



# NCR Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Cultural Observances, Awareness Information and Events

## National African American/Black History Month

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### Did You Know?

#### American/Black History Trivia

Who became the first African American to serve in the U.S. Supreme Court?

Answer: Thurgood Marshall

In 1973, who was the first Black artist to win a Grammy for the album of the year?

Answer: Stevie Wonder

In 2012, who was the first Black gymnast to win individual All-Around title?

Answer: Gabby Douglas

In 1981, who was the first broadcast journalist to host a network mourning show on NBC Today show?

Answer: Bryant Gumbel

Who was the first Black man to win an Oscar for his role in Lilies of the Field?

Answer: Sidney Poitier

Who was the creator of Black History Month or the Father of Black History?

Answer: Carter G. Woodson

### Why Is African American/Black History Month in February?

In February we dedicate the month to honoring Black History Month. It's our nation's way of showing respect and recognition for the hard work of and sacrifices made by African Americans.

President Barack Obama said in 2015 speech "It's about the lived, shared experience of all African Americans, high and low, famous and obscure, and how those experiences have shaped and challenged and ultimately strengthened America. It's about taking an unvarnished look at the past so we can create a better future. It's a reminder of where we as a country have been so that we know where we need to go."

It all started with a man named Carter G. Woodson who is credited with creating Black History Month. He got the idea in 1915 after attending a celebration in Illinois for the 50th anniversary of the 13th Amendment, which under Abraham Lincoln's presidency, abolished slavery in 1863 in the Confederate states that seceded the U.S.

February was selected to align with President Lincoln and Frederick Douglass's birthdays. Both Lincoln and Douglas had long been celebrated in a week-long celebration by the Black community. In 1976 President Ford declared February "Black History Month" in a commemorative speech. He urged citizens to honor the accomplishments of Black Americans in every area throughout history. In 1986 congress passed a law that deemed February "National Black (Afro-American) History Month." Both Presidents Reagan and Clinton issued their own proclamations recognizing it as a national observance and every president has issued on annually since 1996.

Woodson wished to see the acknowledgement of African American's past become a regular daily occurrence rather than be relegated to a single month.