

**Yolo County
Board of Supervisors**

Resolution No. 26-15

Proclaiming February 2026 as Black History Month

WHEREAS, Black History Month has roots dating back to February 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a prominent Black American author and historian, established Negro History Week to encourage the study of Black history and culture, selecting February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, Congress passed a law designating February 1986 as National Black History Month and directed the president to issue a proclamation encouraging the people of the United States to observe February as Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, Yolo County has had Black residents since before 1852, with 22 Black residents recorded in the 1860 census, and the population growing steadily through the late nineteenth century; and

WHEREAS, prominent Black figures in Yolo County history include Basil Campbell, who arrived in California in 1854 while enslaved, purchased his freedom in 1861, and went on to establish a highly successful farming operation in Woodland. By the 1880s, he was among the largest landowners in Yolo County, owning land that would later become part of the Cache Creek Nature Preserve. Campbell was nationally recognized for his success and was active in political organizing and advocacy, serving as a delegate to State and National Conventions for Black Americans while encouraging Black migration to California; and

WHEREAS, another prominent Black Yolo County historical figure is Mary Frances Gaither, born in 1865, who trained as a nurse and midwife and provided essential healthcare services throughout the Esparto region. She founded the first nursing home in Esparto and, alongside Sophie Raymus and Mary Belle Padmore, co-founded Greater Second Baptist Church, the first and only African American church in Yolo County; and

WHEREAS, Black history is American history, and it is vital to preserve, uplift, and share the stories of Black individuals whose contributions have shaped Yolo County and the nation; and

WHEREAS, the theme for Black History Month 2026, as designated by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, is "A Century of Black History Commemorations," marking 100 years since the establishment of Negro History Week in 1926 and recognizing the enduring importance of studying, commemorating, and sharing Black history across generations; and

WHEREAS, Yolo County departments, community organizations, and cultural partners, including the Yolo County Office of Education, Yolo County Library, local museums, arts organizations, and community groups, will collaborate to recognize Black History Month through educational programming, exhibits, public events, and opportunities for reflection and learning throughout February 2026; and

WHEREAS, the County of Yolo remains committed to advancing equity, inclusion, and belonging through its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, ongoing community engagement, and efforts to address the lasting impacts of systemic racism.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Yolo County Board of Supervisors hereby proclaims February 2026 as Black History Month and encourages all residents to learn about, reflect upon, and celebrate the achievements and contributions of Black Americans, both historically and in the present day. The Board of Supervisors recognizes the ongoing impacts of systemic racism and affirms that uplifting Black voices, histories, and lived experiences is essential to building a more just and inclusive Yolo County.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 10th day of February 2026 by the following vote:

AYES: Barajas, Villegas, Frerichs, Vixie Sandy, Allen.

Sheila A. Allen, Chair
Yolo County Board of Supervisors