

# AAHM Sojourner Special Edition

Newsletter of the **SPRINGFIELD AND CENTRAL ILLINOIS AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MUSEUM**

VOLUME 5, NO.1

WINTER-SPRING 2021

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## Museum Reopens to the public March 4, 2021 Hours: Thursday through Saturday, noon to 4 pm

### SPECIAL EDITION: 2020 Annual Meeting Report

This Sojourner special edition provides the *Annual Membership Report Wrap-up* and other essential components of a traditional AAHM Annual Meeting. We were unable to offer this special event, which typically includes dinner, live music, and enthusiastic reports summarizing the past year at the Museum. We look forward to renewing our enjoyable annual meetings in the future. If there are any questions about the information contained here in, please do not hesitate to contact the Museum for answers. Similarly do not hesitate to contact the Museum to find out how you can become a member volunteer.

## Negro Leagues Beisbol Exhibit Rescheduled September 4 to October 30, 2021

Story by Carolyn Farrar

The AAHM will present on September 4 to October 30, 2021 the *Traveling Exhibit: Negro Leagues Beisbol*, a production of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, MO, at the African American History Museum, 1440 Monument Avenue in Springfield.

The exhibit honors and explores the rich history and connections of African American baseball with Hispanic cultures, communities and countries beginning in the late 1800s.



The exhibit features profiles of significant baseball players, a timeline of American and Hispanic baseball history, and detailed baseball histories of several countries. The exhibit is bilingual, presented in both English and Spanish.

Unique stories of athletes with ties to the United States and Hispanic countries will be featured. They include Minnie Minoso, Willard Brown, Oscar



Charleston, Ray Dandridge, Martin Dihigo, "Rube" Foster, Josh Gibson, "Pancho" Herrera, Monte Irvin, Jose Mendez, Emilio Navarro, "Buck" O'Neil, "Satchel" Paige, Alex Pompez, Pat Scantlebury, Pedro Sierra, Luis Tiant, Sr., and Willie Wells.

The Negro Leagues' Springfield connection will be presented by highlighting **Josh Johnson** who lived in Springfield and played in the Negro Leagues and by highlights of events and games played in Springfield and Central Illinois.





# Message from President Farrar

Greetings to Supporters of the AAHM:

I am pleased to serve as the President of the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum (AAHM). The Museum grew out of a noble concept and need to tell the “authentic stories of African Americans in Central Illinois”. My husband, Curtis, and I have supported the Museum financially and as volunteers since its beginning in 2012. I have served as a Member of the Board since 2018.



## OUR MISSION

\* We will tell authentic stories about African American life in Central Illinois, past and present, celebrating and sharing our history and culture while planning our future.

\* We will do this through scholarship, oral history, exhibits, partnerships, our board of directors, our supporters and our friends. We are and will continue to be community builders.

\* We recognize that our stories are unique but connected to those of other communities and we will support those interconnections. We will be integral to the cultural life of our area. We will partner with like-minded organizations. We will be proactive in our community. We will study and apply best practices in business, scholarship and communication.

The growth and impact of the Museum within the community has been steady over time based on the sound leadership of a dedicated Board of Directors, volunteers, benefactors, and community supporters.

My goals for the Museum include:

- developing a long-term strategic plan;
- increasing the number of members, volunteers, and board members;
- growing community interest and involvement through more hands on and digital exhibits; and
- expanding youth involvement by offering more activities and events that would appeal to young people.

I challenge you to volunteer and support the AAHM in any way you can, it shows your love for a good story, which Museums tell and authenticate from our past and give us a window to our future.

*Carolyn Farrar*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Carolyn Farrar, President**

**Joan Joyner, Vice-President**

**James Lewis, Treasurer**

**Nell Clay, Immediate Past President**

**Vincent “June” Chappelle**

**Kathryn Harris**

**Ann Joseph, PhD**

**Lynne Slightom**

**Aaron Pearl-Cropp**

**Gail Simpson**

**Jamie Stout**

**Kevia Maloney, Museum Coordinator  
and Interim Recording Secretary**

## Notes from Immediate Past President Clay

It was an honor as well as a challenge to serve as the President of the Board of Directors of the Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum (AAHM). I began volunteering at the AAHM in 2015. Jerrie Blakley, who was president at the time, invited me to join the Board of Directors. I was excited and honored to be asked.



From 2016 to 2018, I served as chair of the Program & Exhibit Committee. During this time Doug King was the president and toward the end of his term, he asked, persuaded, and convinced me to seek the position of President of the AAHM Board of Directors. With apprehension, humility, and nervousness, I accepted the position. Why not me?

I was determined to do the very best I could and work diligently to improve attendance at the Museum, increase our membership, develop meaningful and educational programs and exhibits; expand our connections with other organizations in the area, improve our visibility in the community and keep the AAHM solvent financially. With the hard work of some of the most dedicated board members & volunteers I have ever known, together, we accomplished a lot.

I wish the new board president, Carolyn Farrar, all the luck in the world and pledge to diligently work beside her like the board members that worked beside me and supported me.

*Nell R. Clay*

**AAHM website:** spiaahm.org  
**Email:** siaahf@yahoo.com  
**Address:** 1440 Monument Ave.,  
Springfield, IL 62702  
**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 301,  
Springfield, IL 62705  
**Telephone:** 217-391-6323  
**Follow us on Facebook**



is the quarterly newsletter of the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum, 1440 Monument Avenue, Springfield, Illinois. Sue Massie, editor

# Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum

## Annual Membership Report – 2020 Wrap-up



### 2020 Wrap-up

Dear Members and Friends,

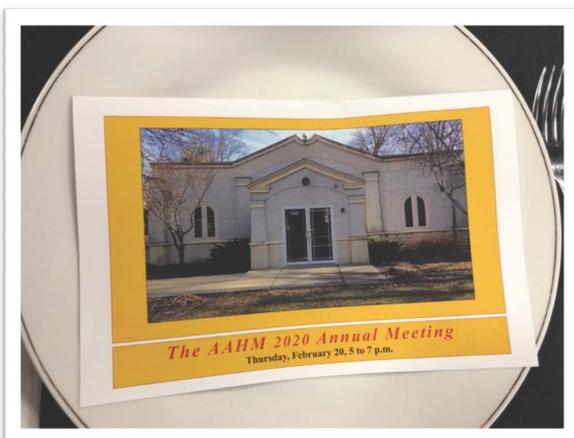
It is rather amazing that considering the devastating effects of so many 2020 events in this country, the AAHM has had some remarkable highpoints.

An innovative event for the museum was **The Indoor Garage Sale** held at the museum January 18 – 23, 2020. We regularly ask you for donations but we ourselves also donate money for our expenses. We earned enough from the garage sale to sponsor our annual membership meeting with refreshments and door prizes and more.



*The Garage Sale was a great success!*

**The Annual Museum Membership Meeting** for 2020 was held successfully and joyfully in February with good food, good reports and a live band.



*Nell R. Clay presents "The 2019 Year in Review" at the Annual Membership Meeting*



*High School History Bowl, 2019*

During the closing, the **Illinois Dept of Public Health** held COVID-19 testing at the Museum where they set up for people to come and get tested. From July 28 - September 22, the museum held **Voter Registration Drives**, conducted inside the museum by **several sororities and fraternities, Black Lives Matter Springfield Chapter and the League of Women Voters.**



*Voter Registration Drive*

Throughout the year we tried to keep in contact with our membership through **Facebook, our Quarterly Newsletter, Sojourner, and our Website.** The Museum developed 7 videos about our exhibits, narrated by volunteers and board members. These videos are still on our website.

All year, our Facebook page kept you updated on current history, posting notable deaths – Civil Rights icon **John Lewis**, Supreme Court Justice **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**, basketball star **Kobe Bryant** and his daughter, **Gianna** and 9 others in a helicopter crash, and Broadcaster **Gwen Ifill.**



*Follow us on Facebook & visit our website [www.spiaahm.org](http://www.spiaahm.org) for the latest news*



*Virtual Tour of our Museum*



*Kathryn Harris*

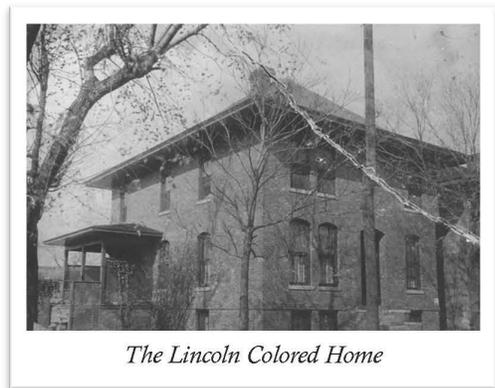
We posted historic appointments such as the appointment of **Wilton Gregory** as the 1<sup>st</sup> black American cardinal, and **Kathryn Harris, AAHM Board Member**, as “**2020’s First Citizen**” in Springfield. We shared with you short spotlights on historical figures such as **Harriet Tubman, Mary Mcleod Bethune, Vivien Thomas** and others.

By the end of 2020, our **Facebook page has 1,895 followers**. Join us there and go to our **website, www.spiaahm.org** to stay informed. The museum’s mission is to educate you, celebrating and sharing and keeping you informed about our history and culture. We will do this in person, on our media forums, in Zoom gatherings and special presentations - anywhere we can.



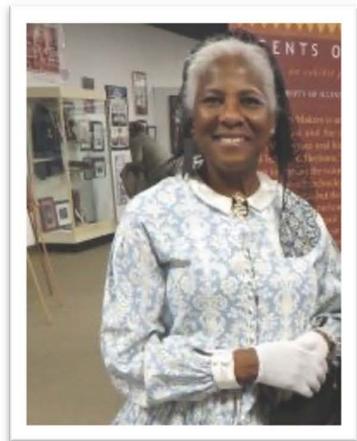
*Our Virtual Fundraiser Gala*

In September we began another innovative way to fund the museum. We are always dependent on you for our wherewithal, but we began something different - a **Virtual Gala Fundraiser** in place of our Gala, canceled because of the Corona Virus pandemic. We contacted you and you delivered! We are so pleased to inform you that you donated just under enough to sustain us for much of next year! We are so grateful!



*The Lincoln Colored Home*

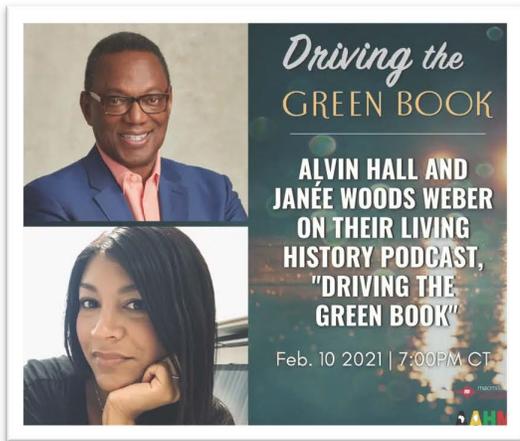
On November 17<sup>th</sup> we had a Zoom **Webinar on the life of Sojourner Truth, portrayed by Patricia James Davis**. To continue to inform and educate you, we had two special Webinars on Zoom on December 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with the **Abraham Lincoln Museum and Library**. Robert Davis portrayed Frederick Douglass and Mary Frances presented a program on Eva Carroll Monroe and The Lincoln Colored Home. In 2021 there was a special program “Driving the Green Book” on Zoom.



*Patricia James Davis portrays Sojourner Truth*



*Robert Davis portrays Frederick Douglass*



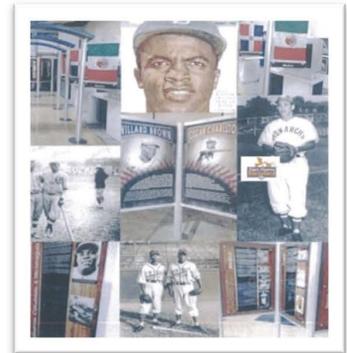
*“Driving the Green Book” Alvin Hall and Janée Woods Weber*



*Students at the 2019 Black History Bowl*

Also coming again in February 2021 will be the **Black History Bowl**. The final day for the high school students from Springfield High School, Lanphier High School and Southeast High School, to compete in the Bowl is on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

In **September** the **National Negro Baseball League** will be on exhibit at the museum.



*National Negro Baseball League*

And finally, our existing exhibits are ready for your visits when we re-open; **The Middle Passage, Barack Obama, Illinois Firsts, Black Women on U.S. Postage Stamps, Early African American Pioneers, and our newest exhibit, the Four Oldest Black Springfield Churches.**



*The African American Firsts in Illinois Exhibit*

We have a **new president, Carolyn Farrar**, and new board members and volunteers. We are very **thankful to Nell Clay** for her past few years of passionate **leadership as our President**. Thank you, Nell, for your dedication, energy and resourcefulness.

We are gearing up for re-openings, new innovations, exciting exhibits and with you as our supporters and cheer leaders, a great year. We are deeply sorrowful for the devastation to jobs, businesses, families, and lives this past year. Each of us must bring hope where we can, lift up those around us and show thanks to all the medical workers, essential workers, and others who press on in this battle.

On behalf of the **Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum Board, volunteers and staff; we thank you for being members.**

*Elizabeth Alexander, author*

*Jenni Dahl, photo composition*

# AAHM Perseveres through 2020

## Thank you Volunteers for your Dedication and Service during 2020

Elizabeth Alexander  
Nell Clay  
June Chappelle  
Jenni Dahl  
Judy Betts Davis  
Carolyn Farrar  
Jayna Flatt  
Kathryn Harris  
Erika Holst  
Joan Joyner  
Jim Lewis  
Sue Massie  
Aaron Pearl-Cropp  
Roger Powers  
Lynne Slightom  
Jamie Stout  
Mary Helen Yokem  
Kevia Maloney,  
*Museum Coordinator*

Visitors: Approx: 431  
Volunteer Hours: Approx: 372



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Greetings African American History Museum family! What a year the last one has been for us all. We look forward to this new year bringing greater normalcy to our lives and to our Museum.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Museum provided opportunities for our members and the community. We have hosted an array of on-line programs and kept information flowing in the Museum's high-quality newsletter, on the Museum website [www.spiaahm.org](http://www.spiaahm.org), and through social media. The Museum will reopen to visitors on March 4, 2021 according to State Phase 4 guidelines. Because of these restricting conditions, museum membership has declined.

Museum members are the backbone of our organization. It is critical that memberships are renewed, and the Museum receive new ones. Memberships should be renewed in January. Besides providing financial support for the operation of the Museum, exhibits and activities, members receive benefits of the quarterly newsletter, invitations to special events and 10% discount at the Museum store. Simply put, without members there can be no Museum.

Please renew your membership now and encourage others to join and become part of the Museum family. Think about gifting memberships to family and friends. Let us boost the Museum now for the promise of a great year ahead.

Thank you from the Membership Committee:

*Elizabeth Alexander, Jenni Dahl, Kevia Maloney, Sue Massie.*

# Statement of Financial Income and Expense Calendar Year 2020

## Income

Direct Public Grants	\$ 1,100.00
Direct Public Support	12,901.00
Other Grants	4,306.00
Program Income	42,173.89
Sales	<u>1,677.36</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 61,158.25</b>

## Expenses

Business Expenses	\$ 5,437.09
Facilities and Equipment	21,159.89
Program Event Expenses	9,469.67
Payroll Expense	8,531.86
Fundraising Expenses	1,572.33
Reconciliation Discrepancies	<u>72.88</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 45,243.72</b>

The year 2020 was an unusual year, because we had to shutdown during the pandemic. Our financial support remained strong, particularly through the Virtual Gala, which raised \$29,035 toward Program Income. This level of support almost equaled prior years. And we certainly cut expenses, to almost half of recent years, when we shutdown.

The Museum's income in 2020 was almost \$16,000 more than expenses, therefore we enter 2021 with a positive balance in the Operations Account (\$40,948.42 on 1-31-2021) and a positive balance in the Grants Account (\$45,087.31 on 1-31-2021).

We expect to use these balances for a robust schedule of programs in 2021 and into the future, as we reopen safely and carefully. Thank you for your continued support – you enable us to maintain our important voice and expand our important work.

**Thank you to all who contributed time and treasure to the Museum this year.  
We are grateful for your membership and for contributions throughout the year.  
Thank you all for seeing us through this challenging year.**

*9th Annual Honoring our Heritage Gala  
"Celebrating Empowerment Through the Ballot"*

*Springfield & Central Illinois  
African American History Museum's Heroes:  
Virtual Fundraiser Sponsors*

Platinum 4,000 +	Gold \$2,500 +	Silver \$1,000 +	Bronze \$500 +
Jim Lewis	Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln  Fletcher Farrar	Bruce & Nell Clay Robert & Patricia Davis DMI - Brad Davis Laurie & David Farrell Curtis & Carolyn Farrar HAP Inc. (Rev. Howard & Beverly Peters) Chris & Debra Smith	Positive Creations Union Baptist Church U.S. Bank
<b>Supporters \$300 +</b>			
Carrollton Bank Otis & Matthew Clay David & Laurie Farrell	Kathryn Harris Dr. Victoria Nichols- Johnson Dr. Ann Joseph	Joan Joyner Merrill Lynch (Summer-Graue Group)	Wendell & Loretta Meeks Springfield Periodontics Gail Simpson
<b>Friends \$200 +</b>			
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Steve & Liz Alexander Sarah Anderson Elbert Betts	Willard Bunn III Staff Carpet Delinda Chapman Kent Childs Guy C. Fraker	David Gerlach Pam & Doug King Ray LaHood Marine Bank Friends of Andy Manar	William McGee PJP Auto Enterprises Thomas Riley, Riley Dental Sue Scherer Yvonne Singley Lynne Slightom
<b>Donors</b>			
Abraham Lincoln Association (ALA) Doris Bailey Harry Berman Jennifer Bettis Buraski Builders Brown St. Church of God in Christ Brad Brown Judith Davis Wilbur & Florence Day James Deal Jennifer DeJong	Jan Droegkamp Loretta Durbin Ken Easterday Plumbing Mary Ann & Karen Egizio A Friend LaShonda Fitch David W. Fuchs Minnie Gillespie Janet Grimes Fredia Hawthorne Tarfa Khan	Anna Koepfel Theodis & Judy Lewis Kevia Maloney Joe McMenamin Tracy Owens Ken Page Robert Patterson Pattie Piotrowski Deron Powell State Farm Roger Powers & Jenni Dahl Jean Richards	Greg & Klaren Romashko Greg Sgro Georgetta Slaughter Daniel Spelce Rev. Greg & Valerie Stoner Jamie Stout Leon & Ruby Taylor Edna Walden Brenda Sanford Williams Mary Yokem Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Mike Zimmers

## A Brave And Startling Truth

Maya Angelou

We, this people, on a small and lonely planet  
Traveling through casual space  
Past aloof stars, across the way of indifferent  
suns  
To a destination where all signs tell us  
It is possible and imperative that we learn  
A brave and startling truth

And when we come to it  
To the day of peacemaking  
When we release our fingers  
From fists of hostility  
And allow the pure air to cool our palms

When we come to it  
When the curtain falls on the minstrel show of  
hate  
And faces sooted with scorn are scrubbed  
clean  
When battlefields and coliseum  
No longer rake our unique and particular sons  
and daughters  
Up with the bruised and bloody grass  
To lie in identical plots in foreign soil

When the rapacious storming of the churches  
The screaming racket in the temples have  
ceased  
When the pennants are waving gaily  
When the banners of the world tremble  
Stoutly in the good, clean breeze

When we come to it  
When we let the rifles fall from our shoulders  
And children dress their dolls in flags of truce  
When land mines of death have been removed  
And the aged can walk into evenings of peace  
When religious ritual is not perfumed  
By the incense of burning flesh  
And childhood dreams are not kicked awake  
By nightmares of abuse  
When we come to it  
Then we will confess that not the Pyramids  
With their stones set in mysterious perfection  
Nor the Gardens of Babylon  
Hanging as eternal beauty  
In our collective memory  
Not the Grand Canyon

Kindled into delicious color  
By Wester sunsets  
Nor the Danube, flowing its blue soul into  
Europe  
Not the sacred peak of Mount Fuji  
Stretching to the Rising Sun  
Neither Father Amazon nor Mother Mississippi  
who, without favor,  
Nurture all creatures in the depths and on the  
shores  
These are not the only wonders of the world

When we come to it  
We, this people, on this minuscule and kithless  
globe  
Who reach daily for the bomb, the blade and  
the dagger  
Yet who petition in the dark for tokens of peace  
We, this people on this mote of matter  
In whose mouths abide cankerous words  
Which challenge our very existence  
Yet out of those same mouths  
Come songs of such exquisite sweetness  
That the heart falters in its labor  
And the body is quieted into awe

We, this people, on this small and drifting  
planet  
Whose hands can strike with such abandon  
That in a twinkling, life is sapped from the living  
Yet those same hands can touch with such  
healing, irresistible tenderness  
That the haughty neck is happy to bow  
And the proud back is glad to bend  
Out of such chaos, of such contradiction  
We learn that we are neither devils nor divines

When we come to it  
We, this people, on this wayward, floating body  
Created on this earth, of this earth  
Have the power to fashion for this earth  
A climate where every man and every woman  
Can live freely without sanctimonious piety  
Without crippling fear

When we come to it  
We must confess that we are the possible  
We are the miraculous, the true wonder of this  
world  
That is when, and only when  
We come to it.

# Museum Reopens to the public March 4, 2021

Hours: Thursday through Saturday, noon to 4 pm

## Webinars and Exhibits at the AAHM

### AAHM 2020 webinars still available for Viewing

To continue to inform and bring the community authentic stories about African Americans, the AAHM hosted three webinars in 2020. These webinars were presented in cooperation with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM).

- November 17 - "Eva Monroe and the Colored Children's Home" based on Mary Francis' book about Monroe's courageous efforts to establish the home in Springfield, the first of its kind in the country.
- December 15 - AAHM volunteer, Patricia James Davis portrayed Sojourner Truth.
- December 16 - Robert Davis, AAHM volunteer, portrayed Frederick Douglass.

### AAHM 2021 Webinars

- February 10 - Driving the Green Book with authors Alvin Hall and Janee Woods-Weber. The book and discussion chronicles their trek across the country stopping at places highlighted in the Negro Motorist Guide, *the Green Book*.
- February 24 - Dr. Thavolia Glymph discusses her book, The Woman's Fight, a comprehensive history of women's roles and lives in the Civil War- black/white, north/south, and slave/free. This webinar was sponsored jointly with ALPLM.
- March 18 - "Valiant Women: Silent no more, through God, Faith, and Perseverance we rise." Several Central Illinois African American women authors tell stories of faith with the discussion of their book U.G.L.Y. (Uncovering Gods Love for You).
- March 20, 2 pm - "African American Science Leaders Serving Central Illinois." This program is associated with The Big Read project and book selection, Lab Girl. The book is available at AAHM starting March 4. To register for this program go to <https://bit.ly/BigReadSangamonCounty>

To Register for webinars and to review past webinars go to: [www.spiaahm.org](http://www.spiaahm.org)

### AAHM 2021 Exhibits

- **The 4 Oldest African American Churches in Springfield** will be the new exhibit for the Museum reopening in March. The exhibit features Union Baptist, Zion Missionary Baptist, St. John AME, and St. Paul AME churches.
- **The following exhibits will remain at the Museum:** Middle Passage, Illinois First, Pioneer Families, the Freedom Trail, and the Obama Exhibit.
- **The 1908 Race Riot Exhibit** is coming soon.
- **The Negro Leagues Baseball Exhibit: *Beisbol***, a traveling exhibit of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, MO will be open from September 4 to October 30, 2021. The exhibit honors and explores the rich history and connections of African American baseball with Hispanic cultures and countries beginning in the 1800s.

African American History Museum  
Springfield and Central Illinois  
P.O. Box 301  
Springfield, IL 62705-0301



## MEMBERSHIP

Members receive membership cards, the *Sojourner* newsletter, museum communications, and a 10% discount at the Museum Store. Members at the Sustaining level and above also receive invitations to previews, grand openings and special VIP events.

### Membership Categories

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$ 25   | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$ 100-\$ 199 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$ 50       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$ 200-\$ 499 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth/student \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing \$ 500-\$ 999  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior \$20        | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$1,000      |
- Business Member \$500-\$999 (includes business listing at museum events)
- I would like to pay now for three years of membership . AMOUNT enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Your check should be made payable and sent to the African American History Museum of Springfield and Central Illinois (AAHM) , P.O. Box 301, Springfield, IL 62705-0301