

## Black History Month 2025

Streetcar Suburb News – February 2025

### ***Haircuts and Health in College Park***

I was enchanted by the story of [local public health professor and Director of UMD's Center for Health Equity, Stephen B. Thomas](#), who, in this thoughtful profile, reflects on the successes and challenges faced throughout his remarkable, decades-long effort to spread vital public health information to vulnerable populations through their local barbers. The program, called Health Advocates In-Reach and Research (HAIR), began in 2005 as an initiative that trains Black barbers and stylists to educate their customers on health issues. Thomas is now working with stylists to create a new program under HAIR, called Tea Time, to focus on sexual wellness and HIV treatments. He is also working with barbers and stylists to combat opioid abuse.

### **Tues. Feb. 4**

**7-9pm.** [Black History Month Book Discussion: "The Water Dancer" by Ta-Nehisi Coates - Part 1 at Montpelier Arts Center](#) in Laurel. Ta-Nehisi Coates' lyrical novel "The Water Dancer" weaves tasker Hiram's inhuman separations, fear, toil, and the supportive African American community on Lockless plantation into a quest for freedom. This is a two-part discussion, happening on Feb. 4 and 11. Register for both Part 1 and Part 2.

### **Wed. Feb. 5**

**5:30pm.** [The Golden Age of Black Opera: A conversation with Legendary African American Mezzo-Soprano Denyce Graves](#) at Leah H. Smith Hall, UMD. In celebration of Black History Month, Dean Stephanie Shonekan invites you to an exclusive conversation with mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves as part of the Spring 2025 ARHU Dean's Lecture Series. Denyce will share insights from her career, reflecting on her trailblazing journey as a Black woman in opera. Reception to follow.

### **Thurs. Feb. 6**

**6:30-8:30pm.** Black History Month at Mount Rainier Nature Center: [Collage Workshop featuring Artist Khadija Jahmila](#). Art is a powerful medium for storytelling, reclaiming silenced voices, and advocating for change. Get creative by using recycled materials to make beautiful artwork inspired by Black History Month themes.



Britannica

[https://www.britannica.com > topic > Black-History-Month](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Black-History-Month)

**Black History Month**, month long commemoration of [African American](#) history and achievement that takes place each February in the [United States](#). It was begun in 1976.

Carter G. Woodson Carter G. Woodson, c. 1910s. In February 1926 Woodson launched what would become Black History Month so as to recognize the history and achievements of Black Americans.(more)

The idea for a Black History Month was first conceived by the historian Carter G. Woodson and members of his Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now the Association for the Study of African American Life and History). Together they organized a Negro History Week, beginning in February 1926. They selected the month of February for this celebration because it was close to the birthdays of U.S. Pres. Abraham Lincoln, who had been responsible for the Emancipation Proclamation, and the African American orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. During the next 50 years Negro History Week grew in popularity, with



American cities initiating their own celebrations of Black achievements and with teachers—particularly in schools with a large percentage of African American students—using class time to discuss contributions to history made by notable African Americans. The civil rights movement also contributed to its popularity. Negro History Week was expanded to become Black History Month in 1976, with U.S. Pres. Gerald Ford urging Americans to participate in its observance.

## [Why is Black History Month in February?](#)

Learn the history and meaning of Black History Month in the United States.

See all videos for this article

At the beginning of the 21st century, Black History Month was celebrated with a range of events at public schools, universities, and museums as well as within individual communities across the country. It was sponsored at the national level by such groups as the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Gallery of Art, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

### [Why Is Black History Month Celebrated in February?](#)

[Black History Month](#) <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk> › [article](#) › ...

### [Celebrating Black Labour: The 2025 Black History Month Theme ...](#)

The 2025 Black History Month theme places a particular focus on the role of African Americans in labour movements.

As America prepares to celebrate Black History Month, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) has announced the theme: “African Americans and Labour.” This theme highlights the profound and varied ways Black people have shaped the workforce, from the forced labour of enslaved Africans to their ongoing contributions in diverse fields. By examining the intersections between work, race, and culture, this theme sheds light on how Black workers, activists, and leaders have had a pivotal role in shaping both the economy and the social fabric of the United States.

Labour has always been central to the African American experience. From the very beginning, when enslaved Africans were brought to the Americas to work the land for European colonial powers, Black people have been fundamental to the development of the economy. The contributions of African Americans—whether in agriculture, industry, or later in civil rights movements—have laid the foundation for much of the country’s growth. Despite facing significant challenges such as racial discrimination, superexploitation, and wage disparities, Black workers have consistently pushed for justice and equality, reshaping industries, communities, and political landscapes along the way.

The 2025 Black History Month theme places a particular focus on the role of African Americans in labour movements. Over the years, Black workers have fought for better wages, job security, and working conditions. This struggle for justice is exemplified by A. Philip Randolph, who founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids in 1925. This was the first Black union to receive a charter from the American Federation of Labour (AFL). Randolph’s efforts helped establish a platform for Black workers, particularly in the transportation industry, where workers were often subjected to poor working conditions. Through the Brotherhood, Black workers secured better pay and job security, setting a precedent for future Black-led labour movements.