

For Immediate Release

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SPRINGFIELD & CENTRAL ILLINOIS AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MUSEUM

VOTER REGISTRATION INITIATIVE

A lot is happening in our world right now. The Board of Directors of the Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum (AAHM) has been moved and inspired by the massive, diverse crowds protesting for justice and are inspired to do something. Have you thought about what you can do to help the cause and make your voice heard? There are so many issues that need to be addressed. How do you pick one and focus on that? How can we impact positive change in our community?

OUR VOTE IS OUR MICROPHONE, ABSOLUTE RIGHT, AND OBLIGATION

The Board of Directors of the AAHM, in cooperation with several organizations in our community, will serve as hosts for voter registration drives. In order to make a significant impact in our community, state and our country, we need to work together to get everyone in Springfield who are eighteen and older registered to vote. After you are registered to vote, you need to go vote.

Below is a schedule of dates and times you can register to vote. All events will be held at the Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum, 1440 Monument Ave., Springfield, 62702. Please visit our website at www.spiaahm.org, our Facebook page, our Twitter and Instagram pages to find out more about our organization. This schedule will be posted on our social media sites.

If you are not registered to vote, please come and register. If you know someone that is not registered to vote, bring them to one of the scheduled events. We worked to provide a variety of dates and times for the events so everyone can register to vote. Please bring two forms of ID.

SCHEDULED VOTER REGISTRATION DATES:

July 18, 2020 - 11am - 3 pm/ Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. Kappa Sigma Zeta Chapter

July 21, 2020 - 3pm - 7pm/ Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Epsilon Sigma Sigma Alumnae Chapter

July 23, 2020 - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm/ Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc Springfield-Decatur Area Alumnae Chapter

July 25, 2020 - 12pm - 4pm/ Black Lives Matter

August 8, 2020 – 12pm-4 pm /League of Women Voters

August 15, 2020 - 1pm -3pm/ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Nu Omicron Omega Chapter

September 12, 2020 – 12pm – 3pm./ Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity

September 22, 2020 - 5pm – 8pm/ Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Mu Delta Lambda Chapter

We are working to make sure you have a safe environment when you come to the AAHM. Masks or face covering will be required, social distancing will be practiced, temperatures will be taken and hand sanitizing will be available. All areas will be sanitized after each use. We are also working on a new exhibit about the oldest African American Churches in Springfield and we hope to have that on display when we open.

KNOW YOUR HISTORY

Independence Day, July 4th was just celebrated by many. In 1776, on July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress declared that the thirteen American colonies were no longer subject (and subordinate) to the monarch of Britain, King George III, and were now united, free, and independent states. That Declaration of Independence did not free enslaved Africans or give White women equal rights.

In 1870 the 15th Amendment passed and states: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” It wasn’t until the 19th Amendment to the constitution that passed in 1920 that specifically gave women “equal” rights to vote as men

Even after these Constitutional Amendments were passed, access to voting became something to fight for, not a granted right. Voter suppression was prevalent throughout our country and became the way to keep our voices from being heard. In 2020, many states are still practicing various means and methods of voter suppression. Illinois is not one of those states. You can vote early. You can vote absentee ballot and you can request a mail-in ballot. You have no excuse.

Thanks to AARP for the census information and continued support.

Nell Clay, President
AAHM Board of Directors