

# Carter G. Woodson Award

## Award Guidelines & Criteria

**Purpose:** To recognize outstanding and significant contributions to the betterment of the San Diego community on a **long-term basis**.

### Qualifying Criteria (for candidate to be considered)

- 10+ consecutive years as a resident of the San Diego community.
- Served on any committee and/or special project in the San Diego community and has been instrumental in the accomplishment of that area of assignment.
- Has been instrumental in the execution of community-based program that has made an impact on a local, national, or international level.
- Has not served on the Board of Directors of Nu-Way Operation BHILD and/or its affiliations.

### Distinguishing Criteria (for selection of candidates under consideration)

- Has made contributions to the definition/communication/demonstration of the San Diego community
- Has been instrumental in the recruitment of youth in the San Diego community
- Has the respect of his/her peers in the San Diego community
- Has made significant contributions to the knowledge base of the San Diego community health, education or business system
- Has exhibited courage, perseverance, and vision with focus on specific cultural identities

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The Carter G. Woodson Award is a special honorary award that Nu-Way Operation BHILD presents at the annual Heritage Day Parade held on the last Saturday in February during Black History Month to outstanding individuals for their significant contributions to betterment of the San Diego Community.

The following guidelines are used for selecting individuals to receive this award. As done in the past, nominations are requested for qualified individuals to be considered for the Carter G. Woodson Award. If you are interested in submitting a nomination, please email the following information to [cartergwoodsonaward@heritagedayparade.org](mailto:cartergwoodsonaward@heritagedayparade.org)

- Name of Award
- Name, Telephone Number, and Email of Nominee
- Name and Telephone Number of Nominator
- Brief Supporting Information for the Nominee

For mail nominations please use the attached form and mail to:

**Nu-Way Operation BHILD**  
P.O. Box 740352  
San Diego, CA 92174-0352

Recipients of this award in the past were: Arnie Robinson (1997), Eric J. Chambers (1999), John & Geri Warren (2000), Dr. Leon Kelly (2001), Reverend George Walker Smith (2002), Bishop George McKinney (2003), Maxine Wilson (2004), & Dr. Willie Morrow (2005), Larry "Preacherman" Thompson & Dr. Timothy Winters (2006)

**Deadline to receive nominations is Monday, January 6, 2007.**



# Carter G. Woodson



**1875-1950**

**Nationality:** American

**Occupation:** Teacher, Historian, Scholar, Publisher

*"Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration, which comes from the teaching of biography and history."*

## **NARRATIVE ESSAY:**

Called the "Father of Negro History," Carter Godwin Woodson (1875-1950) was instrumental in the founding of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915. During his lifetime he was probably the most significant scholar promoting the history and achievements of African Americans.

Carter Woodson was born in New Canton, Virginia, in 1875--ten years after the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery, was written into law. His grandparents and his father, James, a tenant farmer, and mother, Anne, had been slaves. Consequently, when freedom was a reality, they were poor like thousands of newly freed families of African descent in the United States. Because of the close ties to his family and a strong sense of responsibility to them, Woodson worked throughout his early school years to help support his parents and siblings. By the time he was able to attend school, he was well past his teens.

Creative and imaginative as well as independent at an early age, Woodson taught himself by reading avidly in his spare time. As a result of his innate intelligence, personal accomplishments, and dedication to learning, he was able to complete high school. In 1903 he graduated with honors from Berea College, a unique college in the slave state of Kentucky. Founded in 1855, Berea introduced integrated education in the 19th century and thus permitted the enrollment of African Americans. Yet Kentucky had profited from the slave market and the psychology of its people could not accept racially integrated classrooms. One year after Woodson's graduation the "Day Law" was passed, which prevented white and African American students from being in the same classroom or school community together. Integrated schooling became illegal. The pernicious "Day Law" was actually enforced for nearly half a century, a fact that was not lost on Woodson in his writings about the social customs and laws that served as obstacles to the progress of "the Negro race." He recorded these events as he pursued his interests in the study of African American history.

In 1907 and 1908, respectively, Woodson earned an undergraduate degree and his M.A. from the University of Chicago. Just four years after completing graduate training at the University of Chicago, he was awarded the doctorate from Harvard. This educational background in the country's leading universities challenged Woodson's creative imagination. He became increasingly interested in documenting for the permanent historical record the talents and accomplishments of the sons, daughters, grandsons, and granddaughters of slaves.

## **PROMOTING AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY**

In 1916, during the height of World War I, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, which Woodson had founded, issued the *Journal of Negro History*. This would become one of his most significant scholarly contributions for recording the backgrounds, experiences, and writings of Americans of African ancestry. He served as the sponsor and editor of the *Journal of Negro History* for many years. This important medium became a significant milestone in promoting the history and contributions of African Americans to the culture. African Americans themselves became aware of their own influence in the intellectual sphere and in the whole society.

In addition to establishing and publishing the *Journal of Negro History*, while Woodson was dean of West Virginia Collegiate Institute he served as president of Associated Publishers. The primary purpose of this innovative outlet was to publish and distribute writings by and about African Americans. When Woodson left West Virginia to

continue his research, he involved himself more deeply in the work of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. It remains today as a monument to his dedication and foresight.

The broad spectrum of the life of Africans in America was of central interest to Woodson. He studied all facets of their experiences and rich cultural contributions. These included myths, patterns of migration, roles as wage earners, entrance into medicine, work in rural America, inventions and writings, and their unique history. In 1926, during the zenith of the Harlem Renaissance, he launched a movement to observe "Negro History Week." Woodson felt that an annual celebration of the achievements of the African American should occur during the month of February, since both the gifted abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln were born in that month. In the 1960s what was once only a week of recognizing the outstanding achievements of Americans of African heritage to science, literature, and the arts became transformed into "Black History Month."

## THE WRITINGS OF WOODSON

Carter G. Woodson was one of the country's prominent historians and a prolific writer. From the moment he received the doctorate from Harvard, he initiated a career in publishing. In 1915 he wrote *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861*, in which he concentrated on both the obstacles and the progress characterizing the schooling of the descendants of slaves. Three years later he published *A Century of Negro Migration*. This was introduced in 1918, as World War I was coming to a close. The examination of patterns of migration was followed by *The Negro in Our History*, published in 1922. This work has been defined as "the first textbook of its kind."

Among Woodson's basic writings are those that describe patterns of migration and family composition. African Americans who had entered the professions of medicine and law during the eras of Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction were of particular interest to Woodson. In 1934 Negro Universities Press published his documentation of *The Negro professional man and the community, with special emphasis on the physician and the lawyer*. Perhaps his most important work, and the one for which he is widely known in the late 20th century, is *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933, reprinted 1990). Woodson is remembered as a leading historian who promoted the rich intellectual and creative legacy of the African American.

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