



**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

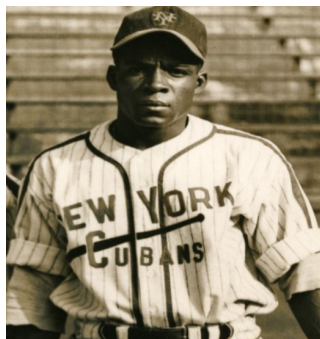
This Sojourner special edition provides the *Annual Membership Report Wrap-up* and other essential components of a traditional AAHM Annual Meeting. We were unable to offer this special event, which typically includes dinner, live music, and enthusiastic reports summarizing the past year at the Museum. 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.



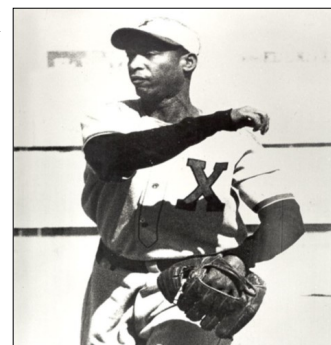
The exhibit features profiles of significant baseball players, a timeline of American and Hispanic baseball history, and detailed baseball histories of several countries. The exhibit is bilingual, presented in both English and Spanish.

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.





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.

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**

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

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.

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



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



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 for the latest news



Virtual Tour of our Museum



Kathryn Harris

We posted historic appointments such as the appointment of **Wilton Gregory** as the 1st 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

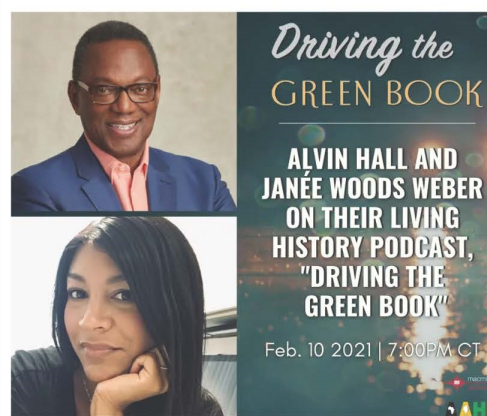
On November 17th we had a Zoom **Webinar on the life of Sojourner Truth, portrayed by Patricia James Davis**. To continue to inform and educate you, we had two special Webinars on Zoom on December 15th and 16th, in conjunction with the **Abraham Lincoln Museum and Library**. Robert Davis portrayed Frederick 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



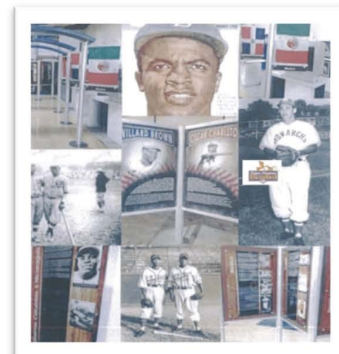
“Driving the Green Book” Alvin Hall and Janée Woods Weber



Students at the 2019 Black History Bowl

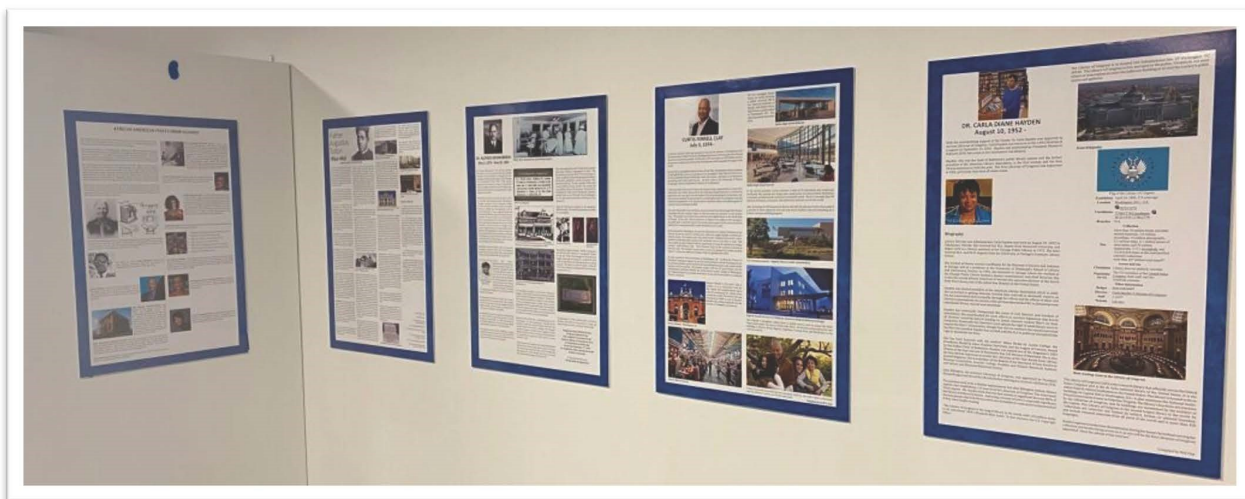
Also coming again in February 2021 will be the **Black History Bowl**. The final day for the high school students from Springfield High School, Lanphier High School and Southeast High School, to compete in the Bowl is on March 27th.

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 Il 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, 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>

Total Income **\$ 61,158.25**

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>

Total Expenses **\$ 45,243.72**

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
Supporters \$300 +			
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
Friends \$200 +			
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
Donors			
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.

Poem selected by Joan Joyner

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

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