



# POWER LUNCH

FEBRUARY 2009

*Bringing Worship to the Workplace*

## The Revolution of Change

By Renee Prioleau

As we celebrate African American History this month, there is a greater sense of our contribution to the fabric of this country's legacy because of the remarkable and extraordinary political events that have occurred recently. With the election of the first African American President of the United States, Barack Obama, I believe African Americans will continue to celebrate the culture of our heritage each and every month of the this year and beyond. So, it says in the third chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes, the word of the Lord says "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born... Indeed, President Barack Obama was born for this time and season to become engraved in the articles of history in this country and the world.

The first month of the year marks the closure of the past year and the beginning of a new year. Yet, in 2009, we had an added bonus of multiple celebrations during the entire month. The world had the unique, almost once in a lifetime opportunity to experience a commemoration and convergence of "Dream and Destiny". Dr. Martin

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## The History of Black History Month

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month." What you might not know is that black history had barely begun to be studied-or even documented-when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America at least as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a respectable presence in the history books.

### Blacks Absent from History Books

We owe the celebration of Black History Month, and more importantly, the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Born to parents who were former slaves, he spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age twenty. He graduated within two years and later went on to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard. The scholar was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population-and when blacks did figure into the picture, it was

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### ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

#### The Revolution of Change

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#### The History of Black History Month

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Luther King's dream of racial equality, justice, and unity has become a reality in the destiny of Barack Obama's Inauguration and Presidency in the United States of America. Certainly, we understand that the possibility and the reality of this monumental change in the culture and politics of our nation began centuries ago within the African American community and continued through the valiant efforts of many men, women, and children of diverse backgrounds. Such a revolutionary change in our contemporary culture only represents the hardships and difficulties; the price that was paid by many persons, such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Malcolm X, Jesse Jackson, Dr. Dorothy Height, John F. Kennedy, and Medgar Evers. There are volumes of famous as well as ordinary people who sacrificed their lives that we would be alive to see this day. Let us not take this moment for granted, or think we have arrived... There is still more change in the world that must be realized in the hearts, minds, and lives of people all over the world that must be achieved for the greater good of our human existence and the glory of God! This is only the beginning of "Change".

As we labor to do what is good, just, and right in the sight of God with all humility; endeavoring to show mercy, compassion, and love to one another, let us be committed to the process of change in our world and for the kingdom of God.

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generally in ways that reflected the inferior social position they were assigned at the time.

### **Established Journal of Negro History**

Woodson, always one to act on his ambitions, decided to take on the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation's history. He established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now called the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History) in 1915, and a year later founded the widely respected Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history. Woodson chose the second week of February for Negro History Week because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the black American population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. However, February has much more than Douglass and Lincoln to show for its significance in black American history.

*Elissa Haney, Pearson Education, Inc.*

## **Power Lunch News**

### **February Monthly Focus**

#### **Black History Month**

### **Announcements**

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