

Celebrating the Remarkable Contributions of James Weldon Johnson

“Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty”

By James Weldon Johnson & J Rosamond Johnson



James Weldon Johnson, a writer, lawyer, and civil rights activist, was born in Jacksonville, Florida on June 17, 1871. Johnson was a leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), where he started working in 1917. In 1920, he was the first African American to serve as the executive secretary of the organization, similar to a chief operating officer. Through this position, Johnson was able to bring attention to racism, lynching, and segregation.

Johnson became well known for his poems and novels on black culture during the Harlem Renaissance period of the 1920s. He wrote the lyrics for "Lift Every Voice and Sing" which became known as the Black National Anthem. Johnson was appointed as US consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua from 1906 to 1913 under President Theodore Roosevelt. In 1934, he was the first African American professor to be hired at New York University. He died in a car crash on June 26, 1938 in Maine.

Born: June 17, 1871

Died: June 26, 1938

Hometown: Born in Jacksonville, FL Moved to New York City

Education: Clark Atlanta University, Columbia University, Fisk University

**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH**