

Black History Month

THE BLACK FAMILY: REPRESENTATION, IDENTITY, AND DIVERSITY

Black History Month

Each February, we honor the contributions of African Americans throughout our nation's history during African American/Black History Month.

The observance is mandated by Public Law 99-244.



Dr. Carter G. Woodson

The annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans is associated with Dr. Carter G. Woodson.

In 1915, Dr. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, now called the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.



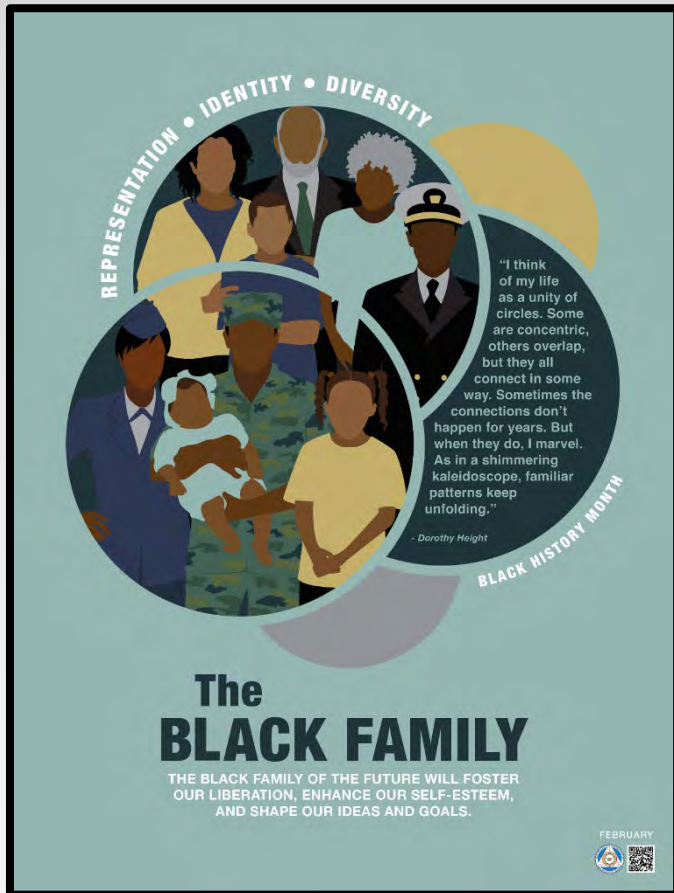
In 1926, Dr. Woodson initiated the celebration of Negro History Week, which encompassed the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

The Department of Defense Pays Tribute



On military installations around the world, the Department of Defense (DoD) joins in paying tribute to African Americans' contributions in protecting the nation and enriching our culture.

Theme/Poster/Presentation



The theme for 2021 is: The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity.

African Americans have a long heritage of distinguished service. This presentation highlights several legacy families that have served through times of peace and conflict: Sgt. 1st Class Davin Stovell, 2nd Lt. Emily Perez, and Admiral Michelle J. Howard.

Sgt. 1st Class Davin Stovell



In 2018, Sgt. 1st Class Davin Stovell saw a job posted on the Army's Tour of Duty website, *Wanted: Military instructors within a Training and Advising Detachment for a Security Cooperation Organization working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. He knew it was a perfect fit, not only for himself, but also for his brothers, Daryl and Daniel, both Army Staff Sergeants.

The brothers, full-time members of the Los Angeles Police Department, had once served in the National Guard and were now in the Army Reserve. They all applied and were accepted.

The Stovell Family

Five generations of the Stovell family have served in the Army, starting with their great-grandfather. Their grandfather served in Korea, and their father, Donell Sr., did two combat tours in Vietnam.

A fourth, older brother is in the Army Reserve, and their sister is a member of the Mississippi National Guard. Altogether, the five generations have completed nine combat tours.

“Right now we have four sons, a daughter and a grandson in the Army,” said Donell Sr. “We also have a daughter that is a teacher, so all our kids serve their country. It’s our family’s ultimate sacrifice. I don’t brag about it or boast about it, but I am really proud of them all.”

2nd Lt. Emily Perez



Emily Perez, a 23-year-old, born to a military family, was part of the 'Class of 9/11': the class that entered the Academy almost simultaneously to the attacks of September 11, 2001.

As Cadet Brigade Command Sergeant Major, she held the distinction of being the highest-ranking minority woman in the history of the U.S. Military Academy.

2nd Lt. Emily Perez

After her commissioning, Perez, a platoon leader, served in southern Iraq. She was killed while patrolling near Najaf in 2006, when a roadside bomb exploded under her Humvee.

Perez was the first female graduate of West Point to die in Iraq and she was buried at the academy.



Admiral Michelle J. Howard (Retired)

Michelle J. Howard was born at March Air Force Base in California, the daughter of former U.S. Air Force master sergeant, Nick Howard. She graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1982.

She achieved many historical firsts throughout her naval career. She was the first Black woman to command a U.S. Navy ship, and the first to achieve two- and three-star rank.

In 2006, she was selected for the rank of rear admiral making her the first admiral selected from her class and the first female graduate of the Academy selected for flag rank.



Howard

On July 1, 2014, Howard was appointed Vice Chief of Naval Operations, the second highest ranking officer in the Navy.

Upon her swearing in she became the highest ranking woman in U.S. Armed Forces history, and the highest ranking African-American and woman in naval history.

Howard also became the first female four-star admiral to command operational forces, when she assumed command of United States Naval Forces Europe and Naval Forces Africa.

She retired on December 1, 2017, after nearly 36 years of service.

Conclusion

Throughout our history Black Americans have served their communities. They have a rich tradition of honorably answering the call to duty and serving in the U.S. Armed Forces with great valor and distinction.



The Brunson family of Fayetteville, N.C., have made a family tradition of military service. First row (L to R): Karyn Brunson (wife of Maj. LaHavie Brunson), Miryam Brunson, Maj. Tavi Brunson, Lt. Col. Kirsten Brunson; Second row: Maj. LaHavie Brunson, Rachel Brunson, Rebecca Brunson (children of Lt. Col. Kirsten and Lt. Col. Xavier Brunson), Lt. Col. Xavier Brunson; Third row: Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Albert Brunson, Delphine Brunson (Sgt. Maj. Brunson's wife).

End

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Patrick Space Force Base, Florida

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