

PROCLAMATION

DR. PERCY L. JULIAN DAY

APRIL 11, 2023

WHEREAS, Dr. Percy Levon Julian was born in Montgomery, Alabama on April 11, 1899, and was encouraged by his family to leave the segregated South in pursuit of higher education, and graduating first in his class from DePauw University with a bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1920, earning a master's degree in chemistry from Harvard University in 1923, and awarded a Ph.D. from the University of Vienna, Austria in 1931, being one of the first African Americans to achieve this distinction at the time; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career he faced discrimination, relying on his brilliant scientific mind and remarkable work ethic to become a renowned chemist who would earn more than 130 patents and publish 150 scientific articles in his career, earning numerous honors and a national and international reputation, and reaching breakthroughs in the commercialization of affordable semi-synthetic steroids and hormones that have been used in a wide range of applications including birth control pills and medications to combat glaucoma and rheumatoid arthritis; and

WHEREAS, his wife Anna also broke down academic barriers when she earned a Ph.D in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1937, one of the few women to earn such a distinction at that time; and

WHEREAS, the Julian family came to the Chicago area in 1936, when he was appointed to a top research position at Glidden Paint Company in Chicago before founding his own laboratory, Julian Laboratories, in Franklin Park, Illinois in 1953; and

WHEREAS, in 1950, Dr. Percy L. Julian was named Chicagoan of the year for his scientific achievements, and that same year he and Anna Julian moved with their children from their home in nearby Maywood, Illinois to Oak Park; and

WHEREAS, the Julian family experienced racism and threats of violence in their new community, their Oak Park home being twice attacked by arsonists, and yet the Julians would persevere against these acts of hostility and discrimination and became community leaders, and whose children were graduates of Oak Park River Forest High School and whose daughter remains an Oak Park resident.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vicki Scaman, President of the Village of Oak Park and the Board of Trustees, do hereby proclaim April 11, 2023 **DR. PERCY L. JULIAN DAY** in the Village of Oak Park, and encourage our community, especially our youth, to reflect on the many achievements of Dr. Percy Julian in science, medicine, and research, as well as one of Oak Park's pioneers in the quest for inclusion, human and civil rights, and a role model and catalyst for integration, diversity, and inclusion to which the Village of Oak Park has committed.

DATED this 11th day of April 2023.

Vicki Scaman, Village President

ATTEST:

Christina M. Waters, Village Clerk