

County of Buncombe

Proclamation

Black Legacy Month

WHEREAS, Buncombe County is committed to creating an inclusive community that celebrates diversity and ensures all residents have equitable opportunities to lead healthy, peaceful, safe and sustainable lives; and

WHEREAS, in honoring the cultures, traditions and accomplishments of Black and African Americans that have shaped our country, we also acknowledge our nation's history of colonialism that has inflicted slavery, discrimination, deprivation, violence and genocide upon Black people; and

WHEREAS in 1926, Carter G. Woodson and Minister Jesse E. Moorland laid the foundation for Black History Month because the achievements of Black Americans were all but erased from national history and underrepresented in important policy decisions; and

WHEREAS in 1976, President Gerald Ford made Black History Month a national observance; and

WHEREAS, during Black History Month, we celebrate the many achievements and contributions made by Black Americans like Nina Simone, Roberta Flack, E.W. Pearson, and Isaac Dickson to Buncombe County's economic, cultural, spiritual, and political development; and

WHEREAS, we honor the memory of the millions of enslaved Africans who died during the Transatlantic Slave Trade; and

WHEREAS, by transitioning from looking back on history and celebrating the legacy of our Black and African American community members, we create a culture of mutual respect; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of Black leadership has long been a bedrock of Buncombe County, including at Stephens-Lee High School, the "Castle on the Hill" that served 900 Black students, where Elynora M. Foster was a member of the faculty and was known as the first African American woman in Asheville to receive a master's degree; and

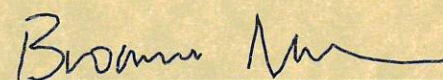
WHEREAS, we call our community's attention to the continued need to battle racism and to build a society that lives up to its democratic ideals through resolutions like the declaration of racism as a public health and safety crisis and the implementation of our Racial Equity Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County joins the City of Asheville in our commitment to reparations; and

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Libraries, including the Buncombe County Special Collections, offer curated content for all ages about Black legacy, not just in February, but year-round; and

WHEREAS, we seek to repair the trauma of past oppression and broken trust by celebrating the legacy of Black cultures and voices striving together to build a future of shared hope and promise for all;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on this 1st day of February 2022, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim February 2022 as Black Legacy Month, a time to celebrate the rich and diverse cultures of Black and African American people, to raise awareness about our shared history, to recognize that truth must come before reconciliation, and to acknowledge the important contributions that Black and African American people have made to our community and our nation.



Brownie Newman
Chairman, Buncombe County Board of Commissioners