



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Black History Month was first celebrated at Kent State University in 1970, but had its roots in 1926, when it was created as Negro History Week by Carter G. Woodson, American author, journalist, and educator, who realized the need for research of American Black History was being ignored, neglected, and misrepresented; and

WHEREAS, Black History is American History; and

WHEREAS, the following list is only a tiny, partial list of Black American firsts:

George Washington Carver

Agricultural scientist, Inventor

1st Black student and faculty member at Iowa State University

Shirley Chisholm

Author, Educator, Politician

1st Black woman elected to the U.S. Congress

1st African American and woman candidate for a major party's nomination for President

Bessie Coleman

Aviator

1st African American (and Native American) woman to hold a pilot license

W.E.B Du Bois

Historian, Sociologist, Author, Civil Rights Activist

1st African American to earn a doctorate at Harvard University

Althea Gibson

Professional Tennis Player and Golfer

1st African American to win a tennis Grand Slam Championship (The French Open)

Kamala Harris

Attorney, Politician

1st African American (and Asian American) and female Vice President of the United States of America

Mae Jemison

Engineer, Physician, Business Leader, NASA Astronaut

1st Black woman to travel into space

Barbara Jordan

Attorney, Educator, Politician

1st African American elected to the Texas Senate after Reconstruction

1st Southern African American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives

Thurgood Marshall

Attorney, Civil Rights Activist

1st African American United States Supreme Court Justice

Hattie McDaniel

Actor, Singer-Songwriter, Comedian

1st Black woman to sing on the radio in the United States

1st Black actor to be nominated for, and win, an Oscar

Barack Obama

Attorney, Community Organizer, Politician

1st African American to be President of Harvard Law Review

1st Black President of the United States of America

Debi Thomas

Figure Skater, Physician

1st African American to hold U.S. National titles in ladies' singles figure skating

1st Black athlete to win any medal in the Winter Olympics

Tuskegee Airmen

1st African American military aviators in the United States Armed Forces

Doug Williams

Football Player, Executive, and Coach

1st Black quarterback to start and win a Super Bowl

WHEREAS, the colorful tapestry that is American Black History is interwoven with extraordinary works of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), with nine (9) in the State of Texas alone, and civil rights organizations and the bravery of the Little Rock 9, the Greensboro Sit-Ins, and the Selma to Montgomery Marches while interspersed with horrific actions thrust upon it, like the Tulsa Race Massacre, the 16th Street Baptist church bombing, lynchings, assassinations, and America's original sin, slavery, which this country, this state, and this county are still struggling with today; and

WHEREAS, Black lives, stories, ideas, art, and voices are an integral part of the breadth of the American Experience; and

WHEREAS, Texas Black History can be traced back to 1528 when people of African descent, enslaved and free, were instrumental in the settlement of Spanish Texas;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, for the first time in its own history, that the Williamson County Commissioners Court proclaim February 2021 Black History Month in Williamson County.

Signed on this date: _____

Bill Gravell, County Judge

On behalf of the Williamson County Commissioners Court