



PAYLOCITY :: PAST OR PRESENT

Go to a Black-owned business	Read a book by a Black author	Watch a film by a Black director	Take a photo of a Black invention	Take a photo of a product from a Black-owned business
Photo of a concert performed by a Black artist	Share your favorite albums by Black artists / music groups	Share a film written, directed, and starring Black individuals	Visit a local museum featuring Black History	Cook a traditional African or African-American dish
Visit a historical site significant to Black History	Attend a performance by a Black artist (music, dance, theatre)	FREE SPACE	Participate in a virtual event related to African American History	Share a photo of a notable quote by a Black historical figure displayed in a public space
Research and share a photo of a lesser-known figure from Black history	Attend a workshop or seminar focused on Black culture or history	Create a playlist featuring music by Black artists and share a screenshot or link	Visit a historically Black church or religious institution	Visit a local library and take a photo of the Black History Month display or section
Write a poem, spoken word or short story inspired by Black history	Participate in a virtual workshop or class focused on African American history, art, or culture	Explore and share a photo of a mural or street art in your community celebrating Black history or culture	Donate time, money, skills, and/or resources to national and/or international causes	Find, sign, and share petitions that support Black communities and causes



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

1915

National Black History Month has its origins in 1915, when historian & author **Dr. Carter G. Woodson** founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History

This organization is now known as the **Association for the Study of African American Life & History External (ASALH)**

Through this organization, Dr. Woodson initiated the first **Negro History Week** in February 1926

Dr. Woodson selected the week in February that included the birthdays of **Abraham Lincoln & Frederick Douglass**, two key figures in the history of Black Americans

1926

By the time of Woodson's death, **Negro History Week** had become a central part of African American life & substantial progress had been made in bringing more Americans to appreciate the celebration

~1950

At mid-century, mayors of cities nationwide **issued proclamations** noting Negro History Week

The **Black Awakening** of the 1960s dramatically expanded the consciousness of African Americans about the importance of Black history

1960s

The Civil Rights movement **focused Americans of all races** on the subject of the contributions of African Americans to our history & culture

ASALH expanded this commemoration of Black history in the United States from a **week-long observance to Black History Month**, which also has been known as **African American History Month**

1976

The celebration was expanded to a month in 1976, the nation's bicentennial. President Gerald R. Ford urged Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

That year, fifty years after the first celebration, the association held the first **Black History Month**

In the same year, **President Ford issued a Message on the Observance of Black History Month**. In subsequent years, presidents continued to issue messages honoring Black History Month

Since then, **each American president** has issued Black History Month proclamations. And the ASALH continues to promote the study of Black history all year.

Congress passed Public Law 99-244 which designated February 1986 as "National Black (Afro-American) History Month."

This law noted that February 1, 1986 would "mark the beginning of the 60th annual public & private salute to Black History."

1986

The law further directed the president to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe February 1986 as Black History Month with the appropriate ceremonies & activities.

President Reagan issued Presidential Proclamation 5443 which proclaimed that "the foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity."

This proclamation stated further that this month was a time "to celebrate the many achievements of African Americans in every field from science & the arts to politics & religion."

~ 1996

Since 1996, presidents have issued annual proclamations for National Black History Month. Since 1996, Congress has regularly passed resolutions honoring Black History Month.

In February 1996, the Senate passed Senate Resolution 229 commemorating Black History Month & the contributions of Black American U.S. Senators

The Black History Month 2024 theme is 'African Americans and the Arts'

This explores the key influence African Americans have had in the fields of "visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, folklore, language, film, music, architecture, culinary and other forms of cultural expression"

2024

Since 1976, every American president has designated February as Black History Month & endorsed a specific theme

