



3rd Annual

**I, Too, Sing America
Black History Month Film Festival 2025:
*African Americans & Labor***

February 22 and 23 | Free Admission

Scottsdale Baha'i Faith Community Center
6910 E Shea Blvd, Scottsdale, AZ
(480) 219-3281

Showtimes, Registration & iProgram:

<https://www.scottsdalebahai.org/blackhistory2025/>



ORGANIZED BY THE BAHAI'S OF SCOTTSDALE IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NAACP-MARICOPA COUNTY
BRANCH AND THE PHOENIX SANKOFA PROJECT



PSP

*Enterprising insight to initiate
public wealth and success ...*



Welcome!

The Bahá'ís of Scottsdale, AZ, welcome you to our Community Center and are proud to sponsor with our partners the 3rd annual *I, Too, Sing America* Black History Month Film Festival celebrating Black History as American History. Dawning in mid-19th century Persia and established in the United States by 1895, the Bahá'í Faith upholds the essential oneness of humankind predicated on justice, education, gender equality, harmony between science and religion, and the elimination of racial prejudice that is notably referred to as America's "most vital and challenging issue." The guiding principles included in this year's program – justice, oneness, and unity – are taken from the sacred Bahá'í Writings.

*I, Too**

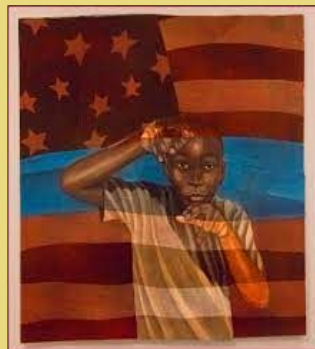
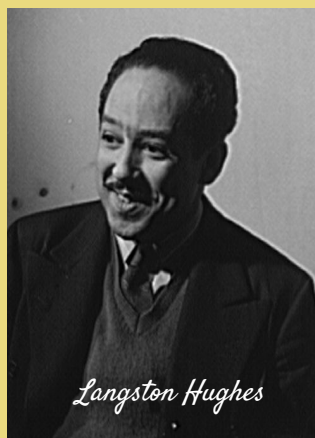
I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.



He Who is your Lord, the All-Merciful, cherisheth in His heart the desire of beholding the entire human race as one soul and one body. — Bahá'u'lláh

I, Too, Sing America captures the aspirations motivating this film festival: That America – as a country, idea, and ideal in waiting – must seat everyone at her table. Building on more than a decade of programming by the Public Discourse & Social Action Task Force of the Bahá'ís of Scottsdale to further human rights, interfaith understanding, and racial unity, the film festival offers the chance to learn about the African American experience through the art of cinema. Today's proliferation of streaming media makes watching movies with those who typically share our experiences and points of view easier than ever. The *I, Too, Sing America* Film Festival creates a space for the meaningful conversations that follow – with people we might not otherwise encounter – as we strive towards realizing a racially just and unified community.

*From *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, published by Knopf and Vintage Books. Copyright © 1994 by the Estate of Langston Hughes. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Harold Ober Associates Incorporated.

Why is Black History Month Celebrated in February?

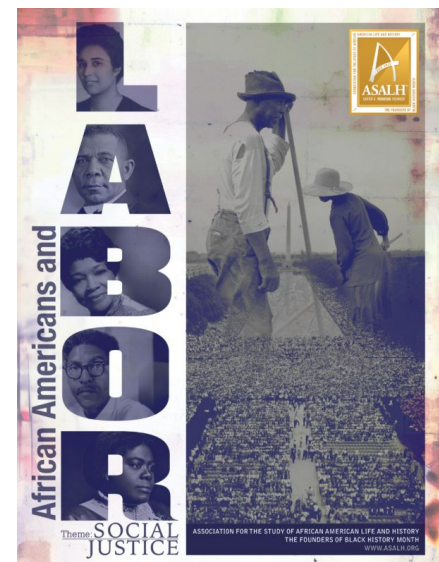
Black History Month dates back to 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), established “Negro History Week” during the second week of February because it encompasses the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass – both great American symbols of freedom.

BRIEF TIMELINE:

- ❖ **1912:** Dr. Woodson establishes ASALH.
- ❖ **1926:** Dr. Woodson establishes Negro History Week, precursor to Black History Month.
- ❖ **1969:** Kent State University black educators and students first propose Black History Month.
- ❖ **1976:** First federal observance where President Ford proclaims, “In the Bicentennial year of our Independence, we can review with admiration the impressive contributions of black Americans to our national life....”
- ❖ **1986:** U.S. Congress designates February as “National Black History Month.” Ronald Reagan issues Presidential Proclamation 5443 stating, “the foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity.” To learn more, please visit <https://asalh.org/about-us/about-black-history-month/>.

2025 Theme: African Americans and Labor

The 2025 theme, *African Americans and Labor*, highlights the critical role of Black people’s work—spanning free and unfree, skilled and unskilled labor—in shaping history and culture. From enslaved Africans in agriculture to debates on vocational education, from entrepreneurship to organized labor’s fight against injustice, Black labor has driven transformation across the U.S., Africa, and the Diaspora. This theme celebrates the enduring impact of Black work in all its forms. For more, please visit <https://asalh.org/black-history-themes/>.



Saturday, February 22

The Struggle for Justice, Unity and the Fight for a Fair Wage

GUIDING PRINCIPLE: JUSTICE

The Best Beloved of All Things in My Sight is Justice... — Bahá'u'lláh

10,000 Black Men Named George (2002, R)

- 1:30 pm: Doors open & light refreshments
- 2:00 pm: Welcome & film showing
- Audience discussion facilitated by Greg McAllister

About the theme. “10,000 Black Men Named George” vividly illustrates the 2025 ASALH theme, “African Americans and Labor,” by chronicling the formation of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—the first Black-controlled union in the United States. The film highlights the systemic challenges African American workers faced in the early 20th Century, including discriminatory labor practices and the struggle for fair wages and recognition. The title itself references the dehumanizing practice where all Black porters were addressed as “George,” after George Pullman, the company’s founder, disregarding their individual identities. By focusing on A. Philip Randolph’s leadership and the porters’ resilience, the film underscores the vital role of Black labor in advocating for workers’ rights and shaping American industries. This narrative aligns with ASALH’s emphasis on the profound impact of African American labor across various sectors and its significance in the broader struggle for civil rights and economic justice.

About the film. “10,000 Black Men Named George” is a 2002 historical drama that tells the story of A. Philip Randolph, an African American labor leader, and his pioneering efforts to form the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—the first Black labor union in the United States. Set in the 1920s and 1930s, the movie portrays the porters’ fight against racial discrimination and workplace exploitation. It highlights their resilience and determination in the face of injustice, shedding light on key issues of racial inequality and labor rights during that era. The cast includes Andre Braugher as A. Philip Randolph and Charles S. Dutton as Ashley Totten directed by Robert Townsend. For more, visit https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0280377/?ref=fn_all_ttl_1.

About the facilitator. Greg McAllister is a historian, musician, and artist who strives to bring greater understanding of race unity through the intellect and the arts. He currently is a faculty member in the Ethnic Studies Program at Northern Arizona University teaching courses on African American studies, the history of racial formation in the United States, and race relations in American films. His research has focused on the history of African and Native American relations in the Southwest during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. His current teaching and research interests include examining the writings and speeches of Hubert Harrison, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King in relation to issues of the 21st Century.

Saturday, February 22

Coming Together: The Power of Humanity

GUIDING PRINCIPLE: ONENESS

Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. — Bahá'u'lláh

The Long Walk Home (1990, PG)

- 5:30 pm: Doors open & light refreshments
- 6:00 pm: Welcome & film showing
- Audience discussion facilitated by Princess Lucas-Wilson

About the theme. The Montgomery Bus Boycott, as depicted in *The Long Walk Home*, serves as a profound act of labor resistance, emphasizing the power of collective action in confronting systemic injustice. Black workers like Odessa, already burdened by racial and economic oppression, chose to sacrifice their meager wages and endure long, arduous commutes rather than continue to support a system that devalued their existence. The boycott was not merely a protest against segregated transportation; it was a broader struggle for dignity in labor and life. By refusing to participate in an exploitative system, Black laborers asserted their humanity and forced the dominant society to confront its reliance on their undervalued work. The film highlights how the boycott's success depended on the unity and perseverance of the Black working class, who bore the heaviest burden of the movement. Their collective refusal to comply with injustice demonstrates that even in the face of immense hardship, organized labor resistance can challenge deeply entrenched systems of exploitation. This enduring message reminds us that labor movements are not just economic struggles but moral ones—fighting for the recognition of the laborer's humanity and inherent worth.

About the film. Odessa's (Whoopie Goldberg) journey in *The Long Walk Home* reflects the intertwined oppression of race and class, where Black laborers endured relentless working conditions while being denied basic dignity. The Montgomery Bus Boycott stands as a pivotal act of labor resistance, driven by a collective refusal to support a transit system that thrived on racial inequality and economic exploitation. This act of defiance was not only a civil rights protest but a key moment in the broader labor movement, uniting Black workers in a fight for justice and fair treatment. Additionally, the film delves into the moral conflict faced by individuals like Miriam, (Sissy Spacek) who are compelled to confront the tension between their privileged status and their growing awareness of systemic wrongs. Ultimately, the boycott underscores the transformative power of organized labor resistance, proving that solidarity among the oppressed can challenge entrenched systems of injustice, even at significant personal cost. For more, visit https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0100046/?ref=fn_all_ttl_1.

About the facilitator. Ms. Lucas-Wilson serves as a Vice President and Chair of the Public Safety Committee for the Maricopa County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) where she conducts quarterly forums on policing/public safety with police departments, reviews law enforcement policies, and works collaboratively with community partners on a range of justice and equity issues. Ms. Lucas-Wilson holds a Master of Social Work and a Certification in Public Management. She has worked as a counselor, practitioner, cultural competency curriculum developer and trainer, and executive in the public and private sectors. She is currently a faculty instructor in the Mesa Community College Counseling Department. She has taught courses in social work, public policy, advocacy, community practice, counseling, and victimology at several community colleges and Arizona State University. She grew up in Phoenix, AZ, and has seen the challenges affecting our communities. Her son recently graduated from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, Arizona State University.

Sunday, February 23

The Untold Story of Black Women Breaking Barriers & Delivering Victory

GUIDING PRINCIPLE: UNITY

So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth. — Bahá'u'lláh

The Six Triple Eight (2024, PG-13)

- 1:30 pm: Doors open & light refreshments
- 2:00 pm: Welcome & film showing
- Audience discussion facilitated by Anthony Pratcher II followed by Film Festival closing fellowship and music

About the theme: Black labor spans many fields including factories, government agencies, public service, private homes, the private sector and the military as seen in *The Six Triple Eight*. Recognizing the impact of the work is key to understanding the histories, lives and cultures of Black people. The 2025 Black History Month theme, *African Americans and Labor*, celebrates the vital contributions and influence of Black labor.

About the film: This movie highlights the extraordinary story of the Six Triple Eight Central Postal Directory Battalion, the only all-Black, all-female unit deployed overseas during World War II. Directed by Tyler Perry, the film brings attention to these unsung heroines who served in the U.S. Army and tackled a seemingly impossible task: Clearing a backlog of millions of undelivered letters and packages for American troops stationed in Europe. Set against the backdrop of racial segregation and gender discrimination, the film showcases how these women persevered through harsh conditions, including freezing weather, limited resources, and long hours. Their mission was more than just sorting mail—it was about connecting soldiers to their loved ones back home, boosting morale, and demonstrating the invaluable contributions of African American women to the war effort. For more, please visit

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt24458622/?ref=fn_sr_srsq_0_tt_8_nm_0_in_0_q_the%2520six%2520th.

About the facilitator: Anthony Pratcher II is a historian from the Salt River Valley. He currently teaches in the Ethnic Studies Program at Northern Arizona University. His previous appointments include Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State, the Center for African American Urban Studies and the Economy in the Department of History at Carnegie Mellon University, and the Center for the Study of Race + Ethnicity in America at Brown University. While his public scholarship explores space and race in the American Southwest, he has co-edited a textbook on planning history, *Planning Future Cities* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt, 2017), with Walter Greason, and is currently completing a new manuscript, *Searching for My People: Black Arizonans and the Making of the Metropolitan Southwest*, under contract with the University of Arizona Press. His work has been published in the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, *Pennsylvania Magazine of Biography and History*, *Southern California Quarterly* and *Technology and Culture*. He earned a PhD. in American History from the University of Pennsylvania and received a BA in History from Howard University. He serves on the Board of Directors at the George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center in Phoenix, Arizona and is a proud graduate of Deer Valley High School in Glendale, AZ.

Bahá'í Guidance on Work, Labor, and Management

The Bahá'í Faith views work as both a practical necessity and a spiritual duty, emphasizing purpose, excellence, and service. It stresses justice, fairness, and cooperation in labor, rooted in its principles of unity and equity. Key insights include:

- **Justice and Fairness:** Bahá'í teachings call for respectful, just relationships between employers and employees, ensuring fair wages, reasonable conditions, and profit-sharing.
- **Consultation:** Open, respectful dialogue is encouraged to resolve conflicts and foster harmony. Abdu'l-Bahá highlights that truth emerges through the exchange of differing views.
- **Profit Sharing:** Abdu'l-Bahá advocates profit-sharing to reduce wealth disparities and promote shared purpose.
- **Eliminating Class Struggles:** Partnership, rather than conflict, is promoted, urging labor and management to work collaboratively for the common good.
- **Human Dignity:** All work is honored, with systems encouraged that uphold the dignity and well-being of workers and employers alike.
- **Balancing Values:** The Bahá'í Faith stresses the integration of material and spiritual principles—such as justice and compassion—in economic matters.
- **Education and Development:** Both workers and employers are encouraged to pursue education and skill development, fostering personal growth and improved productivity.

These teachings promote just, collaborative labor-management relations, emphasizing consultation, equity, and shared service to advance societal well-being.

America's most vital and challenging issue...

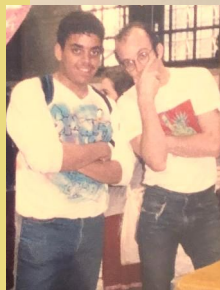
The elimination of racial prejudice has been a central teaching of the Bahá'í Faith from its beginning. In 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the leader of the Bahá'ís at that time and successor to the Faith's Founder, Bahá'u'lláh, presented at the Fourth Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) during His visit to America. He encouraged the development of conferences for racial unity and race amity.

In May 1921, the Bahá'í Race Amity movement was launched in Washington, DC in an effort to influence public discourse on race in America. This movement was distinct in that it focused primarily on eradicating the root causes of racial injustice.

The Bahá'í Faith regards racism as a major barrier to peace, which cannot be achieved without the recognition of the fundamental oneness of all peoples and the establishment of justice.

2025 Black History Month Planning Group:

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