

OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES



1867
HOWARD
UNIVERSITY
School of Social Work

IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WE PRESENT

- DR. RUBY GOURDINE'S EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF AMERICAN HISTORY
- MSW STUDENTS PERSONAL ACCOUNTS ON "WHAT BLACK HISTORY MONTH MEANS TO THEM"
- SPOTLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN SOCIAL WORKERS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

By Dr. Ruby Gourdine

I WAS IN MY FIRST YEAR SECOND SEMESTER OF MY MSW PROGRAM IN ATLANTA WHEN "HAMMERING HANK" HIT NUMBER 715. WE GRAD STUDENTS SAT IN WARE HALL (FORMER RESIDENCE OF W.E.B DU BOIS) CHEERING ABOUT THIS AWAITED FEAT. WE WERE SO JOYOUS.

THE JOY DIDN'T LAST LONG AS MR. AARON'S LIFE WAS THREATENED BECAUSE OF THIS ACHIEVEMENT. HE FEARED FOR HIS LIFE BECAUSE HE USED HIS TALENTS. I WITNESSED THIS FEAR FIRSTHAND. ONE EVENING AFTER HIS ACHIEVEMENT, I WAS DRIVING SOME STUDENTS TO A SOCIAL EVENT AND WE NOTICED THAT A WHITE CAR AHEAD DOOR WAS AJAR.

I BLEW MY HORN TO GET THE DRIVER'S ATTENTION. BUT HE KEPT DRIVING AS IF HE THOUGHT SOMEONE WAS CHASING OR FOLLOWING HIM. I WAS ABLE TO CATCH THE CAR AND WE ALL HOLLERED THAT HIS DOOR WAS OPEN.

WE THEN NOTICED IT WAS MR. AARON. HE CLOSED HIS DOOR AND IMMEDIATELY EXITED THE ROAD. THIS INCIDENCE STUCK WITH ME BECAUSE A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION TURNED INTO A CAUSE TO BE AFRAID FOR YOUR LIFE.

For MSW Student Zenzile Tonge

"Black History Month is a reminder of the great history and culture we have cultivated as a community. It's a great time to not only, pay homage to those who came before us but, to honor those that are here now and the rising generation of children to come. This is a time where I strive to be more intentional about where I spend my money, spreading more knowledge, truth, and positivity about our culture, and challenging people to look beyond the idea that our history begins with slavery.

Slavery was simply a large turning point in our history yet, it is not the full representation of it. In honor of our foremothers and forefathers, Black History Month is a time to celebrate our richness and to celebrate rest, promote wellness, and self-care. Especially for Black women, it's important that we take the time to care for ourselves as we live up to the high demands of society along with personal obligations. As a Black woman myself, I have been striving to inspire other Black women with my own wellness journey where I have built a lifestyle around using holistic modes of wellness to sustain my body, mind, and soul.

To learn about my wellness journey and to gain wellness tips, please feel free to follow me on Instagram @wtfiszen."

For MSW Student Hanifah Griffith

A month that is celebrated openly and publicly in the United States, to my knowledge has never been openly and publicly celebrated in Trinidad and Tobago, where I'm born and raised.

To see people unapologetically celebrate ancestors, public figures, their friends, and themselves, I knew I had to explore more. I remember the day like it was yesterday, I was doing rounds at my university. I ended up passing a friend's door. She was sticking papers of her biggest inspiration: Tupac, Malcom X, Assata Shaku, Angela Davis, and so much more.

I asked her what she was doing, to which she responded, "I'm making sure people know what time it is".

We talked more about what Black History Month meant to her, and of course at that time I couldn't say what it meant for me because it was my first encounter.

It's 2022 now and I think I know what it means to me. I have come to know the intimate love of celebrating Black History Month. Black History Month means walking in my authenticity. Walking in my anime loving, stay at home baking, wine sipping, podcast recording, friend, and family lovin, laughter sharing self. It is also knowing that I have come to know the intimate love of celebrating Black History Month. It is also knowing that I am enough; enough to take up space, to stand my ground, and enforce my boundaries.

African-Americans Who Significantly Influenced Social Work
Who is generally known as the first African-American female Social Worker?

Name the first African-American who served as President of NASW.

Did You Know???

Norma Gray Jones was the US Navy's first African American female Social Work officer.

Ida B. Wells was the first person to document the lynching of African Americans and lead many anti-lynching campaigns.

Wells worked with other organizers of her time to create the foundations of modern Social Work.

Dorothy Height, who trained as a Social Worker, is known as the "Godmother of the Civil Rights Movement."

Alice Walker and Samuel Jackson studied Social Work.