

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in 1915, Dr. Carter G. Woodson of Virginia founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH); and

WHEREAS, in 1926, ASALH originated the annual observance of Negro History Week, which has continued and is now celebrated throughout the month of February as National Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria observes and hosts a series of events to honor Black History Month this year following ASALH's 2026 theme: **A Century of Black History Commemorations**; and

WHEREAS, during Black History Month the Alexandria Black History Museum, within the Office of Historic Alexandria, and the Alexandria Library draw on the richness of their resources and collections to collaborate with and cooperate with various city agencies in highlighting and interpreting the rich history and achievements of African Americans in Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Historic Alexandria and the Alexandria Library continue to document, preserve and disseminate African American history through exhibitions and programs, which include performances, film screenings, storytelling, and lectures; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Black History Museum continues its annual collaboration with the Alexandria City Public School system on an exhibition of posters in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with the 2026 theme, **DREAMING TOGETHER: LEARNING FROM THE PAST, SHAPING THE FUTURE**; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria Library Special Collections will host programs and events that showcase prominent Alexandrians who are African American through the Elrich Murphy Exhibit and the mini oral histories collected during the Black Family Reunion; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Health Department supports the health and well-being of all its Black residents, recognizing that Black Alexandrians have higher rates of preventable hospitalizations and chronic illnesses compared to the general population as a result of systemic racism; and

WHEREAS, to address the disproportionate impact of HIV in Black communities and the broad-ranging challenges this poses, the Alexandria Health Department is hosting a symposium to recognize and highlight National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day on Saturday, February 7; and

WHEREAS, The City of Alexandria, with support from the Office of Historic Alexandria, the Alexandria Library, the Office of Human Rights, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, Alexandria Police Department, Alexandria Sheriff's Department, Alexandria Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the Office of Race and Social Equity and the Alexandria City Public Schools, are dedicated to supporting the City's Alexandria Community Remembrance Project and ALL Alexandria Equity Initiative, which includes a commitment to educate the public about Alexandria's lynching history and to promote racial equity throughout the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ALYIA GASKINS, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council and the citizens of Alexandria, do proclaim the month of February 2026, as:

"BLACK HISTORY MONTH"

in Alexandria, Virginia and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 27th day of January 2026.

MAYOR ALYIA GASKINS
On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Gloria A. Sitton, CMC City Clerk