

**Background Information on the 2018 Black History Month
Student Challenge Theme:**

African Americans in Times of War

In 1915, Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, now the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). When Dr. Woodson founded the Association, he labored under the belief that historical truth would crush falsehoods and usher in a new era of equality, opportunity, and racial democracy, and it has been its charge for over century.

The 2018 theme, "African Americans in Times of War," commemorates the centennial of the end of the First World War in 1918, and explores the complex meanings and implications of this international struggle and its aftermath. The First World War was initially termed by many as "The Great War," "The War to End All Wars," and the war "to make the world safe for democracy."

Those very concepts provide a broad, useful framework for focusing on the roles of African Americans in every American war, from the Revolutionary War Era to that of the present "War against Terrorism." Times of War inevitably provide the framework for many stories related to African American soldiers and sailors, veterans, and civilians. This is a theme filled with paradoxes of valor and defeat, of civil rights opportunities and setbacks, of struggles abroad and at home, of artistic creativity and repression, and of catastrophic loss of life and the righteous hope for peace.

The theme suggests that contemporary conditions, past and present, give us cause to consider the specific and unique issues faced by African Americans in times of war. These issues include opportunities for advancement and repression of opportunities during wartime; the struggle to integrate the military and experiences during segregation/apartheid and successful integration; veterans experiences once they returned home; the creation of African American Veteran of Foreign War posts; the impact and influence of the Pan African Congresses; the impact of migration and urban development; educational opportunities; health care development; the roles of civil rights and Black liberation organizations, including the Black Power movement and the Black Panther Party; the roles of African American businesses, women, religious institutions, and the Black press; in the struggle abroad and at home; and how Black soldiers and/veterans are documented and memorialized within public and private spaces. These diverse stories reveal war's impact not only on men and women in uniform but on the larger African American community.

This year, the Legal Services Corporation Black History Month Student Challenge seeks to prompt students to think about "**African Americans in Times of War**" and the extraordinary impact of African American military personnel who served their country while also fighting racism and inequality overseas and in the United States.

Below are the Student Challenge Guidelines for each of the various participation categories.

BERTRAND "RANDY" THOMAS PARTNERING FOR THE FUTURE
2018 BLACK HISTORY MONTH CHALLENGE

African Americans in Times of War

CHALLENGE GUIDELINES – ESSAY/POETRY/SHORT STORY

- Essay, short story, or poem must be written based on the theme ***African Americans in Times of War***.
- Essay, short story or poem must **not** include student's name or any other identifying information about the student. This information should only be written on the submission form. Essays will be judged without knowledge of the identity of the author.
- Essay, short story, or poem submission must be solely the student's original work.
- The essay, short story, or poem must clearly reflect the student's point of view (e.g., an essay should not simply be a report of historical facts).
- Essay, short story, or poem must not include any offensive or derogatory language.
- Essay or short story must be a *minimum of two (2) full pages and not exceed three (3) typed pages* (double spaced) on 8-1/2 X 11 paper in a standard (Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial) font size 12. See example below.

SAMPLE COVER PAGE AND ESSAY FORMAT

<p>"Essay Title"</p>	<p>Type essay using a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial. Use 12 pt font. Double-space your document. You should also paginate your essay. Page numbers can be placed on the top or the bottom of each page; on the left, right or in the middle of the page.</p> <p>Type essay using a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial. Use 12 pt font. Double-space your document.</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Type essay using a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial. Use 12 pt font. Double-space your document. You should also paginate your essay. Page numbers can be placed on the top or the bottom of each page; on the left, right or in the middle of the page.</p> <p>Type essay using a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial. Use 12 pt font. Double-space your document.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Type essay using a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial. Use 12 pt font. Double-space your document. You should also paginate your essay. Page numbers can be placed on the top or the bottom of each page; on the left, right or in the middle of the page.</p> <p>Type essay using a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial. Use 12 pt font. Double-space your document.</p> <p>3</p>
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- Poem should be at minimum of three (3) stanzas and not exceed two (2) typed pages (double spaced) on 8-1/2 X 11 paper in font (Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial) size 12. No minimum number of words.
- All entries must be accompanied by a submission form.
- Submissions that do not adhere to all of the challenge guidelines will not be eligible.
- **All entries must be submitted to the Legal Services Corporation by no later than 5:00 p.m., February 12, 2018 to qualify. No late submissions will be accepted.**

Submit entry by email, fax, or postal mail.

- o Email address: BHM@lsc.gov
- o Fax: 202-337-6797, attention Black History Month Challenge
- o Mailing address: LSC, Black History Month Challenge, 3333 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007

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CHALLENGE GUIDELINES – VIDEO

- Video must be representative of the theme: ***African Americans in Times of War***.
- Video must be solely the student's original work.
- Video must be no longer than five (5) minutes.
- Video must not include any offensive or derogatory language or images.
- Video may be submitted with a web link to an accessible video website such as YouTube or Vimeo.
- Video submissions must include an explanation or description of the work and its connection to the theme. Explanation/description should be typed on an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper but should **not** include the student's name or any other identifying information about the student. The explanation/description should be included with the submission form. Video will be judged without knowledge of the identity of the creator.
- Video must be accompanied by a submission form.
- Submissions that do not adhere to all of the challenge guidelines will not be eligible.
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CHALLENGE GUIDELINES – ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

- Art/photography must be representative of the theme: ***African Americans in Times of War***.
- Art/photography work must be solely the student's original work.
- Art/photography may be drawings (color pencils, crayons, charcoal, markers, etc.), paintings (oil, acrylic, watercolor), paper collages, and/or photographs.
- Art/photography must be no larger than 24" x 36" and must be mounted on foam poster board or other rigid surface.
- Art/photography must not include any offensive or derogatory language or images.
- Artistic submissions must include an explanation or description of the work and its connection to the theme. Explanation/description should be typed on an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper but should **not** include the student's name or any other identifying information about the student. The explanation/description should be included with the submission form. Artistic submissions will be judged without knowledge of the identity of the creator.
- Must be accompanied by a submission form.
- Submissions that do not adhere to all of the challenge guidelines will not be eligible.
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