

PROCLAMATION

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

FEBRUARY 2025

WHEREAS, the story of Black History Month began in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished chattel slavery in the United States, when Harvard-historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson, known as the “Father of Black History,” and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) as an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements of Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, Black history is revered as U.S. history, and essential to understanding the story of our country and the global impact on the Black diaspora. May we all embrace the complexities, challenges, and more importantly the crucial lessons of perseverance that is woven within Black history. Which continue to inspire all marginalized communities in their fight for liberation.

WHEREAS, the ASALH continues to organize with the mission to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, history, and culture to the global community. The theme for 2025 is African Americans and Labor. This theme highlights the central role that labor has played in the Black American experience, from the agricultural work of enslaved Africans that shaped early American economies to the entrepreneurial spirit that built thriving communities such as Black Wall Street. As stated by the ASALH, Black labor has been transformative across industries and geographies, from factories and government offices to churches, community groups, and social justice movements. This theme acknowledges the vital contributions of Black workers to economic, cultural, and societal progress while recognizing labor as a source of survival, empowerment, and collective advancement. By examining the role of work in Black history, we honor the resilience, creativity, and transformative impact of African Americans across time and space.

WHEREAS, the Village of Oak Park will kick off Black History Month with a performance by Kuumba Kids during the Village Board Meeting on January 28, 2025. The performance will celebrate the proclamation of February 2025 as Black History Month and honor the contributions of African Americans; and

WHEREAS, Oak Park is honored by the contributions of Black workers and community members, past and present, whose labor has enriched our village in countless ways. May we all recognize and celebrate the transformative impact of their work on our shared history and culture. The Village of Oak Park will celebrate Black History Month on February 8th at the Nineteenth Century Charitable Association starting at 11:00 A.M. This family-friendly event will highlight the theme "African Americans and Labor" through inspiring performances, historical presentations, and community fellowship, honoring the contributions of Black labor locally and beyond. The celebration is free to attend, though space is limited. If you would like to join us, please register on the Village of Oak Park's website.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vicki Scaman, President of the Village of Oak Park and Board of Trustees, do hereby proclaim the month of February 2025 to be Black History Month in the Village of Oak Park, and urge all community members to be cognizant of and participate in events arranged for this time, and work fearlessly for our Village to embody anti-racist systems and principles, throughout the year and years to come.

DATED this 28th day of January 2025.

Vicki Scaman
Village President

ATTEST

Christina M. Waters
Village Clerk