

SEMA HADITHI FOUNDATION NEWS

Tell the story and expand the history of Utah

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Top stories in this newsletter



Sema Hadithi African American Heritage and Culture Foundation



The Sema Hadithi Foundation Team

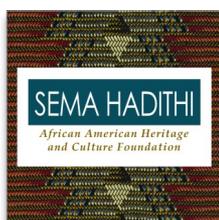


Creating the Complete Community



About the Founder

Sema Hadithi African American Heritage and Culture Foundation



The phrase Sema Hadithi means “Tell the story”.

Sema Hadithi Foundation hopes to fill the need for an institution dedicated to the discovery, preservation, and sharing of the history of African Americans in Utah. It is a history as rich as the American story. It tells the story of the Utah Territory conquered by America's adventurous spirit long before the settlement of the Salt Lake Valley. The story of African Americans has touched every form of progress in Utah with the first mountain men of Cache Valley, settling Brigham City, to the railroad at Promontory Point, and the Union Station in Ogden. This is the story of military units at Fort Douglas and Duchesne County as well as the business success of historic Ogden 25th Street. This is the story of jazz music, academic excellence, athletic prowess, entrepreneurial success, and public service in schools, police departments, fire departments, politics, and volunteerism. There is no corner of Utah that Black success has not touched. Sema Hadithi Foundation seeks to “tell the story”.

The Sema Hadithi Foundation Team



The Sema Hadithi team is comprised of sixteen experienced professionals spanning many aspects of business creation and administration. They excel in historical, archeological, and genealogical research. Their experience includes event production, museum operations, preservation of historic sites, and academia. The company was established early in 2020. Its non-profit status with the IRS is pending.

In coming releases, Sema Hadithi Foundation News will introduce the members of this extraordinary team. We think you will be excited about the super team we have been able to put together. They come from relationships with established partnerships like Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society - Utah, Better Days 2020, Brigham City Museum, Fort Douglas Military Museum, Preservation Strategies, Project Success Coalition, Union Station Museums, The University of Utah, and the Utah Division of State History. Each and every member is dedicated to the call to “tell the story”

*Where the story of diversity is missing
the life of diversity does not exist*

BECOME A PATRON OF SEMA HADITHI FOUNDATION

Creating the Complete Community



Sema Hadithi Foundation is born out of the experience that as members of the African American community and their friends attend historical events and participate in genealogical presentations, no real information is shared or stories told about the Black ancestors and history makers of Utah. It is very discouraging for those who want to feel grounded in the community where they live when the historical narrative that would help them feel they belong is missing. This is especially true for the newcomer to Utah. There is such a dearth of African American narrative that many of the brightest folk who come to Utah seek other areas of the country to live. Areas that allow them to feel they fit into the community and the community narrative.

Beyond the need to feel a part of a community is also the need for cultural understanding and acceptance. Where the story of diversity is missing the life of diversity does not exist. Many times what is left in the vacuum of no information is misinformation. Often that misinformation is in the form of mythology, folklore, and falsehood. By filling in those missing pieces of Utah history we can help create the complete Utah community where a goodly heritage is shared and respected.

About the Founder



Robert Burch is the founder of Sema Hadithi African American Heritage and Culture Foundation.

Robert is from Decatur, GA. His father still resides in his childhood home there. He attended Talladega College. Talladega College, or Dega as the students and alumni refer to it, was founded in 1867 as one of the nine historic Black colleges founded immediately following the Civil War. After leaving Dega he joined the United States Navy serving aboard ship in the Caribbean, Central America, South America, the North Atlantic, and the Mediterranean Sea. He received a Naval Expedition Medal for service as a member of the Middle East Peacekeeper initiatives in 1983 and 1984. Following the military, he worked as a sales manager, customer service manager, safety and corporate compliance, and business owner.

He has served as the Utah Chapter President of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society for five years. He also serves on AAHGS national board. The Society is a membership-based organization and is the largest African American historical/genealogical organization in the U.S. AAHGS was founded in 1977 and boasts 36 chapters nationwide with over 3000 members.

Robert is a charter board member of Sons and Daughters of the United States Middle Passage, which is in its third year. Sons and Daughters is the only lineage society in existence that commemorates and venerates the formerly enslaved of the United States and the Caribbean. The Society recognizes the formerly enslaved as the heroes of 400 years of enslavement in Africa, South America, Central America, the Caribbean, and North America. Robert has documented ancestors from 1807 to two plantations in Georgia. With that documentations, he became eligible to become a member of Sons and Daughters.

Robert started his journey into history and genealogy as a member of the LDS faith. He has served in many church-related callings including a branch presidency, priesthood group leader, Sunday School President, and several other responsibilities. The LDS Church is where he became familiar with family history research, eventually becoming the leader of the family history effort for the LDS Genesis Group. The Genesis Group is a support initiative by the LDS Church for the benefit of its Black members. It was created in 1971 and led by LDS notables such as Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, Russell M. Nelson, and Boyd K. Packard.

In the past two years, Robert has created two businesses. Sema Hadithi, LLC is a for-profit company that provides research services, speakers services, and training material. Sema Hadithi Foundation is a pending non-profit focused on building a permanent Black history institution in Utah. Its focus is research, preservation, and dissemination of Utah Black History.

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