

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia recognizes the importance of honoring the history, heritage, and achievements of African Americans throughout our nation and local community; and

WHEREAS, in 1915, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, noted black scholar and son of formerly enslaved people, founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, and initiated Black History Week on February 12, 1926, which expanded and was established as Black History Month in 1976; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month is a time to recognize and celebrate the many contributions and accomplishments of African Americans in all fields, including but not limited to arts, education, science, civil rights, labor, healthcare, technology, and the economy; and it is also a time to focus on the continued need to dismantle racism and build a community that lives up to its democratic ideals; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Black History Month theme, “African Americans and Labor”, highlights the transformational work of African Americans throughout the United States in a variety of fields; and

WHEREAS, notable African American residents have shaped the city’s history, including individuals like William Owen Bush, one of the first legislators elected in 1889 and pioneer agriculturist who helped establish the Western Washington Industrial Association and an agricultural college, now known as Washington State University; and

WHEREAS, the African American population in Olympia stands at approximately 3 percent or 17 hundred African American residents, and their contributions are an essential part of Olympia’s story and the diversity and strength of our city; and

WHEREAS, it is important to acknowledge the achievements, joy, and resilience of African Americans while also recognizing the ongoing work necessary to ensure equal opportunities for all people in Olympia, acknowledging the systemic racism perpetuated by individuals and our nation’s government through slavery, segregation, mass-incarceration, police brutality, and health and economic disparity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia remains committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse, and equitable community where all residents’ differences are respected and celebrated; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Olympia City Council does hereby proclaim the month of February 2025 as

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

in the City of Olympia and encourage all Olympians to recognize and honor the African American experience and work toward a nation where all people have equal opportunity to thrive.

***SIGNED IN THE CITY OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON THIS
ELEVENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2025.***

OLYMPIA CITY COUNCIL

Dontae Payne
Mayor