



John William Templeton “The Black Encyclopedia”

The premiere expert on African-American history is the catalyst for Black History Month, writing about the 1976 proclamation by President Gerald Ford as White House correspondent for the AFRO-AMERICAN in a story that led to the construction of the Schomburg Center for African-American History in Harlem. As project area chair for Richmond, VA's Jackson Ward, he teamed with the National Park Service to create the largest Black business National Historic District in the nation in 1979.

Tracing his family history to the 15th century, he was selected *wanadu aroo* or history advisor to the Amiru Songhoy, direct descendant to Askia Muhammad, ruler of the Songhoy Empire, from which 75 percent of today's African-Americans originated.

In 1983, he was editor of the first Black newspaper to publish a centennial edition, the Richmond AFRO-AMERICAN, winning his fourth First Prize Merit Award from the National Newspaper Publishers Association, trade group for the Black Press marking its bicentennial in 2026. In 1987, he was the first African-American editor of a business newspaper at the *San Jose Business Journal* serving Silicon Valley, serving on the capital committee for the San Jose Museum of Art. fro

As author of *Our Roots Run Deep: the Black Experience in California, Vols. 1-4 in 1991*, he won the Library Laureate award from the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, California Humanities Scholar in 1998 and Sesquicentennial Commendation from the California Sesquicentennial Commission. *Our Roots* will mark the 30th anniversary of his first Black history exhibition in the Historic State Capitol with *The Black Queen: California Black Heritage Confirmed by Public Art*, the opening exhibition for the Sargent Johnson National Museum of African-American Art at Pan African Place. TheSargent is the trailhead for the 6,000 site California African-American Freedom Trail, endorsed by the State Historical Resources Commission in 2015 and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 2014.

ReUNION: Education-Arts-Heritage, the African children's instructional channel, provides curriculum to school districts nationwide using Templeton's research, including three decades of documentaries. In 2024-25, it is implementing the African Union's Year of Education with customized content for the entire nation.

Templeton is author of the trilogy: *Road to Ratification: How 27 States Faced the Most Challenging Issue in American History; Citizenship for All: 150th anniversary of the 14th Amendment*, and *We Fought, We Won: 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment* which discovered the resolutions of ratification for each of the Reconstruction Amendments. He was the speaker for the bicentennial of Frederick Douglass' birthday at the African-American Civil War Museum and as a fifth generation Ruling Elder, Overture Advocate for the Presbyterian Church USA publication of the most important speech in African-American history, *Let The Monster Perish* by Rev. Henry Highland Garnet. He was elected Commissioner to the Synod of the Pacific to represent the Presbytery of San Francisco from 2012 to 2015.

Chair of the Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corp., he outlined the New Black Urbanism at Rockefeller Center in April 2024 as Central Brooklyn received the Community Partner of the Year from LISC-New York. During his five years, Brownsville has experienced the steepest reduction in crime in New York City. His awards include Visionary from California Black Chamber of Commerce in 2016, Community Activist of the Year 2017 from the San Francisco NAACP and Chairman's Award from the Oakland African-American Chamber of Commerce in 2022. He is known as “The Black Encyclopedia.”

The founder of the 22nd Journal of Black Innovation National Black Business Month®, he leads Innovation&Equity22 on Jan. 15, 2025 to inaugurate TheSargent and its 80 cities initiative linking Diaspora cities with more than 1 million population.