

**ASE: The Chicago Association of Black Storytellers
Annual Affiliate Report for 2020**

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 Janice Curtis Greene and the NABS Board of Directors for your support and encouragement.

'there is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens.' Ecclesiastes3:1

2019 marked the 20th anniversary for ASE. Despite the cold weather of the Windy City, ASE was bursting with fiery creative spirit for the upcoming concerts including our 21st Annual Concert. But then... ASE, along with so many organizations and affiliates, had to pivot quickly to the virtual world of ZOOM.

MAY 2020

ASE began having virtual ZOOM business meetings. All members received a personal call from selected Executive Board inviting them to the ZOOM meeting. So many members were able to navigate the rigors of the link and muting while on the screen. The most missed feature of our in-person meetings was the homemade cuisine catered by the hosts of the month.

AUGUST 2020

2020 marked for our very own Chicagoan poet, Gwendolyn Brooks, the 70th anniversary of her winning the Pulitzer Prize for literature in 1950. In collaboration with the David and Reva Logan Center and Nora Brooks Blakely, ASE produced a poem recitation for "The Ballad of Rudolph Reed" and a visual graphics of 1950 photos for the city-wide celebration. Asante sana to Joanne E. Thomas and Elisha Hall for their fantastic renderings of the poem and the 50's photos, respectively.

OCTOBER 2020

With the vibrant sound of African drums, ASE welcomed all (online) to our 21st Annual Concert on Friday, October 16 with stories that would "Celebrate, Meditate and Rejuvenate" the listeners in times such as these. Asante sana to the storytellers that included Mama Edie Armstrong, Marcia Berry, Baba Tony Brown, Velma Gladney, Dolores "Miss Dee" Gordon, and Dhamana Shauri. There were traditional folktales, original and personal stories told even one that set the record straight about the true heroic background of Black enslaved man being named "Uncle", In other words, the myth about Harriet B. Stowe's rendition of Uncle Tom was shattered.

NOVEMBER 2020

Congratulations to Elisha Hall for being granted his Doctoral Degree in Policy Studies in Urban Education in the Graduate College of University of Illinois Chicago. His dissertation title is "Keepers of West African Humanism and Traditional Healing Systems: African oral traditions and narrative praxis in the storytelling from African descended elders and youth in Chicago". (The elders and youth are from ASE)

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

Asante sana

Dr. Stephanie Davenport, ASE president