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Freedom School Gospel Brunch

Set for October 25

Featuring acclaimed jazz trombonist Wycliffe Gordon

And performances by the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe

A Manasota ASALH benefit celebrating learning, culture and community through music.

(April 21, 2026) Manasota ASALH invites the community to save the date for its inaugural Freedom School Gospel Brunch—a vibrant celebration of music, culture and community in support of its Freedom School program.

Set for October 25, 2026, 11:30 a.m., at Michael's On East Ballroom, the event features acclaimed trombonist and composer Wycliffe Gordon alongside the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, bringing gospel and jazz traditions to life. With presenting support from The Marilyn Hartwell Fund of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, the fundraiser reflects the heart of Freedom School—supporting young people through education, cultural connection and empowerment.

“Manasota ASALH Freedom School is rooted in connection—helping young people see themselves reflected in history, culture and community,” says Jada Wright-Greene, executive director of Manasota ASALH. “This event is a celebration of that spirit and an opportunity for the community to come together in support of it.”

Freedom School, a signature program of Manasota ASALH, offers students and families an engaging, community-based approach to exploring African and African American history. Through interactive learning, the program fosters confidence, leadership, and a deeper understanding of history's relevance today.

Proceeds from the Gospel Brunch will support the continued growth and accessibility of Freedom School, helping expand its reach to more students and families throughout the region. ***Additional details, including sponsorship opportunities and ticket information, will be announced in the coming weeks. For more information about Manasota ASALH, visit ASALH-Manasotafl.org.***

Photo captions:

- *Acclaimed jazz trombonist Wycliffe Gordon will headline Manasota ASALH's Freedom School Gospel Brunch on October 25, bringing his signature blend of virtuosity and soul to the event.*
- *Performers from the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe bring energy, storytelling and musical tradition to the stage—part of the lineup for Manasota ASALH's inaugural Freedom School Gospel Brunch on October 25.*

About Manasota ASALH

Manasota ASALH is a local branch of the National Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)—the organization founded in 1915 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who is credited with establishing Black History Month. Since its founding in 1995, the Manasota Branch has remained committed to promoting, researching, preserving, interpreting, and sharing the rich history and culture of people of African descent with both local and global communities. Manasota ASALH fulfills its mission through impactful programs such as the Manasota ASALH Freedom School—a community-based initiative that provides K–12 students with an honest and empowering education about the history and contributions of African and African American people. The branch also supports academic advancement through its robust scholarship program, which awards scholarships to Sarasota and Manatee

high school students accepted to colleges or universities. Over the past 23 years, Manasota ASALH has awarded more than \$700,000 in scholarships to 333 scholars in Manatee and Sarasota counties. For more information about Manasota ASALH, visit www.asalh-manasotafl.org.