**Black History Moment February 2025**

**Focus: The Origins of Black History Month**

**1st Sunday, February 2, 2025**

**Presenter: Marcus Snipe**

Source: ALSLH.org / WRITTEN BY Daryl Michael Scott | ASALH Former National President

**The story of Black History Month begins in Chicago during the summer of 1915.** An alumnus of the University of Chicago and Harvard University, Dr. **Carter G. Woodson, was a historian, author, journalist, and founder of The Journal of Negro History (1916). He was the dean of Howard University Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Dr. Woodson** traveled from Washington, D.C. to Illinois to participate in a national celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of emancipation. Thousands of African Americans from across the country came to see exhibits highlighting the progress made since the destruction of slavery.

Woodson joined exhibitors with a Black history display. Despite being held at the Coliseum, the site of the 1912 Republican convention, an overflow crowd of over six-thousand waited outside for their turn to view the exhibits. Inspired by the three-week celebration, Woodson decided to form an organization to promote the scientific study of Black life and history before leaving town.

On September 9th, Woodson met at the Wabash YMCA with A. L. Jackson and three others and formed the **Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH)**.

**What is Black History Month?**

**Black History Month** is an annually observed month-long celebration of African American life, History, and culture. Founded by **Dr. Carter G. Woodson** in **February** 1926, what was Formerly known as **Negro History Week,** became a month-long celebration to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, history, and culture to the global community.

**Why February?**

Each year the question is asked: **Why does Black History Month occur in February?** The relevance of February goes back to 1926, when ASALH’s founder Dr. Carter G. Woodson first established “Negro History Week” during the second week of February.

**And why that week**? Because it encompasses the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln on the 12th and Frederick Douglass on the 14th—both men being great American symbols of freedom.

More importantly, he chose them for reasons of tradition. Since Lincoln’s assassination in 1865, the Black community had been celebrating the fallen President’s birthday. And since the late 1890s, Black communities across the country had been celebrating Douglass’ birthday.

However, Dr. **Woodson never confined Negro History to a week**. His life’s work and the mission of ASALH since its founding in 1915 is a living testimony to the year-round and year-after-year study of African American history.