



SEMA HADITHI



African American Heritage and Culture Foundation

UNITY THROUGH HISTORICAL TRUTH

Tell the Story

2021 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE CELEBRATION
and BLACK HISTORY CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY



University of Utah's
BLACK CULTURAL CENTER
diversity.utah.edu/bcc

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8 & 9, 2021
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH FORT DOUGLAS GUEST HOUSE
FORT DOUGLAS MILITARY MUSEUM



THRIVE
125

Kirk Huffaker
Preservation Strategies



UTAH HUMANITIES
Ideas in Action

Welcome!

Sema Hadithi African American Heritage and Culture Foundation is excited to invite you to our annual conference. We are pleased with the great learning opportunity we have put together for you. We hope you are as excited as we are. We eagerly welcome you to participate in this event to learn about, commemorate and venerate our beloved.

We have prepared a great mix of experiences. We will begin our weekend with a retrospective of how and why the Sema Hadithi Foundation was formed. We will also have an inspiring message from Pastor Robert Merrills of the Baseline Christian Fellowship on families and family history.

Sema Hadithi Foundation has been fortunate to be able to put together a fantastic team of researchers. This year is the first time we have had an opportunity to showcase their work.

This conference will include the work of Sema Hadithi's **Buffalo Soldiers Working Group**. They have uncovered amazing stories about Black soldiers serving in the Uintah Basin and Vernal, as well as at Salt Lake City's Fort Douglas and in the building of Fort Duchesne. We are excited to feature A. Jerome Christophe, who will speak about Colonel Charles Young, the third Black graduate of West Point who served at Fort Douglas. We will also have an interesting discussion on the Buffalo Soldier graphic novel project lead by Reilly Jensen

The **Black Women Working Group** will feature presentations on social and support clubs created by Black women to provide education, companionship, and income opportunities for Black women. They will also present on Emancipation Celebrations, commonly known as Juneteenth today, from as far back as 1895. We will also have an inspiring presentation on Alberta Henry from Dr. Kathleen Christy.

The **Black Church Working Group** will present a previously recorded discussion panel for PBS Utah called "The Black Church This is Our Story, This is Our Song," a conversation with local Utah leaders. It will also feature a panel on the Genesis Group of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (in honor of its 50th anniversary), with leaders and family members who will discuss both the struggles and blessings of being Black Latter-day Saints and of having a Black American cultural focus of the Genesis Group

The **Preservation Working Group** will present a lunchtime panel discussion of the Equal Justice Initiative's collaborative work with the Salt Lake County Community Remembrance Coalition. The discussion will focus on the efforts to form the coalition, the community conversations it hopes to engender related to social violence and social inequities, and how the projects of the coalition will continue the discussions of social justice. As a part of that discussion, Connell O'Donovan will speak about the lynching of Thomas Coleman on Arsenal Hill, now the location of the Utah Capitol Building.

We hope you enjoy this great opportunity!

Robert S. Burch Jr., Executive Director
Sema Hadithi Foundation



Conference Location

The 2021 Annual Day of Remembrance & Black History Conference lectures, workshops, and luncheon are hosted by the University of Utah's Black Cultural Center (BCC). The center, located at 95 Fort Douglas Boulevard, Building 603, Salt Lake City, will house three of the presentations. The Day of Remembrance Celebration begins at 5:00 PM on Friday, October 8, in the Fort Douglas Post Theater, 245 Fort Douglas Blvd.

Saturday morning's activities take place at the Fort Douglas Military Museum's Cannon Yard, 32 Potter Street. Please park your vehicle at the Guest House parking, 110 Fort Douglas Boulevard, and walk across the parade grounds to the Cannon Yard. The luncheon, afternoon, and evening activities will be held in the Granite Ballroom of the Guest House and the Black Cultural Center.

Registration

Registration is free, but required, for this hybrid conference (available to experience in-person and online). Visit semahadithi.org/events to register online.

On-site Registration Hours

Friday: 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 to 10:30 a.m.

Day of Remembrance Commemoration Friday, 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

The annual Day of Remembrance is an essential part of our conference. The event is meant to not only remember our predecessors but to venerate them. As such we perform the ceremony of libation, an intricate part of the African tradition of recognizing ancestors. In it we invoke the names of ancestors. We also invite a local religious leader to bring a spiritual message. We end the celebration with music and song.

Conference Program Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

We have planned three concurrent tracks on the research of the four Sema Hadithi working groups over the past year--the Buffalo Soldier, Black Women, Black Church, and Preservation Working Groups.

12:30 p.m. Lunchtime panel discussion.
(Catered by Chef Ramesus Stewart-Johnson of Papa Stew's Kitchen.

FRIDAY PROGRAM		
5:00 PM	Welcome and Libation	Everett Spenser, Drums Jerome Christophe and Meligha Garfield Robert Burch, Libation
5:30 PM	“Discovering, Preserving & Telling the stories of African Americans in Utah”	Sema Hadithi African American Heritage and Culture Foundation
6:30 PM	Speaker	Pastor Robert Merrills, Baseline Christian Fellowship
7:00 PM	Entertainment	

SATURDAY PROGRAM			
9 – 10 AM 9:45 – 10 AM	Registration and Breakfast Drum Opening - Welcome	Everett Spenser, Drums Robert Burch, Alana Blumenthal, Kirk Huffaker	
10:15 – 11:00 11:15 – 12:15 AM	Plenary Speaker and Q&A Museum and Fort Tour	Sistas in Zion Beau Burgess, Director, Fort Douglas Military Museum	
12:30 PM- 1:30 PM	Lunch and Discussion Panel, Salt Lake County Community Remembrance Project	EJI Lynching Project Meligha Garfield (moderator), Robert Burch, James Tabery, Eliza Dawson	
Tracks	Buffalo Soldiers Granite Ballroom A	Black Women Granite Ballroom B	Black Church, Preservation Black Cultural Center
1:45 PM	<i>Colonel Charles Young</i> A. Jerome Christophel Colonel Charles Young was the third African American to graduate from West Point and served at Fort Douglas, Utah.	<i>Alberta Henry</i> Dr. Kathleen Christy Dr. Christy, former school board administrator, and diversity and equity coach, talks about her friend Alberta Henry, educator, activist, and longtime President of the Salt Lake NAACP	Lynching Project: <i>The Life and Murder of Thomas Coleman, Enslaved Mormon</i> Connell O'Donovan Examines the enslavement, troubled life, and lynching of Thomas Coleman on Arsenal Hill, the present site of the Utah State Capitol.
2:45 PM	<i>“Graphic Histories, Part 1: Buffalo Soldiers”</i> Fiona Robinson Hill and Dwayne Madry Introducing Fort Damn Shame (a comic-centered Utah’s Buffalo Soldier history) and shares personal family memories from Dwayne Madry, a descendant of a Buffalo Soldier.	<i>Emancipation Day Queens and Celebrations</i> Rachel Quist Utah is one of the few states where the Black population celebrated Emancipation Day back in the 1800s.	<i>A 50 Year Retrospective of the Genesis Group</i> Alice Burch Former Genesis Relief Society President Ramesus Stewart-Johnson Former Texas Genesis President Nathanael & Cassandra Byrd African American members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day discuss their experiences and the importance of the Genesis Group.
3:45 PM	<i>“Graphic Histories, Part 2: Communicating your Own Past through Comics”</i> Reilly Jensen Comic book artists facilitate writing and drawing exercises to tap into your creative powers. No drawing skills are necessary! Experience the creative process of visual storytelling and discuss how stories, memory, and art can be combined to create new types of knowledge.	<i>Women Social and Uplift Clubs</i> Tiffany Greene Black women formed creative resources to uplift themselves and create community.	<i>The Black Church Discussion Panel</i> PBS Utah This is a viewing of the PBS Utah panel discussion of the Black Church in Utah, streamed live on February 9, 2021.
4:45 – 5:30 PM	Performance Art	<i>Alixia Brobbey - Poetry</i>	

Overview

Salt Lake is the Genealogy capital of the world. It hosts the world's largest genealogy conference, attracting more than 20,000 visitors annually. It is the home of the world's largest genealogy library, housing 1.4 million rolls of microfilm, more than 600,000 books, serials, and maps; and has 550 internet-enabled guest computers and more than 200 microfilm and microfiche readers. Salt Lake is also home to genealogy's premier technology companies. It is the place to submerge yourself into the culture of genealogy and family history. We welcome you here.

Family history is American history. Many of the discoveries we have made over the years are a result of families conducting family history research. In a large part, it informs the work we do as researchers at Sema Hadithi Foundation.

Partner Organizations

We want to thank those organizations that have partnered with us and are always there to support us:

- ❖ *University of Utah Black Cultural Center*
- ❖ *Project Success Coalition*
- ❖ *Kirk Huffaker Preservation Strategies*
- ❖ *Brigham City Museum*
- ❖ *Union Station Museums*
- ❖ *Better Days 2020*
- ❖ *Mormon History Association*
- ❖ *Fort Douglas Military Museum*
- ❖ *Utah Division of State History*
- ❖ *Silver Foundation*
- ❖ *Utah Humanities*
- ❖ *Utah Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society*
- ❖ *Sons and Daughters of the U.S. Middle Passage*



THRIVE125

CELEBRATING UTAH'S STATEHOOD | EST. 1896

Kirk Huffaker

Preservation Strategies

