

ASE: Chicago Association of Black Storytellers Annual Affiliate Report for 2021

The Officers and Members of ASE salute you in the spirit of our ancestors and NABS co-founders Queen Mother Mary Carter Smith and Queen Mother Linda Goss. Asante sana to President Kwanzaa Brewer and the NABS Board of Directors and the co-directors of the Affiliate Program, TAHIRA and Denise Chapman Acosta for your support and encouragement throughout the year. ASE 2021 programming and activities incorporate and undergird our mission and commitment to keeping alive the traditional art form of Black storytelling to entertain and to inspire our youth and our community.

As Aretha Franklin sang, “Who's zooming who?”, ASE didn't drive a big Cadillac but ASE did ZOOM all of its business meetings and concerts in 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

NEW ASE MEMBERS

Thanks to ZOOM, ASE's member, Gwen Hilary, could “meet” with each new prospective member in a designated “chat room” to discuss the history and benefits of ASE membership. We salute our newest members: Barbara Akpan, Betty Davis , and Aliyyah Hetherington.

STORYTELLING AT THE ASE

Having ASE members volunteer to tell a story prior to our Business meeting time has always been a tradition and it continues on ZOOM. Members tell their story both to entertain and to invite constructive criticism on the crafting of their story. Asante sana to all especially to Muteeat Lawal who told “Once Upon A Time – The ASE Story” that covered ASE'S 20 year history.

June 2021

“Kaleidoscope of Stories” was the theme of our ZOOM Storytelling Concert that was quite a hit with our listeners.

July 2021

Loretta “Fire keeper” Hawkins, celebrated poet and author, contributed her original story about ASE in the NABS Village Telling concert.

October 2021

“Let Their Voices Be Heard” is our theme for our virtual annual fundraising concert. This year ASE will also honor our former ASE Youth member, Charles Owen, whose admission application included his storytelling of his Chicago skateboarding adventures that served him well since he is now a freshman at the University of Chicago.

MOVING ON UP

ASE is taking preparatory steps for the challenges forecasted in the next decade :

- **Annual Board Training by the Urban Awareness Inc.**
- **ASE Youth Alumni Network (AYAN) that will provide further storytelling opportunities for the youth who transition out of high school and into young adulthood.**

REST IN POWER

ASE honors our newest ancestors:

- **Lorenzo Young (2020) – long standing ASE member**
- **Timuel Black (2021) - recipient of ASE Tradition Keepers Award in 2019**

**'When lions do not tell their own stories, then the hunters become the heroes.'
African proverb**