

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Celebrate Black Health and Wellness with us!

1 **READ** about our stories.

2 **TRY** a new recipe and
BUY our cookbook.

3 **DISCOVER** health stories from the past to
the present in our Searchable Museum.

4 **JOIN** our virtual programs.

SHARE ON SOCIAL

▶ Celebrate #BlackHistoryMonth with @NMAAHC as they embrace the official theme announced by @ASALH, Black Health & Wellness: s.si.edu/blackhistorymonth

▶ Join @NMAAHC during #BlackHistoryMonth for a look at Black Health & Wellness, the official theme announced by the founders of Black History Month, @ASALH: s.si.edu/blackhistorymonth

▶ Join @NMAAHC to learn more about the national theme of Black Health & Wellness this #BlackHistoryMonth: s.si.edu/blackhistorymonth



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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

National Theme

The national theme for Black History Month is “Black Health and Wellness.” In celebration of Black History Month, the National Museum of African American History & Culture (NMAAHC) will examine the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birth workers, doulas, midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well.

The History of Black History Month

Carter G. Woodson developed the idea for Negro History Week to promote the history, culture, and achievements of African Americans and other people of color worldwide. Designed to coincide with Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass’ celebratory birthdays, Woodson launched Negro History Week in February of 1926 as a coordinated effort to develop lessons and encourage the teaching of Black history across the nation’s communities and public schools. Woodson, the son of former slaves who became the second African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University, recognized the importance of establishing an initiative that could be celebrated annually and on a national scale.

Though the first Negro History Week found little cooperation and tiny audiences among school administrations and community organizers, Woodson recognized the initial efforts of Negro History Week as “fortunate steps” that established and powerfully proclaimed the importance of African American history in our nation’s segregated public. Following those initial years, Negro History Week gradually gained national support as public intellectuals, church, and civic organizations, the Black press, politicians, and historians alike continued to promote and celebrate the initiative. And by the 1960s, as the national discourse on race and identity continued to evolve, so did the design and parameters of Negro History Week as the initiative formally changed into what would become Black History Month by 1976 to more fully represent the scope and experience of Black history, life, and culture.

The official theme of Black History Month in 2022 centers on the importance of Black Health and Wellness. Part of the theme acknowledges the history and legacies of medical practitioners from birth workers, doctors, scholars, midwives, and doulas over generations from across the Black diaspora. This year’s theme also explores the importance of public and community health initiatives that focus on exercise, nutrition, mental health, and augmenting access to preventative care within Black communities across the country. With its focus on improving the care and health of African Americans, this year’s theme speaks to Woodson’s larger goals of strengthening the communities and improving the daily lives of African Americans.



Did you know the open design of the museum is symbolic, and seeks to stimulate open dialogues about race and help promote reconciliation and healing?



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