Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans. It is a time for recognizing their immeasurable impact on United States history.

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) theme for 2022 is, “Black Health and Wellness.”

The annual celebration is credited to Dr. Carter G. Woodson, “The Father of Black History.”

February was chosen to correspond with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

The first official observance came in 1976, from President Gerald Ford whose words established Black History Month. He proclaimed: “In the Bicentennial year of our Independence, we can review with admiration the impressive contributions of Black Americans to our national life…. [T]o help highlight these achievements, Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. We are grateful to him today for his initiative, and we are richer for the work of his organization.”

Ten years later in 1986, the U.S. Congress, in a joint resolution of the House and Senate, designated the entire month of February as “National Black History Month.” The resolution authorized and requested President Ronald Reagan to issue a proclamation in observance. The Presidential Proclamation 5443 noted that “the foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity.”

“We are not makers of history. We are made by history.”

-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.