhibit and had an opportunity to participate in a silent auction to own some of the hats. The exhibit depicted hats traditionally worn by African American women in religious, social and cultural settings across the country. This holiday event concluded the Society’s activities for 2019!



featured l-r: Lota Ekman, Al Williams, President. Rose Lewis, Ginger Smyly, Board member



featured l-r: Bill Hoskins, Board Member, Virginia Jordan, David Johnson, Steven Sterling. Shashi Dalal, former member of late Att. Jim Herndon’s Paul Robeson Club & former editor, *Sun Reporter*; Lisa Tan

... Bill Hoskins, Board member

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

(Your annual membership term is January 1 through December 31.)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____ **CELL** _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please sign me up as a:

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| _____ Student | \$15 | _____ Organizations | \$250 |
| _____ Senior | \$25 | _____ Small Business | \$350 |
| _____ Adult | \$50 | _____ Large Business | \$700 |
| _____ Family | \$100 | | |

Contribution: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Membership fees and contributions are tax deductible

Make Your Check Payable/Mail To:

San Francisco African American Historical & Cultural Society

762 Fulton Street, 2nd Floor

San Francisco, CA 94102

415/292-6172

I am interested in serving on the checked committee(s):

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| _____ Development | _____ Library/archives |
| _____ Membership | _____ Programs |
| _____ Black History Month | _____ Communications |
| _____ Volunteer/Reception | _____ Other |

San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society

Winter 2020

762 Fulton Street, 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94102

415-292-6172; info@sfaahcs.org; www.sfaahcs.org

Editors/Photos: Eldoris Cameron & Ginger Smyly

President: Al Williams

Executive Director: William Hoskins

Black History Month Comte. Chair: Marisa Williams

BOARD MEETING: First Thursday, Monthly

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:
Sunday, March 15, 2020 –**

Mark your calendars!