



A large graphic for Black History Month. It features a background with diagonal stripes in green, orange, and red. A black-bordered box contains the following text: "FEBRUARY 2023" in red, bold, sans-serif font; "BLACK HISTORY MONTH" in large, bold, black and white sans-serif font; "Black History IS America's History" in black, sans-serif font; and "Let's Celebrate 365" in a teal, handwritten-style font, with "365" being significantly larger than the other words.

On the occasion of Black History Month, **Let The Truth Be Told** is proud to be one of the many, many independent, Black-owned newsletters in the United States that is about speaking truth to social justice and power on behalf of African Americans. All of the newsletters' contributors are Black. In addition, they are diverse: high school students, educators, grassroots environmental justice advocates, ministers, historians, as well as everyday folks. Most importantly, the contributors are great because, in paraphrasing the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., they are serving their families, the communities in which they live as well as their country, since the aim of their service is a just society for all.

Hence, this edition of **Let The Truth Be Told** was guided by a central objective of Carter G. Woodson's classic book, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. That is, African Americans who think critically to overcome structural racism. Accordingly, **Let The Truth Be Told** aims to be a resource that assists African Americans "...to deal wisely with conditions as he finds them rather than to take orders from someone who knows nothing about his status and cares less" (Woodson, 1933).

The articles in this edition of **Let The Truth Be Told** not only deal with current realities threatening the safety and well-being of African Americans (e.g., gun violence inside Black communities), the articles also highlight a special kind of interconnectedness that ties us to each other and accounts for ceaseless efforts to take care of each other while advocating for policies, programs, and to eliminate the structural racism that accounts for the destructive behavior observed in some Black communities.

In addition, the articles urge recognition and observance of the history and values of Africans in America (Black history and Kwanzaa) year-round, rather than just in December and February. The passage of HB 198, which requires school districts and charter schools to teach Black history to children in grades K-12, is a first step to integrating the whole story about African Americans year-round.

We hope you enjoy the sixth edition of **Let The Truth Be Told** and find it to be a useful resource for facts, analyses and actions that will lead to a barrier free, equal status for African Americans.

As usual, we invite individuals to contribute to **Let The Truth Be Told**. Do not think twice about contributing because you think you do not write well enough for your article to be accepted. Fannie Lou Hamer's and Dick Gregory's grammar was not always correct, but their voices could not be ignored.

Let The Truth Be Told - Editorial Board



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Let The Truth Be Told (TM) is a quarterly newsletter.

Let the Truth Be Told is intended to give African Americans the opportunity to speak “truth to power” through media such as commentary, poems, history, and art, among others, which will be provided by parents, teachers, children, ministers, historians, and other citizens. This platform aims to transform our words into empowered activism.

We are seeking contributors to **Let the Truth Be Told**. If you feel you have something to say but don't believe you write well enough, don't let that stop you. Please submit what you want to say and you will be given support which will lead to your voice being heard. **Let the Truth Be Told!**

Submissions are reviewed by the editorial board and may be edited for brevity and clarification. We regret we cannot return any unsolicited articles, photos, or other materials.

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Knowledge IS Resistance!

By Dr. Akwasi Osei



This year's theme for Black History Month is **Black Resistance in the Past, Present and Future**. As an educator, I want to focus on the idea that **knowledge of the centuries-old, global African struggle is resistance in itself!**



The theme of resistance has characterized the African struggle worldwide since the middle of the 15th century. That was the genesis of the shift in global relations whereby trade in commodities such as salt, gold, and ivory were eventually replaced by the trade of humans, leading to the enslavement of African peoples.

The activities of the various European political entities focused on securing labor to maximize the post-Columbus assault on lands owned by the indigenous peoples they encountered on their commercial journeys.

Knowing what happened is the first step in building challenges to the narrative created when the Europeans constructed a **hierarchy of cultures** that maintained the **ideology of African inferiority**. Over time, this became the *raison d'être* for enslavement. In 2023, as some states in the United States are banning books, others are erasing centuries of scholarship on African peoples through legislation. **Resistance is called for.**

Knowledge is any acquired and organized information that is used to explain and make sense of reality. As we begin to connect the pieces of information, we gain insights which allow us to understand that the status quo does not have to be. Having this knowledge places a responsibility on us to change.



Akwasi Osei, PhD

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www.ourhistorymatters.org

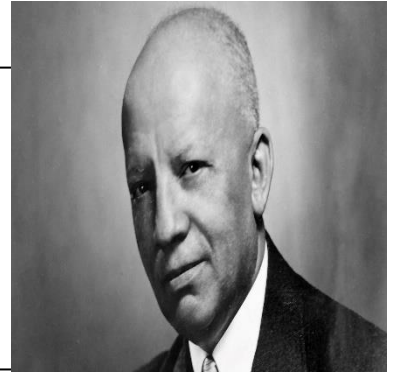
THERE'S MORE
to the Story

Carter G. Woodson

1875-1950

The Father of Black History: How it all Began

By Kathy Trusty



When Carter G. Woodson was working on his doctorate at Harvard University, it became apparent that Black history was not a logical topic for research. There was a scarcity of data and facts on Black Americans and the study of Black life and culture was limited to slavery. Moreover, the public was not aware of the contributions and achievements of Black Americans. Woodson realized Black history was a “negligible factor” in American history.”

Carter G. Woodson was born in New Canton, Virginia. His parents, who were formerly enslaved, were farmers. Young Woodson worked on the farm alongside them.

Woodson only attended school on days when the weather was too bad to work the farm. He was mostly self-taught and did not enter high school until he was almost twenty.

The Day Law

On January 12, 1904, Kentucky State Representative Carl Day introduced House Bill No. 25, entitled "An Act to Prohibit White and Colored Persons from Attending the Same School." The bill passed and remained in effect until it was amended in 1950.

In 1915, he founded the *Association for the Study of Negro Life and History*, which is now the *Association for the Study of African American Life and History* (ASALH).

Woodson believed life in the United States could not be fully and correctly understood without studying the contributions of Black Americans.

The mission of ASALH is to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, history, and culture.

After completing his high school courses in two years, Woodson enrolled in Berea College in Berea, Kentucky.

Berea College was founded by the abolitionist, John G. Fee, in 1855. Berea was the first interracial and coeducational college in the south. Woodson graduated from Berea in 1903, the year before the *Day Law* was passed, forcing racial segregation by forbidding interracial education.

After Berea, Woodson attended the University of Chicago, where in 1908, he received a master's degree in history.

In 1912, he became the second African American to receive a PhD from Harvard University. The great intellect, W.E.B Du Bois was the first.

Carter G. Woodson was an author, historian, and educator. He dedicated his life to researching and publishing books and journals on African American life and history. He encouraged others to study the history of Black Americans and he worked to increase public awareness of Black history. In 1926, Dr. Woodson created Negro History Week to celebrate the accomplishments and achievements of Black Americans. He selected the week that encompassed the birthday of Abraham Lincoln and what is accepted as the birthday of Frederick Douglass. He hoped to tap into the celebratory spirit of the country on the birthdays of these two men. In 1976, Black History Week was expanded and became Black History Month.

ASALH is continuing the work of Dr. Woodson, and each year sets the theme for Black History Month. The theme for 2023 is Black Resistance.

[ASALH - The Founders of Black History Month - Association for the Study of African American Life and History \(est. 1915\)](#)



“Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history.”

Carter G.
Woodson

Kwanzaa and Beyond

by Cliffvon Howell



Kwanzaa was formed from a sense of urgency. When Maulana Karenga created Kwanzaa, he was looking to establish something that would unite and empower the African American community. He was standing in the wake of the violent *Watts Rebellion* and he understood, in that moment, the African American community needed something which spoke uniquely to our people and our plight in America, something that shined a light on a rich culture of Africans while also providing a spiritual safe zone for Africans of all faiths. In existence since the mid-1960s, Kwanzaa has gradually gained traction. In its infancy, Kwanzaa was a refreshing drink for the parched soul of African Americans and Africanoid people throughout the diaspora.

Kwanzaa provided seven principles to guide African Americans to better wealth and prosperity. The principles are:

1. Umoja (Unity) - To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
2. Kujichagulia (Self-Determination) - To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.
3. Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility) - To build and maintain our community together and make our community's problems our problems and to solve them together.
4. Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) - To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.
5. Nia (Purpose) - To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
6. Kuumba (Creativity) - To do always as much as we can to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
7. Imani (Faith) - To believe with all our hearts in our people and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

The principles are just as valid today as they were a half century ago. The challenge today should be for African Americans to find ways to utilize the seven principles beyond the seven days of Kwanzaa and implement a lifestyle that observes these principles year-round. Here's how I imagine we could utilize each principle all year long.

Umoja - Unity is the glue that bonds our families, our race, our community, and our nation. In a world where division threatens the wellbeing of everyone, we should seek ways to gravitate toward things that unify, while placing great distance between ourselves and things that divide. America has shown us that she has the ability to unify in times of tragedy. Seemingly, the best of the American Spirit is on display

when we see the humanity in one another. If we properly practice Umoja, we can show the world that a knot bound with unity cannot be untied.

Kujichagulia - The ability to see ourselves for who we really are and be the captain of our ship can only be achieved through self-determination. Many challenges are placed before us to hinder progress, but we collectively stand as a symbol of perseverance and what it looks like to overcome all obstacles.

Kujichagulia has to be the battle cry that raises our wounded and propels our ranks to push forward, onward, and upward.

Ujima - We have to believe in a cause that is greater than oneself. African Americans have largely endured a collective fate and our plight has been a shared plight. As much as it may be tempting to enjoy the opportunities and amenities afforded to us individually, we must be ever mindful that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr said, an “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. “

Ujamaa - is vital to the economic prosperity of our communities. The Mckinsey Quarterly¹ (Aug. 2021) indicated that African American Consumers contributed \$835B in expenditures with a five percent increase annually over the past 20 years. This demonstrates the existence of substantial capital within the Black community, yet the African American community remains underserved in the essential areas of housing, healthcare, and higher education. We also know the Wealth Gap between Black and Hispanic households is widening². If we collectively invested in ourselves through the support of Black and minority owned businesses, we would simultaneously increase the economic prosperity of our communities. We literally have three billion ways to affect change.



Nia - We must never forget our purpose and be guided by an understanding that the sum is greater than all of the parts.

Kuumba - We must let our creativity flow. Whether inventors or entertainers, African creativity has been the admiration of the world. We must embrace this while ensuring we are properly compensated for our intellectual property.



Imani - Faith is what permitted our great ancestors to endure unthinkable conditions and barriers. We have to remain grounded in the knowledge that faith is one of the first contributions Africans gifted global society and keep it a vital part of our identity.

¹ [\\$300 billion opportunity: Serving the emerging Black consumer](#)

² [Wealth Inequality and the Racial Wealth Gap \(Federal Reserve\)](#)

Cliffvon Howell is a product of Delaware’s public education system, first receiving a high school diploma from Cape Henlopen High School, followed by a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Delaware State University and graduate studies at Wilmington University where he earned a Master’s degree in Public Administration. Cliffvon Howell is a 21-year state government public servant providing administrative services.



Police Officers Should Volunteer to Gain an Understanding of the People They Serve by Jerome Saunders

It is clear the Wilmington Police Department is unable to control gun violence or reduce the harmful effects of the drug market on children, adults, families, and communities, especially in areas heavily populated by African Americans and other people of color. Many Wilmington residents believe their community would be better served if the Wilmington Police Department accepted assistance from Delaware's State Police Department to help them deal with gun violence and to reduce the drug problem in Wilmington's hot spots.

Questions have been raised about why the Wilmington Police Department has not asked for assistance from the Delaware State Police. Others have questioned the Wilmington Police Department's willingness to even accept such help if offered. Still others have suggested that "the people" tend to respect State Police Officers more than Wilmington's Law Enforcement Officers.

I believe these questions should be answered. I further believe that until the Wilmington Police Department gets the additional human resources necessary to "get a grip" on gun violence and the drug problem, Police Officers should volunteer in communities impacted by poverty, violence, and drugs, as is done by other professions. Doing so would give Police Officers a clearer and firsthand understanding of the social environments in which people live (e.g., poverty, inadequate housing, racism, trauma). It would also help them understand how a person's environment greatly influences the decisions they make which may lead to selling drugs, carrying, or using a gun, and ultimately, the possibility of incarceration.

Jerome Saunders is a lifelong resident of Wilmington, Delaware. While attending elementary and high school, he lived with his parents, brother and two sisters in northeast Wilmington across from Price Run Park. He owned a meat market at 22nd & Pine Streets. He has been recognized for his work in the community by the City of Wilmington. "The Chronicles of Northeast Wilmington" which he produced and filmed, presents interviews with childhood friends, and recalls the pleasant years growing up in northeast Wilmington from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s and how and why the community changed in so many negative ways.

Image courtesy of <https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/about-us/about-the-city-of-wilmington>

Murder Town USA, Revisited: Will Public Leadership Ever Deliver Structural Change To Black Wilmington?

by Yasser Arafat Payne, PhD

Black History Month is a cherished period where America reflects on the great achievements of Black America; but this month is also a time where we should responsibly ponder the injustices, historically and presently bestowed on far too many Black-Americans. In this spirit, this essay briefly examines the hardships and more specifically the extreme poverty and gun violence still afflicting Wilmington, Delaware.

In December 2014, Abigail Jones an award-winning senior writer for *Newsweek*, released a fiery and controversial article entitled: *Murder Town USA (aka Wilmington,*

Delaware). Jones's story on gun violence in Wilmington also launched a larger discussion about a city of two tales: how a small city's identity was forged and sustained by white wealth and by Black poverty. While this article forced city leadership to reckon with structural racism and the role it played in the maintenance of poor Black neighborhoods, public officials still worked hard to invalidate Jones's argument. But many in the streets marveled at it, particularly when "Murder Town" was used to describe how white wealth and poor political leadership was tied to gun violence in Wilmington. Most disturbing however, is that nearly ten years later, little has changed in Wilmington regarding its extreme wealth and

extreme poverty and especially this city's challenge with gun violence.

My new book project (co-authored with Dr. Brooklynn Hitchens and Darryl L. Chambers), *Murder Town, USA: Homicide, Structural Violence and Activism in Wilmington*, revisits Jones's 2014 argument on race, wealth, and crime with a deeper analysis led by the people most affected by poverty and gun violence. In fact, *Murder Town, USA* is based on a study that worked with 15 men and women from the streets of Wilmington; and these 15 worked alongside major stakeholders from three universities and five non-profit organizations. Among the stakeholders who closely worked with these men and women was Dr. Marlene

Saunders, an esteemed scholar and former assistant professor at Delaware State University in the Department of Social Work and the Executive Manager of **Let The Truth Be Told**. It should be noted that Dr. Saunders and her graduate students

provided the men and

women from the community the much-needed love, or individual and group-based case management needed for them to be successful on this study on violence and reentry in Wilmington (See The People's Report @ thepeoplesreport.com).

Black Love in Wilmington. While it is true the Northside, West Center City, Eastside or Southbridge suffered from poverty and gun violence, it is critical to underscore that these neighborhoods were also filled with *Black Love*; or Black Wilmingtonians were more so defined by a huge commitment to family and community-building. In fact, fierce Black solidarity is the bedrock of Black Wilmington.

**Black Wilmingtonians (in and
outside of the streets) tirelessly
worked to improve their
neighborhoods**

Violence sometimes erupted, but strong Black community pride also reigned in Wilmington. While our book project focuses on how Wilmington's lethal structural violence complex (i.e., failing schools, brutal policing and prison system or fledging political leadership) ensures gun violence, *Murder Town, USA* also makes sure to underscore how many street-identified Black boys/men and girls/women still loved their families and communities; and how so many Black Wilmingtonians (in and outside of the streets) tirelessly worked to improve their neighborhoods. Our discussion on poverty and violence in *Murder Town, USA* should not be understood as a condemnation of Black Wilmington, but instead as a loud public plea to public officials to finally deliver the major structural change they have promised for generations.

Black residents
account for 58% of
Wilmington's total
population.

Black residents account for 58% and white residents 36% of Wilmington's total population. However, the Black unemployment rate in Wilmington is at least twice as high as white unemployment. Blacks are also four times as likely as whites to live in poverty, with some rates reaching 69 percent in some of Wilmington's poorest Black neighborhoods. For instance, the Northside and Westside, household incomes range between \$18,800 to \$19,400; while residents in the Eastside and Southbridge earn between \$20,221 and \$23,375. More distressing is that 40-60% of Black families in these neighborhoods make \$15, 000 or less per year.

White wealth gloriously thrives in Wilmington while thousands of Black bodies drown in structural violence. This magnificently perverse prosperity occurs in *much too normal a fashion*. In fact, very few in the privileged caste ever appear to be disturbed by Wilmington's troubling, racialized divide in wealth. Just under the blue skyline of the sterling Bank of America building in Downtown Eastside, poor Blacks struggle to survive on Ninth and North Pine Streets; Ninth and Lombard Streets; and Tenth and Bennett Streets in the Eastside.

Crowned the "LLC" and "corporate" capital of the United States, Wilmington is indeed a beacon of wealth, *at least for some*, but the underbelly of this corporate leviathan, however, is extreme poverty and a vibrant street culture in the city's predominately poor, Black neighborhoods. In addition to "Murder Town USA," Wilmington has also been labeled the "Most Dangerous City in America" and the capital for teenage homicide. Wilmington is the third-most violent city of its size, and its homicide rate, per capita, is consistently higher than those of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Wilmington broke homicide records in 2010 (29 murders); 2017 (32 murders) and in 2021 (39 murders). In fact, at the end of 2020, shootings were up by 52% and homicides by 35%; and Wilmington's 2021 homicide count meant the city obtained a per capita rate of about 55 murders per 100, 000.

Moreover, the violence is adaptive or makes sense in a context of extreme poverty. From the street's perspective—*physical injury, incarceration and/or death is worth the risk*, because the alternative would be simply sitting in extreme poverty for the foreseeable future—and that for them was just unacceptable. What do we expect these men and women to do in an environment drenched in poverty and joblessness? Are we really that surprised that some respond to failing schools, a job market set up to keep them out, and a policing and prison system hell-bent on incarcerating hordes of

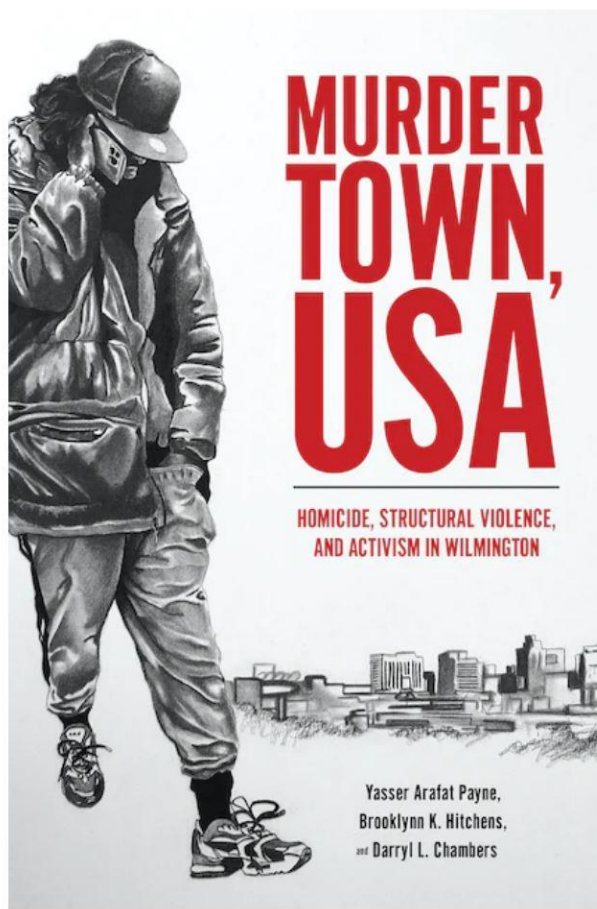
Black male bodies—by hitting the streets to provide for their children and families? Additionally, when will public officials’ repetitions be tied to their ability to improve the quality of life for poor Black Wilmington? When will their empty promises about economic, school, prison, and reentry reform manifest? When will these officials actually feel embarrassed and ashamed for the obscene rates of poverty, homelessness, incarceration, police abuse and police killings in Wilmington? How is it possible that leadership continues to smile, extend nominal pleasantries, or pat each other on the back for a “job well-done,” while thousands in Black Wilmington suffer? When will public officials be held accountable for their institutional betrayal of thousands of Black families – one generation after the next – *When....?*

It should be underscored that in every marginalized community around the world exists a small segment of its population that becomes street-identified to offset the stinging pangs of poverty. *And this dynamic of violence and poverty is no different in Wilmington.*

The help Black Wilmington requires is obvious—and that help is major structural transformation. More precisely, *Murder Town, USA*, calls on public officials to respond to the racial wealth gap or lack of wealth experienced by Black Delawareans descended of America’s and especially Delaware’s shameful slave legacy. Adequately responding to the racial wealth gap will certainly reduce, if not eradicate, gun violence. Furthermore, a robust *Black Reparations Plan* is the only structural-level intervention that can counter the entrenched poverty and resultant gun violence revealed by the racial-wealth gap in (or out of) Wilmington. Black reparations represent the growing national calls for a comprehensive, multi-trillion-dollar package of resources and wealth for Black-American descendants of the slave-holding South.

And it’s past due for Delaware to finally make right on the countless wrongs, exacted by the state for centuries on Black Delaware.

For a fuller discussion on inequality and gun violence in Wilmington and our 12-year journey to combat these issues in the city, we invite you to read our book project entitled: *Murder Town, USA: Homicide, Structural Violence and Activism in Wilmington* ([Rutgers University Press](https://www.rutgers.edu/press)). *Murder Town, USA* will be released on July 14, 2023 and is currently available for preorder.



Yassar A. Payne is Professor of Sociology & Africana Studies at the University of Delaware. Dr. Payne was the principal investigator that led to the groundbreaking report in Delaware titled “The People’s Report”.

Culture v. Color by Rev. Ty C. Johnson, Sr.

Communities around this country remain perplexed, while saddened by the fatal police beating of Tyre Nichols, in Memphis, Tennessee. Many, not only Blacks and other people of color, are seriously questioning police law enforcement practices and authority. How long must we be compelled to accept unacceptable behavior from those to whom God has ordained authority? (see Romans 13:1)

Understanding Police Culture: A paramilitary group, the ranking officer is supposed to check behavior, however experience can also “Trump” misconduct, but only if the culture welcomes or receives correction. History suggests *policing* was established to ‘Protect Property and Serve those who had it’. Plantations which enslaved Black Americans hired these folks to find, capture, and beat those running away from enslavement. It is the Black Communities which are still being **policed, but not protected and not served.**



The oil (mindset and behavior) flows from the head. Black people must become more involved in local elections by ensuring the right folks, those who support Black communities’ needs, are appointed to strategic positions; Police Chiefs, Inspectors, Captains, and New Police Recruits. It is not shocking to hear that Police have fatally beaten or shot another Black person. What is shocking, is to learn that Tyre Nichols was beaten by **FIVE Black** Police Officers. The “Blue Culture” (Police) was so strong, not one of them stepped up to say this is wrong and unlawful. What hurt even more was several other first responders also acted in a non-caring manner! According to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, “Injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere”. We need to establish Citizen Police Review Boards,

that are able to review findings of their police complaints and police disciplinary actions.

Ice Cube said it best, “My only sin is the skin I am in”, skin color is a problem in America today. Dr. Joy DeGruy informs us in her work, *Post Traumatic Slavery Syndrome*, how Black people are still considered less than human beings. If indeed this is still the case, it is not difficult to understand how five (5) Police Officers became desensitized and could do what they did.

The SCORPION Unit in Memphis, TN has been disbanded, and rightly so. What about the other special units, in police departments nationwide, where creating false affidavits still exist, and the ‘Blue’ culture says, “We ride together, and we die together?” How will law enforcement policies and behaviors be modified and enforced?

In a country like the USA where greed outweighs need, we have to recognize and continue to ameliorate *Gun Violence*, secure treatment for those needing help with substance abuse, and raise awareness and solutions for trauma and mental health issues. We **MUST** speak ‘truth to power’ against any culture – Blue or otherwise, which imposes or misrepresents **Public Trust**. Everyone, everywhere, deserves to be treated with respect as a human being by having all their civil rights protected relevant to today’s societal concerns and clearly understood by all. The privileges of honoring people and their culture should be represented fairly in every area of life.

Rev. Ty C. Johnson, Sr.
Churches Take A Corner (CTAC) Founder



Our History Community Service in Action: Diversity at its Best

by Toni A. Barrett

Our History is the title of a community effort currently on display for Black History Month at the Georgetown Library located on 123 W Pine Street in Georgetown Delaware.

A diverse cadre of organizations have worked together to create a large display honoring Black history month by giving information about each organization as well as displaying contributions they have made to the community. The organizations, led by Sussex County Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® also include, Sussex County Delaware State University Alumnae Association, Southern Delaware Alliance for Racial Justice (SDARJ), Richard Allen Coalition, Sussex County Chapter of Omega Psi Phi, Sussex County Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Sussex County of Zeta Phi Beta, and Sunshine Coalition.

All these organizations have contributed to this display, and you are encouraged to view the results of their efforts during the month of February.

We thank these organizations for all their endeavors to promote community service throughout Sussex County and we hope you will have an opportunity to visit this wonderful display at the Georgetown Library to find out more about each one.



Black History Month at the
Georgetown Library



Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®
Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter
Serving Sussex County
By Shorel Clark

I'm so excited to give you a bit of history about Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®. My name is Shorel Clark and I am the current President of Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter, Sussex County Delaware, where we happily serve. I attended and graduated from Delaware State College, now University, in 1986, and became a proud member of the sorority in 1982 but let me take you back to 1908.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® was founded on January 15, 1908, in the dormitory rooms of Miner Hall on the campus of Howard University in Washington, DC. Its founders were among the fewer than 1,000 Negroes enrolled in higher education institutions in 1908 and the 25 women who received Bachelor of Arts degrees from Howard University between 1908 and 1911. Ethel Hedgemon dreamed of creating a support network for women with like minds coming together for mutual uplift and weaving their talents and strengths for the benefit of others. In 1908, her vision crystallized as Alpha Kappa Alpha, the first Negro Greek-letter sorority. Led by Ethel Hedgemon, the nine Howard University students who came together to form Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority were the scholastic leaders of their classes. Each also had a special talent or gift that further enhanced the potential of this dynamic group. Nine juniors and seniors who constituted the initial core group of founding members and seven sophomores who were extended an invitation for membership without initiation comprised what is acknowledged as Alpha Kappa Alpha's original 16 founders. Five years later, in 1913, Nellie Quander ensured that Alpha Kappa Alpha would live on forever through incorporation in the District of Columbia. In fact, their vision and their commitment has sustained our sorority for 115

years. As a sorority, we strive to cultivate and encourage high scholastic and ethical standards, promote unity and friendship among college women, study and help alleviate problems concerning girls and women in order to improve their social stature, maintain a progressive interest in college life, and continue to be of "Service to All Mankind". From the core group of 9 at Howard, AKA has grown into a force of more than 355,000 college members and graduate members, comprising 1,050 chapters in 44 states, the District of Columbia, the US Virgin Islands, the Bahamas, Germany, Liberia, South Korea, Japan, Canada, South Africa, and the Middle East.

On January 12, 2020, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®, pinned a new chapter-- Alpha Alpha Mu Omega, right here in Sussex County. 19 determined young women painted the town pink and green and our 20 pearls were worn with pride. Throughout the year, we gladly continued to engage in our service commitment by partnering with the local American Legion Auxiliary Unit 28 to collect and prepare items for their MLK Day of Service. During that year, the American Legion prepared string backpacks of hats, gloves, and toiletry items for the homeless. In addition, we collected shoes for men, women, and children and we participated in our "Pink Goes Red" Heart Health campaign as we partnered with other Delaware AKA chapters to promote movement and workout through line dancing. Unfortunately, after two active months of reaching out to Sussex County communities, the COVID-19 Pandemic occurred. This did not stop us. Under the leadership of the chapter's first President, Mary C. Lomax, and with the grace of God, we continued our mission to serve all mankind by using social media to highlight businesses in order to help them thrive financially. We also held online exercise classes, such as yoga and Zumba, and the list of activities go on and on.

But don't let me spoil the story, feel free to watch our sorority's award-winning documentary titled, "Twenty Pearls: The Story of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority" narrated by the award-winning actress and sorority member, Phylicia Rashad. You can find the documentary on iTunes, Google Play, YouTube, Microsoft, and other popular platforms. It will give you a thorough account of our history.

Please look for us throughout the Sussex County community carrying out our 2022-2026 International Theme, "Soaring to Greater Heights of Service and Sisterhood." Our six initiatives are listed below.

We invite you to learn more about our members, history, and our upcoming programs and events. Please visit our page at www.georgetownnaka.com. and follow us on Facebook and Instagram: @georgetownnaka.



*Shorel Clark, President
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®
Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter*

- ❖ *Strengthen Our Sisterhood*
- ❖ *Empower Our Families*
- ❖ *Build Our Economic Wealth*
- ❖ *Enhance Our Environment*
- ❖ *Advocate for Social Justice*
- ❖ *Uplift Our Local Community*

The Whole Picture

By Kayla Spruill

What is the source of one's pride? Their possessions? Their outer appearance? Maybe their political affiliations? Or perhaps how they impact other lives? People often take pride in their culture, ethnicity, and country of origin, but should that be the only thing making up their self-esteem? President Barack Obama said, "My identity might begin with the fact of my race, but it didn't, couldn't end there. At least that's what I would choose to believe." While it is important to find comfort within one's own skin (color), I believe it is important for people to not only have racial pride (internal), but also external pride, such as how one treats and serves others.

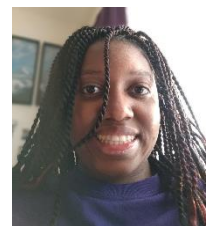
I have often heard my elders say people remember how someone made them feel more so than what they looked like on the outside. Say a person gave someone a compliment about their hairstyle. They are likely to remember how the person brightened their day or put a smile on their face more than whether they were Black or white. Another instance can come when one pays for another individual's groceries. They would be so grateful for that person's generosity that they may overlook their ethnicity. Encouraging and helping someone else can give people a great sense of pride because they feel good about themselves for showing selfless acts of kindness and not just for their own qualities.

Sometimes when people (no matter their race) dedicate their professional lives to helping others succeed and live their best lives, they are likely to feel good about themselves. Although helping others is what they do for a living, they may also develop a personal pride in the accomplishment. For instance, business owners who give young interns a chance to gain

experience in their field can take pride in the fact that they are giving young people the tools they need to succeed in their careers. Another example might be doctors who spend endless hours bringing people back to good health are healers and miracle makers to their patients. In times of health crises, their skin color does not matter, it matters that they are dedicated to saving lives.

Still, being ethnically aware can sometimes depend on the setting or situation the person is in. For example, if someone is in a place surrounded by people who look like them, they might not feel self-conscious about their ethnicity because everyone in the room has that in common. However, when people of a different race surround them, they may be more aware of that aspect of themselves because their ethnic difference is more obvious in this particular setting. Despite the circumstances, people should never let their skin color be the only thing that defines who they are because it could hinder their ability to connect with people who are different from them.

In summary, people can feel proud of themselves in many ways, and it does not have to come solely from their cultural identity. It's certainly not a bad thing to embrace one's racial pride. Still, beyond one's skin color, one should self-reflect on their inner qualities, accomplishments, and interactions with others because by doing so, one will realize they have many attributes to be proud of.



Kayla Spruill is a senior at Early College School at Delaware State University and is interested in studying journalism and video/film.

People To Watch in 2023



Ketanji Brown Jackson

First Black female justice on US Supreme Court



Maxwell Frost (Florida)

From March for Our Lives to US House of Representatives

First Gen Z elected to Congress



Claudine Gay

First Black president of Harvard University

People To Watch in 2023



Wes Moore

First Black governor of Maryland



Stell Parker Shelby

From education to public service

Representative, Delaware General Assembly
(RD20)



Jaylen Smith

Mayor of Earle, Arkansas

Graduated from high school May 2022

Elected mayor November 2022 at age 18

Youngest Black person elected mayor in US

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Announces Two Scholarships

by Mary C. Lomax

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter announces two scholarships for Sussex County high school students who are graduating in May or June 2023. The two scholarships are the Lomax Leadership Scholarship and the Collick Community Book Scholarship.

The Lomax Leadership Scholarship is named in honor of Mrs. Mary C. Lomax, who led the charge in the establishment of the Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter and served as the chapter's first president. The Lomax Leadership Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.00 will be awarded to a senior who demonstrates an exceptional commitment to service within the communities he or she serves. This scholarship is based on academic achievement, aptitude, leadership, and character.

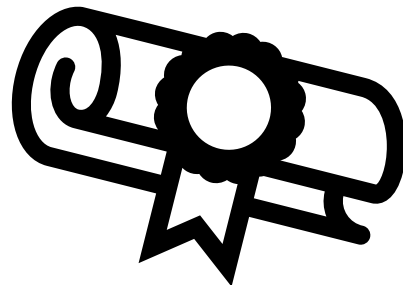
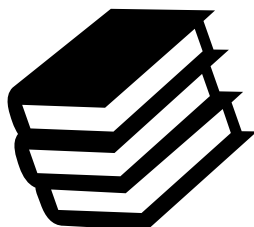
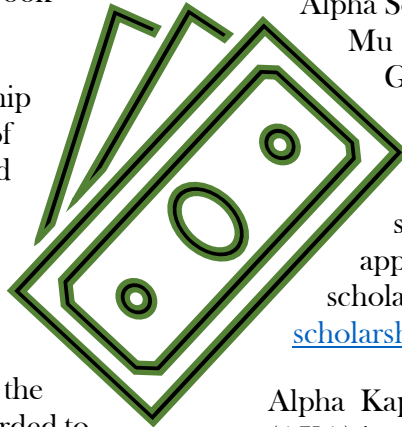
The Collick Community Book Scholarship was established with the purpose of providing financial assistance to a Sussex County Delaware high school senior who is pursuing his or her undergraduate education at a two-year or four-year accredited college, university, or technical college. This scholarship is named in honor of Miss Stephanie Collick, whose commitment to service was instrumental in the establishment

of the Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter and served as its first Vice President. The Collick Community Book Scholarship in the amount of \$500.00 will be awarded to a student who demonstrates an exceptional commitment to service within the communities he or she serves. This scholarship is based on academic achievement, aptitude, leadership, and character.

Applications can be mailed to Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter, P.O. Box 369, Georgetown, DE. For your convenience, both scholarships can be completed online. Please type your name and the scholarship for which you are applying in the subject line. Email your scholarship to scholarships@georgetownaka.com.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated (AKA) is an international service organization that was founded at Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1908. It is the oldest Greek letter organization established by African-American college-educated women. Alpha Kappa Alpha is comprised of nearly 355,000 members in 1,024 graduate and undergraduate chapters in the United States, Liberia, the Bahamas, the U. S. Virgin Islands, Germany, South Korea, Bermuda, Japan, Canada, South Africa, and the Middle East. For more information on Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and its programs, visit AKA1908.com.

*Mary C. Lomax, Chair, Public Relations
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated@
Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter*



Significant Upcoming Events

PARENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS

GETTING H.B.198 RIGHT, ALL THE WAY

A conversation on the implementation of HB 198 (incorporating Black history in K-12)

In invited guests include:

- ⇒ Dr. Monica Gant, Associate Secretary, Department of Education (DDOE)
- ⇒ Dr. Michael Feldman, Social Studies Education Associate, DDOE
- ⇒ School Districts, Charter Schools and HB 198 Leads

March 1, 2023 | 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
Virtual via Zoom

Event Sponsors

Click the image or copy this link to register for HB198 conversation
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/getting-hb-198-right-all-theway-tickets-542897831027>

Pledge of Resiliency:

A Public Dialogue

Saturday, March 4, 2023

Time: 1100: AM - 1:00 PM EST

Location: Zoom

Registration is required, [click here](#)

We invite you to join us for a panel discussion about community responses to the presence of a confederate flag and monument in Georgetown, DE, which is currently being supported by public funds.

Our panelist will explore the impact of this monument on the community and discuss potential solutions for healing and creating systemic change in our communities to prevent similar ideological incursions in the future.

We believe this dialogue is crucial for building a more inclusive equitable community, and we encourage you to register to attend.



Black People's Conference - A small group of African Americans, representing various backgrounds are organizing a "Black People's Conference". The main goal of this this gathering is to bring all segments of the Black community together to talk about problems, and issues impacting African Americans living in Delaware. Consistent with the history of African Americans as a population with never ending determined spirit to overcome oppression, the conference will identify areas of progress on which to build. A final outcome is an action plan that will provide direction in the form of priorities, objectives, and future meetings facilitated by a cross-section of individuals who will move the action plan forward to measurable outcomes. **The tentative target date for the conference is October 2023.** Anyone wanting to participate in this significant event, should so indicate via email at letthetruthbetold2026@gmail.com