The Society is a membership-based non-profit institution. The Society’s mission is to educate African Americans and the public at large about the history, culture and life of San Francisco’s African American community. We hope that in doing so we can instill in African Americans, and particularly African American youth, a sense of pride in themselves and their heritage.

The Society accomplishes its mission by collecting, preserving and presenting art, artifacts and recorded materials that accurately reflect the history and culture of African Americans in San Francisco and the Bay Area. The Society also sponsors and supports research, publications and educational activities related to the history and culture of African Americans.

Founded in 1955, the Society is the oldest institution of its type in the western United States. It is the lineal descendant of the San Francisco Athenaeum and Literary Society that was established in 1853. The Society was the first systematic collector of archival items and published resources depicting economic, political, cultural and religious life of San Francisco’s African American community, its holdings are invaluable resources for scholars, students, genealogists, curators, film makers, authors, publishers and the general public.

The Society tells San Francisco’s story from the perspective of African Americans through exhibitions, lectures, symposia, public programs, printed materials and guided tours. The Society also provides consultative services to public and private entities that seek to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of the history, culture and contributions of San Francisco African Americans community.

The Society’s library, archives and gallery are located in San Francisco on the second floor of the African American Arts and Culture Complex at 762 Fulton St. Admission is free.

For more information visit the Society’s website at www.sfaahcs.org or call the Society at 415.292.6172