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Manasota ASALH to Host Inaugural Black History Month Scholarship Luncheon Supporting Educational Excellence

Friday, February 6

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

The event will bring together scholars, community leaders, and supporters in celebration of Black history and academic excellence.

(December 30, 2025) The Manasota Branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) will host its inaugural Black History Month Scholarship Luncheon on Friday, February 6, 11:30 a.m., at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, 1534 Mound Street, Sarasota. Proceeds from the event will directly support the Manasota ASALH Scholarship Program, helping the organization continue empowering students and advancing equity through academic excellence. Tickets are \$125, with sponsorships and tables available. *For tickets, sponsorship information, or to learn more, contact info@asalh-manasotafl.org or visit www.asalh-manasotafl.org.*

The luncheon, themed “An Unusual Emphasis on Scholarship: Carter G. Woodson, Omega Psi Phi, and the Power of Black History,” honors the enduring legacy of Dr. Carter G. Woodson—the founder of ASALH and the scholar credited with establishing Black History Month—while highlighting the transformative power of

education. The event features a keynote address by Dr. Maurice Hobson, professor of Africana Studies at Georgia State University and lead historian for Omega Psi Phi Fraternity's latest history book. Following the keynote, Dr. Hobson will be joined in conversation by Dr. Jim Stewart, economist, Black history scholar, professor emeritus at Penn State University, and past president of Manasota ASALH, for a thoughtful discussion exploring the role of scholarship in preserving history, strengthening communities, and shaping future generations.

"This luncheon represents both a celebration of our history and a call to action," said Jada Wright-Greene, executive director of Manasota ASALH. "Together—with the support of our community—we are expanding access to education, uplifting promising students, and ensuring that opportunity continues to shape the next generation of leaders."

Wright-Green explains that the luncheon's goal is to raise \$50,000 for the Manasota ASALH Scholarship Program, which has awarded more than \$701,000 to 333 students across Sarasota and Manatee counties since 2000. Many scholars earn top GPAs and continue their education at leading colleges and universities, including Ivy League institutions and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

During the 2025 Scholarship Awards Ceremony, Manasota ASALH awarded \$45,000 in scholarships to 17 students from the region. In addition, the organization allocated an extra \$10,000 to returning scholars currently enrolled in colleges and universities, reinforcing its commitment to degree completion and long-term academic success.

“These students bring focus, drive, and purpose to everything they do,” Wright-Greene said. “Our job is to remove financial barriers so they can keep moving forward.”

Photo captions:

- *Dr. Maurice Hobson, professor of Africana Studies at Georgia State University, will give the keynote speech at ASALH’s inaugural Black History Month Scholarship Luncheon on Friday, February 6.*
- *Dr. Jim Stewart, economist, Black history scholar, and professor emeritus at Penn State University, will share insights at ASALH’s inaugural Black History Month Scholarship Luncheon on Friday, February 6.*
- **2025 Manasota ASALH Scholarship Recipients:** *First Row (l-r) Savannah Ivery, Marley Hall, Jolissa Allen, Zorianna Torres, Brianna Lynch, Markell Porter, Ava Leblanc Bessette. Second Row (l-r) Shandrea Williams, Kadren Henry, Jade Peters, William Grant, Usman Phillips, Arie Williams, Cayden Arlotta, Javari Mitchell, and Amari Lopez (not pictured Jason Anderson).*
- Jada Wright-Greene is the executive director of Manasota ASALH.

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 \$701,000 in scholarships to 333 scholars in Manatee and

Sarasota counties. For more information about Manasota ASALH, visit www.asalh-manasotafl.org.