

FEBRUARY 2023

# AMCS NEWSLETTER

Alief Montessori Community School

Alief Montessori  
Community School  
12013 6th Street

## AMCS Spotlight

MS. PEARLA JARAMILLO

Position:  
Upper Elementary  
Assistant

Favorite Food:  
Chicken Alfredo

Favorite Book:  
Prophecy of the Sisters by Michelle  
Zink

Favorite Song:  
A Thousand Years by Christina Perri

Fun Facts:  
Ms. Perla loves to bake. Her pies are  
really good. Her cake pops are  
amazing. And those sweet chocolate  
bombs are the bomb!



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## Writer in the Schools at AMCS

MADELEINE GAUDIN (WITS TEACHER)

My name is Madeleine Gaudin and, over the past few weeks, I've had the pleasure of working with the Alief Montessori after school writing club. Together we've written odes, ekphrastic stories, and made anaphora poems using silly, mad-lib metaphors. It's been such a pleasure to see the Alief Montessori community in action and get to work with these funny and talented young writers.

The writing club is a partnership between AMCS and Writers in the Schools, an organization that partners with schools and community organizations across the city to provide creative writing programming for students in grades K-12. WITS has been working in the Houston community for over thirty years. In addition to working with students in schools, WITS also runs the Space City Slam Series, Meta-Four Houston, the Houston Youth Poet Laureate Program, Free Verse Open Mic Series, and countless other community programs. The Space City Slam Series, which kicks off on February 10, is a free youth poetry competition that invites performers ages 13-19 to compete for a spot on the renowned Meta-Four Houston youth poetry slam team. Free Verse is a monthly youth poetry open mic for writers aged 13-19. WITS also runs summer camps across the Houston area for students in grades K-12.

In addition to teaching with WITS, I also work for the organization as a Program Associate on a fellowship from the University of Houston. I'm currently working on a Masters of Fine Arts at UH, studying creative writing with a focus on fiction. I love writing short stories that incorporate elements of magical realism, and I'm currently working on a novel. Before coming to Houston, I was a teacher in Detroit Public Schools Community District, where I taught 5th and 2nd grade. Teaching and writing are my two favorite things to do, and so I'm so glad I have the opportunity to do both with the students at AMCS!

**“We must help  
the child to act  
for himself,  
will for  
himself, think  
for himself;  
this is the art  
of those who  
aspire to serve  
the spirit.”**

**Maria  
Montessori**

# Black History Month: A time to A.C.T.

Jennifer Marshall (AMCS Parent)

February is Black History Month, a federally recognized annual celebration of the rich cultural heritage of African Americans, and a time to recognize the many contributions and sacrifices they made that helped shape the United States. This celebration originated in 1926 by historian and educator Carter G. Woodson, the first person born to enslaved parents to graduate from Harvard University. While Black History Month began as a week-long celebration, it was expanded to the full month of February in 1976 by President Gerald Ford. Woodson chose February to honor the birthdays of prolific writer, orator, and abolitionist Frederick Douglass (whose exact birthday is unknown), and President Abraham Lincoln, who signed the Emancipation Proclamation that abolished slavery in the confederate states.

Black History Month is a time to celebrate art, culture, and innovation, while respectfully honoring those who endured unthinkable hardship imposed through slavery, Jim Crow, systematic oppression, and racism. Though it is important to engage critically about these topics, it is just as important to remember Black history doesn't begin with slavery or end with the Civil Rights Movement. While slavery and the Civil Rights Movement may be the most recognizable subjects to begin and end Black History Month, Carter Woodson advocated to connect students with the history of significant African civilizations and their many accomplishments to world history.

Honoring and celebrating Black History Month is for everyone, no matter their race. Black History is American History. I encourage you to make a commitment to A.C.T (/ak(t)/ verb. take action; do something) in honor of Black History Month.

# A.C.T: Acknowledge, Celebrate, and Transcend

## Acknowledge: Acknowledge Atrocities and Adversity

The African-American community has endured many hardships, and the trauma of fighting for their basic rights is not to be taken lightly. Understanding the long-term ramifications of historical adversity, which includes slavery, sharecropping and race-based exclusion from health, educational, social and economic resources, translates into socioeconomic disparities experienced by African Americans today. Analyzing the accounts and experiences of the enslaved or civil right leaders brings a human dimension to the study of the Black History. These personal accounts allow us to see events from the victims' point of view and understand how they resisted spiritually and physically. Studying the atrocities allows us to understand the impact of history on our society and human beings. Acknowledging the past ensures that history is not repeated. Acknowledging the adversities of the African American plight will foster healing from historical trauma for future generations.

## Celebrate: Celebrate the Contributions, Character, and Culture

Black History Month should be a celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. As we reflect throughout Black History Month, we should:

- celebrate the Black American pioneers who've built a society from the ground up since 1619, when the first enslaved people were brought to America;
- honor the incredible contributions the Black community has made throughout U.S. history – from civil rights leaders to artists, politicians to inventors;
- celebrate the Black history that's being made today and every day;
- highlight achievements and contributions, including pre-colonial history and profiles of contemporary figures from politics, education, pop culture, sports, or other areas;
- remember the resilience, mental fortitude, and moral qualities of those who loved this country when it was not the most welcoming.

## Transcend: Transcend, Transform, and Teach others

Black History Month is a time to transcend cultural boundaries and embrace our differences. As we humbly evaluate and triumph over the negative or restrictive aspects of our own world views, personal bias, privilege, and internalized racism, we will transform into individuals who express our divine natures and in turn flood this world with kindness, respect, adoration, and goodwill towards our fellow man. As you transform, be sure to teach others by promoting cultural awareness, equality, and ongoing social change for all humanity. As we stand for one, we stand for all!

There are plenty of ways that everyone can A.C.T., commemorate Black History Month, and celebrate Black heroes even from the comfort of your own home. From supporting Black-owned businesses to donating to charities supporting anti-racism efforts and watching educational documentaries, here are 10 ways you can celebrate Black history – not just this month, but all year round.

- Learn About Noteworthy Black Figures and Their Contributions
- Plan a trip to a local museum that celebrates Black History Month
- Attend Virtual Black History Month Celebrations
- Purchase, Read, and Share Books by Black Authors
- Virtually Visit the National Museum of African American History and Culture
- Donate to Charities That Support Anti-Racism Equity and Equality
- Watch a Documentary <https://www.pbs.org/articles/10-must-watch-black-history-documentaries/>
- Engage students in critical conversations about how Black people are portrayed in the media.
- Watch a Movie Showcasing African American History or Experiences.
- Celebrate Black History Month with family movie night, watching movies that celebrate the African American experience or that highlight historical events.



## **SOME SUGESSTIONS OF LOCAL AND VIRTUAL EVENTS INCLUDE:**

**NMAAHC Kids Learning Together: Celebrating Encanto's Antonio!**

Online Only

Saturday, February 4, 2023 11:00am to 12:00pm

FREE. REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/events/nmaahc-kids-learning-together-celebrating-encantos-antonio>

**Black Voices The Cry**

Sat, Feb 4, 2023, 7:00 PM – Sun, Feb 5, 2023, 10:00 PM CST

Praise Christian Center W.O. 1100 Dell Dale Street Channelview, TX 77530

[https://www.eventbrite.com/e/black-voices-the-cry-registration-453390542317?](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/black-voices-the-cry-registration-453390542317?aff=ebdsoporgprofile)

[aff=ebdsoporgprofile](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/black-voices-the-cry-registration-453390542317?aff=ebdsoporgprofile)

Unite with young Black leaders who have a passion to see our generation transformed through the power and message of the Gospel.

**Fight For Freedom - Anti Human Trafficking Awareness**

Sat, February 4, 2023, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM CST

802 Shepherd Drive Houston, TX 77007

Free Community Human Trafficking Awareness Event

Join us for the 3rd annual Fight for Freedom Collaborative at West End Church in the Houston Heights.

This free community event is to bring education and awareness about the issues of sex trafficking in Harris County. It will allow the public to come hear leaders in the movement and meet multiple organizations that are working in our communities. They'll be speaking about what they do and how the public can assist them in their work.

**NMAAHC Kids Learning Together: Celebrating Frozone!**

Online Only

Friday, February 10, 2023 11:00am to 12:00pm

FREE. REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/events/nmaahc-kids-learning-together-celebrating-frozone>

**Black History Houston @ Avenida Plaza (BLCK Market Marketplace)**

Feb 11, 12, 18, 19 1-5pm

<https://www.blckmarket.com/event/black-history-at-avenida/>

Avenida De Las Americas Avenida De Las Americas Houston, TX

In collaboration with the City of Houston and Avenida Plaza BLCK Market brings you Black History Houston. Located in the heart of Downtown Houston between GRB and Discovery Green. Join us as we celebrate Black History with the #1 Marketplace in the nation, Live Music and cultural activations.

## **SOME SUGESSTIONS OF LOCAL AND VIRTUAL EVENTS INCLUDE:**

Moving Beyond Bad History. Identity, Unity and Black Excellence.

Sat, February 18, 2023, 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM CST

12126 Westheimer Road ##118 Houston, TX 77077

SAiD Pan African Library

The main objectives of the summit is to promote a greater knowledge of history and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies. Black Heritage Month is observed for the month of February every year. People celebrate Black Heritage Month and throughout the year to reflect on more than 400 years of American African history and heritage that have shaped the American culture as we know it today.

FIVE: The Sugar Land 95 at FIVE

Website: [sojesjustice.org](http://sojesjustice.org)

Sat, February 18, 2023, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM CST

Fort Bend County Libraries - University Branch 14010 University Boulevard Sugar Land, TX 77479

Educate. Honor. Heal.

The Society of Justice & Equality for the People of Sugar Land (S.O.J.E.S.) is committed to its mission of educating the community about convict leasing and honoring the contributions of African Americans in Sugar Land and Fort Bend County. It is time to learn and heal. We invite the public to a commemoration of the 5th anniversary of the discovery of the "Sugar Land 95" the 95 victims of convict leasing whose remains were discovered in a Sugar Land high school construction site on December 18, 2018.

Our keynote speaker is Alex Lichtenstein, Ph.D., noted author on convict leasing and American Studies Chair at Indiana University, to speak about the impact of convict leasing in the south and in Sugar Land, Texas. Other speakers and honorees will be featured in the program.

National Museum of African American History & Culture

Online Only

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/events>

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/celebrating-black-history-month>

Children's Museum of Houston

Dates TBD

<https://www.cmhouston.org/events/black-history-month-celebration>

You're invited to celebrate the legacy and contributions of the African American community during February Black History Month at Children's Museum Houston.

The African American Library at the Gregory School

Local and Year Round

[HTTPS://AALGF.ORG/](https://AALGF.ORG/)

1300 Victor Houston, Texas 77019

Housed in Houston's first public school for African Americans — Edgar M. Gregory School — the first-of-its-kind library serves as a resource to preserve, promote, and celebrate the rich history and culture of African Americans in Houston, the surrounding region, and the African Diaspora. For the avid researcher, the destination serves as a one-of-a-kind research and cultural center. For the history buff, rare books, archival materials, exhibits, and artifacts abound. And for the recreational preservationist, The Gregory School's hallowed halls provide an up close view of a State Archeological Landmark. Opt for a guided or self-guided tour.

## **SOME SUGESSTIONS OF LOCAL AND VIRTUAL EVENTS INCLUDE:**

### **EMANCIPATION PARK CONSERVANCY**

[HTTPS://EPCONSERVANCY.ORG/](https://epconservancy.org/)

**LOCAL YEAR AROUND**

**3018 Emancipation Avenue Houston, TX 77004**

Nestled in the heart of Houston's historically African American neighborhood, Third Ward, Emancipation Park's roots and land date back to 1872 — when a group of former slaves united to raise \$1,000 for the purchase of the 10-acre parcel to be used to host Juneteenth celebrations. After years of preservation and revitalization efforts — a feat that culminated with the park's current design by internationally lauded African American architect Phil Freelon, who made headlines for his work on the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C. — Emancipation Park has become a premier greenspace rooted in history. Take advantage of everything from EP's cultural and recreation centers to its various green areas and walking trails.

### **BUFFALO SOLDIERS NATIONAL MUSEUM**

[HTTPS://BUFFALOSOLDIERSMUSEUM.ORG/](https://buffalosoldiersmuseum.org/)

**LOCAL YEAR AROUND**

**3816 CAROLINE, HOUSTON, TX, 77004**

The African American military experience is on full display at the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum. Dedicated to exploring the stories and contributions of African Americans in the military by way of performing and visual arts, educational programming, and exhibitions, the museum is one that highlights the tradition of valor while paying homage to the first Black professional soldiers in a peacetime army— the original Buffalo Soldiers. Experience this portal through history via virtual field trips and in-person tours; or up the ante with a historical re-enactment experience.

### **HOUSTON MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE**

[HTTPS://HMAAC.ORG/](https://hmaac.org/)

**LOCAL YEAR AROUND THURSDAY - SATURDAY 11 AM - 6 PM ALWAYS FREE**

**4807 CAROLINE, HOUSTON, TX, 77004**

For all things Black culture — whether contemporary or historic, HMAAC is your one-stop shop. Step inside for an all-encompassing experience that provides a full education into the progression of African American customs and culture translated through everything from art and lectures to community forums and films.

### **1870 YATES HOUSE AT SAM HOUSTON PARK**

[HTTPS://WWW.HERITAGESOCIETY.ORG/YATES-HOUSE](https://www.heritagesociety.org/yates-house)

**LOCAL YEAR AROUND**

Let's talk about Reverend John Henry "Jack" Yates, an emancipated slave whose impact can be seen across Houston. A pillar of the African American community, Yates' Greek Revival home was originally erected in Freedmen's Town a mere five years after Emancipation. This exact house — which was originally stationed at 1318 Andrews Street — now sits at Sam Houston Park on full display for visitors to experience. Its historic interiors have been furnished to depict the family's lifestyle in the late 19th century, and it even showcases some of the furniture that was in the house when the Yates family still lived there.

## Books to Celebrate Black History Month



**Change Sings by Amanda Gorman**

<https://youtu.be/Tx-AQQ-6hdl>

**Let the Children March by Monica Clark-Robinson**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=bnptqGnM4xQ&feature=share>

**It's OK to be Different by Sharon Purtill**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=Zc63hfrrea4&feature=share>

**I am Enough by Grace Byers**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=OeNfqCRq6HA&feature=share>

**The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=U8D4ldGY41s&feature=share>

**Mae Among the Stars by Roda Ahmed**

[https://youtube.com/watch?v=b\\_mfdqyBqT8&feature=share](https://youtube.com/watch?v=b_mfdqyBqT8&feature=share)

**Skin Like Mine by Latashia M Perry**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=yeGtWNFT2rc&feature=share>

**Superheros Are Everywhere by Kamala Harris**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=tTNs-NJpTYk&feature=share>

**Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman by Nikki Grimes**

**Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope by Nikki Grimes**

**Fifty Cents and a Dream: Young Booker T. Washington**

**I, Too, Am America by Langston Hughes**

**Nelson Mandela by Kadir Nelson**

**Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya**

Thank you to AMCS parent, Jennifer Marshall, for sharing all of these great resources and for teaching our AMCS Community to acknowledge, celebrate, and transcend in honor of Black History Month.



MS. SANTILLAN'S

# VALENTINE'S BAKE & CRAFT SALE

BAKE SALE FEB. 14 & CRAFT SALE FEB 16TH  
PROCEEDS GO TO CLASS TURTLE CARE, EARTH DAY  
SCIENCE PROJECT MATERIALS, AND CLASS BOARD  
GAMES AND CRAFT MATERIALS

amcs  
PODCASTERS

AMCS   
VOLLEYBALL

LISTEN AT:

[HTTPS://OPEN.SPOTIFY.COM/SHOW/3  
H0CDBBU05UBEZHBYHF3MQ](https://open.spotify.com/show/3H0CDBBU05UBEZHBYHF3MQ)

COMING SOON

## Reading Topics for Primary Students

*Head on over to your local library and check out a book with your student on one of the following topics, that will be highlighted in your student's classroom this month:*

Asia, Ground Hog Day, Dental Care, Valentine's Day, Human Heart, Mardi Gras, Presidents, Rodeo, Horses, African American Heritage

### AMCS ONLINE:

AMCS Website  
<https://www.amcsmontessori.org/>

AMCS Official Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/Alief-Montessori-Community-School-102144042265960>

Alief Montessori Community Parents Group  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AMCSParents/>

*Thank you to our Substitute  
Teachers!*

We appreciate all your hard work!

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SUBSTITUTE  
TEACHER PLEASE CONTACT THE MAIN OFFICE**

## Did you know AMCS students recite the AMCS Pledge beginning in elementary?

### AMCS PLEDGE

I believe in myself and in my ability to do my best.  
Today, I will listen, I will speak, I will read and I will  
write.

I will do these things with one purpose in mind- to do  
my best.

I will not waste this day for this day will come no more.  
I can make it a great day or not.  
The choice is mine.

## Coming up:

Black History Month  
FEBRUARY

Writer in the Schools  
Final Class  
FEBRUARY 3

Ms. Santillan's Class Bake Sale  
FEBRUARY 14TH

Valentine's Dutch Oven Cookoff  
FEBRUARY 14TH

Ms. Santillan's Class Craft Sale  
FEBRUARY 16TH

Parent/Child Nights  
FEBRUARY 16TH & 17TH

AMCS Community Run  
FEBRUARY 18TH

Open House  
FEBRUARY 20TH

No School  
FEBRUARY 20TH

Rodeo Day  
FEBRUARY 24TH