

Proclamation

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WHEREAS, since the beginning of Negro History Week in 1926 by noted historian Carter G. Woodson and the subsequent expansion to Black History Month in 1976, February has been a time when the nation reflects on the struggles and accomplishments of African Americans in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina boasts many noteworthy names and places for Black History Month: the unknown indentured servants who were free men and could vote in colonial times, soldiers who fought on either side during the American Revolution, and men and women who offered resistance and fled to freedom during antebellum times, or joined in the fight for freedom with the Civil War. Through the Civil Rights era to modern times, North Carolina has mirrored or amplified the African American movements to freedom and equality in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the Black History Month 2026 Theme “A Century of Black History Commemorations” marks the 100th anniversary of the inaugural celebration launched by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in 1926, celebrating a century of honoring, studying, and preserving Black history and contributions to American society; and,

WHEREAS, Black people have played and continue to play significant roles in Carrboro’s economic, cultural, spiritual, and political development; and,

WHEREAS, Black leaders in Carrboro have included several elected officials, including Alderman Braxton Foushee, Carrboro’s first Black elected official, who served from 1969 to 1981; Robert Drakeford, who served as alderman from 1975 to 1977 and as mayor from 1977 to 1983; Alderman Hilliard Caldwell, who served from 1981 to 1997; Alderman Henry “Hank” Anderson III, who served from 1993 to 1998; Alderman Joal Hall Broun, who served from 1999 to 2011 and currently serves as a district court judge for Orange and Chatham Counties; Alderman Michelle Johnson, who served from 2011 to 2017; and Council Member Barbara Foushee, who served from 2017 to 2023 and is now Carrboro’s first Black Woman Mayor; and Council Member Fred Joiner, who was elected in 2025; and,

WHEREAS, Black people have played leadership roles as employees of the Town of Carrboro, including Richard Knight, Jr, who was the first Black person to serve as town manager from 1976 to 1980 and later became the first Black city manager of Dallas, Texas; and Richard J. White, III, who served as town manager from 2021 to 2023 and Patrice Toney, who began her role in 2024 and made history as the first African American woman to hold the position of Carrboro Town Manager; and,

WHEREAS, the Carrboro Community Park was renamed the Henry Anderson III Park in honor of the late Alderman Hank Anderson; Baldwin Park was named for Henry W. Baldwin, a local Black community member and landowner; and Martin Luther King, Jr Park, which opened in 2020, featuring murals and plaques that honor Dr. King’s life and legacy; East and West Carr Street named after Julian Carr, a confederate soldier, was renamed in 2024 to Braxton Foushee Street in honor of a long time resident and civil rights advocate; the Drakeford Library complex that opened in 2025, was named after Robert Drakeford, the first Black mayor for the Town of Carrboro and Laurel Avenue was designated honorary Strayhorn Drive in honor of Toney and Nellie Strayhorn who were believed to be the first Black family to settle in Carrboro and made significant contributions to the town; and,

WHEREAS, the Town is proud to recognize and celebrate Black people and Black history in Carrboro and across the nation during Black History Month; and,

WHEREAS, the Town is committed to advancing racial equity and has recently taken multiple actions in support of this commitment, including:

- adopting the RESOLUTION SUPPORTING REPARATIONS FOR BLACK CARRBORO in 2020;
- establishing a process in which the racial equity assessment lens or equity pocket questions accompany Council Agenda Items to help provide a deeper awareness and guidance in decision making and centering equity for community members that experience challenges and potential unintended consequences;
- adopting the first racial equity action plan (REAP) in 2023, which will weave equity into Carrboro Town Government
- began implementation of the disparity study findings that will inform changes to the Town's procurement policies to increase opportunities for minority business enterprises
- Unveiling of Historical Marker honoring Manly McCauley, Victim of 1898 Lynching
- offering Green Neighborhood Grants that bring neighbors together, particularly low-income households and residents of color—to implement projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create more climate-resilient natural areas
- engaging in a door-to-door strategy concerning the Weatherization Program and Rogers Road Sewer Extension Program to ensure lower income and Black homeowners, many of whom are elderly, are aware of program and application assistance
- expanded social services capacity by hiring a second social worker to serve Carrboro-specific individuals in partnership with the CARE Team and the Chapel Hill Crisis Team
- Cultivate new community partnerships and deepen existing ones and
- every December 13th is designated as "Braxton Dunkin Foushee Day of Service" in Carrboro, on this day the Town will encourage the residents of Carrboro to learn and reflect on Carrboro's Black history and perform an act of service for their neighbors or the community,

WHEREAS, celebrations of Black History Month including Town hosted events such as a Black History Month Concert Series; a Black History Month Lecture Series, Health & Wellness Fair, Senior Bingo, Day Trip to Hayti Heritage Center in Durham, NC, and a production, The Black History Hall of Fame, performed by the Bright Star Touring Theatre and much more, and,

WHEREAS, in May and June of this year, the Town will again partner with the Music Maker Foundation to host the 11th Elizabeth Cotton Freight Train Blues series in celebration of local music legend and Grammy Award recipient Elizabeth Cotten; and

WHEREAS, numerous other celebrations of Black History Month will occur around the Triangle, a listing of which can be viewed at <https://triangleonthecheap.com/black-history-month/>; and,

WHEREAS, learning about Black history benefits everyone by deepening understanding, challenging racism, and affirming its relevance year-round.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Barbara M. Foushee, mayor of the Town of Carrboro, North Carolina, do hereby proclaim February 2026 as Black History Month in Carrboro and encourage all residents to participate in local Black History Month events and to learn about and celebrate the lives, history, and contributions of Black people during this month and throughout the year.

This the 3rd of February 2026.


Barbara M. Foushee

