

Black History Month *Timeline*



Carter G. Woodson, an NAACP leader, educator and historian, established Black History Week to recognize the central role Blacks played in the development of the nation. The first celebration occurred on Feb. 12, 1926. The second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthdays of abolitionist Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, the week was expanded to Black History Month.



- 1773** William Tucker is the first Black child known to be born in America
- 1773** Phillis Wheatley's "Poems on Various Subjects Religion and Moral" is the first book published by an African-American author
- 1793** Congress passes Fugitive Slave Act, making it a federal crime to assist a slave trying to escape
- 1808** Congress bans importation of slaves
- 1820** Missouri Compromise bans slavery above the southern border of the state
- 1831** Nat Turner leads slave uprising
- 1859** Harriet Tubman escapes to Philadelphia and helps nearly 300 other enslaved people escape via the Underground Railroad
- 1857** In *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, U.S. Supreme Court declares all territories open to slavery
- 1859** John Brown leads Harpers Ferry slave revolt
- 1861** South secedes from the Union and the Civil War begins
- 1863** President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation
- 1865** Civil War ends
- 1867** Fisk University begins to offer education for Blacks and ex-slaves of all ages
- 1868** Fourteenth Amendment ratified; Blacks become citizens
- 1870** The 15th Amendment guarantees that the right to vote cannot be denied because of race, color or previous servitude
- 1896** U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that "separate but equal" is constitutional
- 1909** NAACP is founded
- 1914** George Washington Carver's agricultural research begins to revive Southern farming
- 1924** Harlem Renaissance begins
- 1929** John Hope is named president of Atlanta University, which becomes the first graduate school for Blacks

Black History Month *Timeline*

1963



1993



2008



- 1936** Jesse Owens wins four Olympic gold medals
- 1940** Benjamin Oliver Davis Sr. becomes the first Black general in the U.S. Army
- 1947** Jackie Robinson becomes the first Black Major League Baseball player
- 1950** Ralph Bunche is the first Black person to win the Nobel Peace Prize
- 1954** In *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka*, U.S. Supreme Court rules that racial segregation in public schools violates the 14th Amendment
- 1955** Two men who confessed to murdering 14-year-old Emmett Till for allegedly whistling at a white woman are acquitted by an all-white jury
- 1955** Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a bus to a white man in Montgomery, Ala.
- 1957** Little Rock Central High School becomes first integrated high school
- 1961** Freedom rides begin from Washington, D.C.
- 1963** Four young girls are killed in the bombing of a Birmingham, Ala., church
- 1963** More than 200,000 people march on Washington, D.C., in the largest civil-rights demonstration in the nation's history
- 1963** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gives his "I Have a Dream" speech
- 1964** President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- 1965** Malcolm X, former Nation of Islam minister/civil-rights activist, is murdered
- 1965** President Johnson signs Voting Rights Act of 1965
- 1967** Thurgood Marshall becomes the first Black U.S. Supreme Court justice
- 1968** Dr. King is assassinated in Memphis, Tenn.
- 1972** Shirley Chisholm (the first Black woman elected to Congress in 1968) is the first major-party Black candidate to run for president
- 1984** Rev. Jesse Jackson becomes first Black man to make serious bid for the U.S. presidency
- 1993** Dr. Joycelyn Elders becomes first Black woman surgeon general
- 2008** Barack Obama becomes the first Black president of the United States

Sources: *Black History 2012 Discovery & Reflection*, BlackHistory.com, Britannica, History Channel, Scholastic

DiversityInc

FOR MORE FACTS AND FIGURES:

www.DiversityInc.com/diversity-facts