

THE COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S
African American Advisory Council

*If a race has no history, it becomes a negligible factor
in the thought of the world.*
—CARTER G. WOODSON



*Frank Dean studio, Grand Junction, Colorado, about 1900
Colorado Historical Society collection (Dean 6319)*

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Colorado Historical Society's African American Advisory Council is to inform, advise, and direct the future of the Society in its involvement with African American stories and African American communities to ensure that the Colorado Historical Society has a forward-looking perspective for preserving all of the past for future generations.

Purpose

The purpose of the Council will be to further the cause of the Colorado Historical Society by assisting the Society in broadening its collections, interpretation, audiences, staffing, and programming.

The Colorado Historical Society's African American Advisory Council shall:

- Meet regularly to do the business of the Council.
- Give direction and support to fundraising efforts for projects and exhibits related specifically to African Americans.

- Encourage appropriate utilization of African American consultants, designers, and curators in both staff and consultant positions.
- Provide publicity in the Denver metropolitan area.
- Insist that the Colorado Historical Society continue to be inclusive as it relates to African American history.
- Encourage the Colorado Historical Society to obtain significant artifacts by donation or purchase that reflect African American life in Colorado and the West.
- Serve as an institutional liaison with the African American Museums Association.
- Encourage periodic issues of *Colorado Heritage* magazine that focus on African American history.
- Enhance the general membership of the Colorado Historical Society.
- Provide the Society with a periodic assessment of the Council's effectiveness.

Vision

Based on the actions and efforts of the African American Advisory Council, the Colorado Historical Society will have a vital, dynamic link with black communities at the local, regional, state, and national levels. The Council will take an active role in establishing exhibit themes, outreach programs, and educational programs in connection with other organizations, such as the Black American West Museum and Heritage Center.

As a direct result of the Council's actions, the Colorado Historical Society will become one of the most progressive state historical societies in the United States.

Council Priorities

- The African American Advisory Council will support permanent, seasonal, traveling, and temporary exhibitions that highlight the history of African Americans in the West and in Colorado. The Council will do this through fundraising, social event planning, volunteering, advertising, and providing both financial and in-kind support for ongoing projects.

- The Council will initiate and support a Fellowship program that will provide an African American student with a paid internship at the Colorado Historical Society. The Council will do this through fund-raising to establish a permanent fellowship fund that will enable an African American student majoring in history, anthropology, art history, or museum studies to intern at the Society for one or two semesters.
- The Council will establish a permanent relationship with the Black American West Museum. It will do this by establishing a liaison member who will provide each organization with a report from the other and help the two organizations work together cooperatively, thereby strengthening their respective positions in the museum community.
- The Council will support special educational projects that strive to foster an appreciation of black history in the West. The Council will do this by acting as a liaison between the community and the Society in identifying participants and providing financial and in-kind support for programs such as “Old Stories, New Voices,” targeting at-risk youth, and the Society’s summer camp program.
- The Council will facilitate the Society’s collection of artifacts, manuscripts, documents, and photographs relating to African American experiences in the West. The Council will do this by advising the Society of objects and other materials that have special significance in the lives of black Americans. Council members may help facilitate the acquisition of such items for the collections or their loan for short-term exhibitions.
- The Council will help develop African American docents in the docent program at the Colorado Historical Society.