



## PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS Dr. Carter G. Woodson launched Negro History Week in February 1926 and set it aside as a time to study, teach, and celebrate the significant contributions that Black people had made to American society;

WHEREAS Negro History Week later expanded into a month-long celebration and became known as Black History Month, and was officially recognized in 1976 by President Gerald Ford, who urged all Americans to honor the historic contributions that Black people had made to America during the nation's Bicentennial;

WHEREAS Black History Month, which originated in America, is celebrated (but observed differently) around the world—from Canada in February to the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Ireland in October; from Australia in July (with *Black History Month* coinciding with National Aboriginal & Islander Day Observance Committee week) to various Latin American nations celebrating specific days, including Colombia's Afro-Colombian Day on May 21, Panama's Black Ethnicity Day on May 30, and Brazil's Black Consciousness Day on November 20;

WHEREAS the Association of African American Life and History (ASALH), founded in 1915 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, has faithfully kept the tradition set forward by Dr. Woodson of setting the yearly Black History Month theme, working with ASALH local branches to host Black History Month celebrations, and hosting an annual Black History Month Luncheon;

WHEREAS 2026 marks one hundred years of Black history commemorations—50 years of Negro History Week and 50 years of Black History Month—and is thereby officially noted in the 2026 Black History Month theme: A Century of Black History Commemorations;

NOW THEREFORE, I, KARSONYA WISE WHITEHEAD, National President of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, on behalf of the Executive Council and the ASALH members, do hereby acknowledge and recognize **FEBRUARY 2026 AS BLACK HISTORY MONTH** and urge everyone to recognize and observe this month by hosting and/or participating in Black History Month activities, and by taking up the shared work of protecting, promoting, and preserving Black History as a significant part of the American story.

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Karsonya Wise Whitehead  
ASALH National President

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Sylvia Cyrus  
ASALH Executive Director