

## February NEWSLETTER

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. FF Employees of the Month/Manager of the Month
2. Note from President
3. Spotlight Employee
4. January Birthdays
5. Employee of the Month
6. Contest Items
7. Referral Bonus/EAP
8. Mission Statement
9. Articles
10. Valentine's Day History
11. February Heart Month
12. Heart Health
13. Black History Month
14. Black History Month cont.

### 100 for 100

- #1201** Michelle Vieira, Margaret Smith and Michelle Kratzer \$100  
**#2008** Becky Delaney, Luke Halleman and Amanda Choate \$100  
**#2032** Jody Coffee, Christie Grenon and Amanda Choate \$100

### Sled

- #1201** Bailey Puttre \$300  
**#4004** Jacob Sherf \$300



### Employee Recognition

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ryan Matteson #2008   | Jacob Vanoverstraeten #2306 |
| Paige Williams #2008  | Mariyah Jackson #2306       |
| Jeremy Mahaffey #2042 | Naomi Drummond #2306        |
| Daniel Powers #2042   | Azyia Wakefield #2306       |

### Safe Driving Award

Jean Parish-Safe Driving Award for 2024 (Part-time Driver)

### Employees of the Month

#### Dominique Johnson's Area:

Full-time: Sarah Robinson – Eutawville Subway

- Great with customers and always on time
- Part-time: Ameya Washington – Eutawville Subway
- Always comes in when asked, always gets her job done

#### Crystal Church's Area:

Full-time: Angel Green – Lake Bowen Subway

- Always friendly to customers, great customer service
- Part-time: Jayce Walker – Boiling Springs Subway
- Great worker, always willing to stay over if needed

## DECEMBER MANAGER OF THE MONTH

Name	Division	Location	Award
Luke Halleman	Div I	Murphy 2008	December 2024
Christie Grenon	Div II	Hayesville 2032	December 2024
Tiffany Gleaton	Div III	Orangeburg 3004	December 2024
Amanda Nation	Div IV	Bryson 1102	December 2024
Cheyenne Smith	Fast Food Division	Eutawville Subway 1609	December 2024

## From the President's Desk

**Our continued success will come through excellent customer service, teamwork, or our commitment be the best convenience store our customers can choose. This month, let's continue focusing on providing exceptional experiences for our customers, ensuring that every visit to our stores is warm and welcoming.**



**As we recognize Black History Month, let's take a moment to appreciate the diversity within our team and our customers. Our strength comes from our people, and fostering an inclusive and supportive environment remains a top priority so that we can better serve our customers.**

**Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence. Let's make this February a great one!**

**Remember: fast, friendly & clean!**

**Thank you for your efforts every day!**

*Harvey Hicks*



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



## **Christie Grenon** **HAYESVILLE LOCATION**

**Christie Grenon is the Manager for our Hayesville location.**

**She is a very hard worker, she really cares about her job and employees.**

**She has a very great sense of humor, likes to laugh and have fun. She is always willing to learn new things and is always willing to help.**

**Amanda Choate, District Leader**

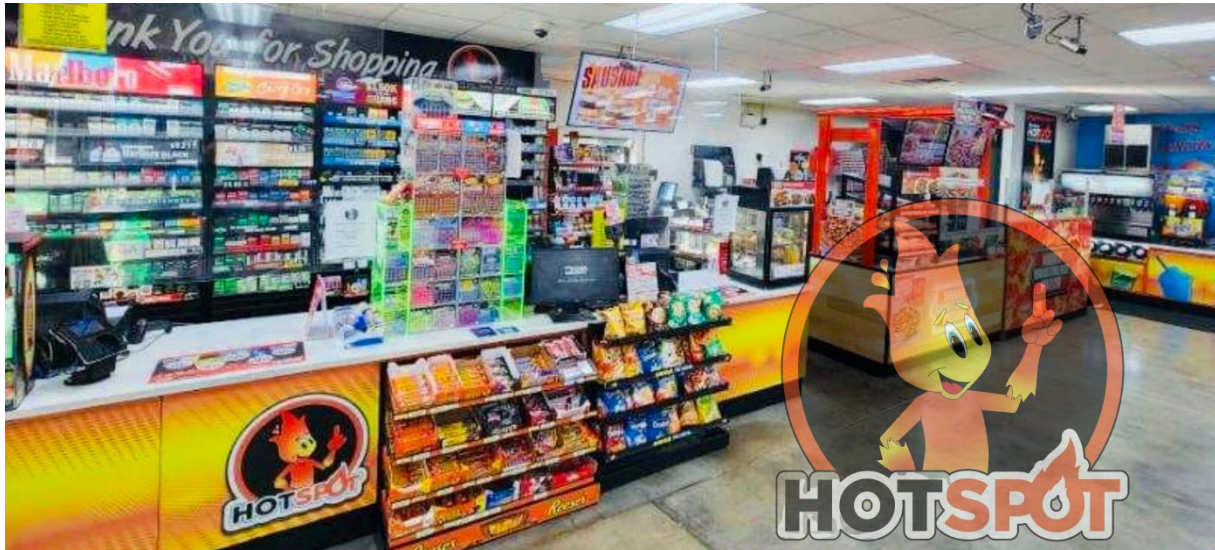


# FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Cori	Angel	5002	Vincent	Irby	2019
Monteja	Baker	2309	Della	Johnson	1609
Maryah	Baxter	1608	James Brian	Jones	2990
Amanda	Bonner	1607	Lezlie	Julian	2003
Taylor	Brown	2028	Lisa	Kelly	2032
Jacqueline	Bruner	6007	Igor	Kolesnik	2995
Jequasia	Burney	2306	Keesha	Luna	4002
Latifah	Byrd	6005	Destiny	Maguy	2043
Amber	Cantrell	2303	Nikay	Maharjan	2013
Colleen	Cobb	1608	Valentina	Martinez G	2306
Malachi	Coleman	3004	Kenneth	Mercer	2995
Jedidiah	Collins	2995	Pamela	Miller	2025
Sherike	Collum	1607	Adrienne	Morris	1601
Jennifer	Corey	2022	Bobby	Null	2022
Cameron	Cottle	2022	Joshua	Painter	2017
Jamurion	Davis	2308	Lana	Phillips	2042
Rebecca	Delaney	2008	Regina	Porter	5004
Dawn	Delong	2024	Cody	Price	6002
Michael	Dickerson	2005	Alexis	Rice	6004
Lindsay	Ferqueron	2043	Ny'asia	Robinson	3003
Courtney	Fowler	2013	Sherese	Rogers	2013
Margaret	Fuhry	2021	Luis	Rojas Jimer	2024
Ashley	Gillespie	1201	Sarah	Smith	6005
Shawaynesha	Grice	2304	Majesty	Spencer	1601
Michael	Hanmer	5004	Michelle	Taylor	2032
Jonathan	Hargro	2025	Scot	Thomas	2019
Tyrell	Harrison	5002	Kadence	Thomson	2305
Jill	Hennett	6005	Sierra	Townsend	2035
Margaret	Hicks	2017	Bonnie	Turner	2008
Rebecca	Hooks	2021	Ashley	Waggener	1601
Shannon	Hughes	2017			

# February Employees of the Month

Great Job and Congratulations to the employees listed below



## Andy's Area

2003 Sam Smith  
2011 Amanda Davis  
2013 Jeffrey Darr  
2018 Ann Gonzalez  
2035 Brooke Hostetler  
3005 Tabatha Mercer  
4005 Jessica Hoffman  
5003 Josh Newberry  
6002 Rhonda Wilson

## Amanda's Area

1102 Sabrina Richmond  
2025 Petra Lemieux  
5001 Ernie Robinson  
5002 Tyrell Harrison

## Ashley's Area

1103 Cyrus Davis  
1601 Brittany Marihugh  
1607 Kandice Toth  
2021 India Waterman  
2024 Madyson Kirby  
2027 Dante Beatty  
2028 Michelle Howell

## Debbie's Area

2005 Tracy Dean  
2010 Marquanz Wofford  
2017 Roxanne Cothran  
2019 Taylor Gosnell  
2042 Satoya Means  
2043 Katrina Fowler  
6004 Kelly Lopez  
6007 Tabitha Jones

## Michelle's Area

1201 Michelle Vieira  
2009 Destiny Turner  
2022 Rose Tuna  
3003 Crystal Glosser  
3004 Keisha Gibbs  
4004 Jacob Sherf  
8001 Jessica Serrato



# January/February Sales Contest Items

Giants 2 for \$7.99

Recover 2 for \$4.00

Good 2 Grow Only \$3.39

Bucked Up BOGO



**1 Cashier Winner for each of the 4 Divisions \$500.00 per item.**

**1 Store Manager Winner for each of the 4 Divisions \$250.00 per item.**

**1 overall District Manager Winner for each contest \$250.00 per item.**

# REFERRAL BONUS



**HOT SPOT  
NOW HIRING**

**JOIN OUR TEAM**

- GREAT STARTING PAY
- MONTHLY SALES CONTEST
- RAISE AFTER 90 DAYS
- SPECIAL HOLIDAY PREMIUMS
- 401K AVAILABLE
- VACATION PAY STARTING AT 6 MONTHS
- HEALTH/LIFE INSURANCE
- PAYING EXTRA FOR BILINGUAL

APPLY TODAY AT [WWW.WEBSITE.COM](http://WWW.WEBSITE.COM)

**TEMPORARY REFERRAL BONUS PROGRAM** This program applies to ALL employees, except management. Employees will receive a **\$200** bonus for referrals that are still employed after 60 days.

**The referral must be listed on the employment application.**

## The Hartford Employee Assistance Program (EAP) –For All Employees & Family Members

Are personal problems affecting your focus and performance at work? You are not alone. The EAP offers services to help you deal with personal problems you may be facing.



What does the EAP cover?

- Substance abuse
- Stress management
- Financial problems
- Divorce/marital problems
- Crisis intervention
- Legal problems

EAPs offer education, awareness and counseling services to help you with your problems.

**AND YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM IS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND FREE!**

Contact your HR department for more information.

To start getting help today call: 1-800-964-3577

[www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com)

First time users click register

Organization Web ID: HLF902

Mental Health Awareness Month:

### Overcome Fear of Stigma to Seek Counseling



Personal challenges can impact well-being, and mental distractions that often accompany them can keep you from feeling like your best self. Your employee assistance program (EAP) is an easy path to help with challenges, but does stigma or embarrassment hold you back? You are sure of confidentiality, but you believe handling problems on your own better demonstrates you are not incompetent or weak. Here's the big reveal: Nothing could be further from the truth. Seeking counseling is a courageous and proactive decision that demonstrates strength, self-awareness, and a commitment to personal growth. Just as you would seek medical care for a physical ailment, seeking counseling for challenges or emotional pain is a vital aspect of self-care. Today, employers are committed to fostering a culture of support where seeking counseling is encouraged. So, go for it. Make the call. Your future self will thank you for it.

## **Know Your Company's Values**

**Are you aware of your employer's core values? Values shape a work culture, wow customers, help an organization compete, and may influence the world at large. Some of your most well-respected peers likely reflect the employer's core values. Value statements typically apply to everything a company does, but understanding how they apply to your job may elevate your position and advance your career. And taking them to heart can help you be more engaged or even influence promotions.**



### ***THE COMPANY'S MISSION STATEMENT***

**The goal of RL Jordan Oil Company, Hot Spot stores, and our restaurants is to provide our customers with excellent and convenient service, a clean, safe and pleasant environment and quality products at competitive prices for the purpose of building a profitable business. Furthermore, it is the Company's intention to strive to provide satisfying and rewarding employment believing that satisfied employees will result in satisfied customer.**



## End Your Day with a Transition Ritual

If you have struggled with work-life balance, try creating a “transition ritual”—a symbolic approach to ending your day that prompts a mental shift from your professional responsibilities to your personal life and responsibilities at home. For example, at each day’s end, routinely turn off lights, straighten your desk, close the laptop, write tomorrow’s to-do list, and/or take a short walk. You may soon experience a faster and healthier mental separation between work and leisure so you gain the full benefits of your time off.



## Stress Tips from the Field: Take It One Day at a Time

“Taking life one day at a time” is a common saying, meaning to deal with each day’s problems as they come instead of worrying about the future. But it means much more, like pausing and engaging with what is happening right now, thereby appreciating the present moment. This reduces anxiety, produces a calming effect, and puts the brakes on catastrophizing. Instantly, you cease magnifying potential negative outcomes of a stressor, crisis, or concern that you face. You discover that you can control your responses to these things and not be swept up by them. Consider using the “one day at a time” stress management strategy more often. It doesn’t mean neglecting goals or plans or necessary interventions. It simply encourages balanced living right now and maintaining a perspective about concerns.



## “Do It Now” Revisited

Procrastination would be a thing of the past if “do it now” were as easy as it sounds. To overcome procrastination, use baby steps. For example, need to finish a report? Step one might be to turn on your computer. Even better, walk into your office with step two being to turn it on. 2) Look at the clock and promise one minute of dedication to the task. The idea is that one minute will turn into two, and before long you are done. 3) Promise a reward. (“If I finish this task, I am taking myself to a movie!”) This is called a “pull strategy.” 4) Get an accountability partner—ask a person to check in with you to see if you have completed the task. This is a powerful tactic, but avoid choosing those with whom you have strong emotional ties such as a spouse, another family member, or a close friend. Ironically, your relationship can reduce the urgency needed to complete the task if you don’t fear their disappointment or reaction to your failure to follow through. The do-it-now mentality is a stepping stone to something even more powerful—a proactive mindset—which can significantly boost productivity and your ability to take immediate action. Experiment with strategies that work for you. Make it your goal to adopt a proactive mindset that instills an ability to take immediate action.



## Supporting a Loved One Who Has Cancer

Upon learning that a loved one has received a cancer diagnosis, you may find it challenging to determine the most supportive and comforting words to express or the best way to offer your support. 1) Be positive and encouraging. Don’t allow fear of unintentionally causing distress to keep you from this role. 2) “Being there”—meaning listening—is your most crucial role. 3) Discard the notion that you must produce a “right” answer or “solution” to what the person is experiencing. 4) Don’t back away or be avoidant, but make visits and contacts purposeful. 5) Don’t say, “If you need me for anything, just ask.” Instead, offer what you can do to lessen a burden. Use the EAP for help in navigating your emotions about the diagnosis and you’ll feel more empowered to be supportive during this critical time.





# Valentine's Day History



## Who Is St. Valentine?

It is believed that St. Valentine served as a priest in third century Rome. At that time, Emperor Claudius II had a standing decree that young single men were not to marry. The emperor thought that marriage and children were a distraction to men of fighting age who were needed to serve as soldiers (with their full allegiance given to Rome).

It was perhaps similar thinking that led Claudius to persecute Christians. The emperor (rightly) believed that Christians devoted their strongest allegiance to something and someone other than Rome.

St. Valentine, believing that Claudius was interfering with matters of the Church and of God, is said to have married young lovers in secret. Tradition holds that he also assisted many Christian martyrs, helping some to escape the harsh Roman prisons.

For one or both of these reasons, Valentine himself was imprisoned. Yet, difficult conditions did not hinder his very evident commitment to the Lord.

He preached his faith to his prison guard Asterius, who was converted and baptized along with his whole family. And, it is said that St. Valentine restored sight to the blind, adopted daughter of Asterius, with whom he fell in love (remember, priests were allowed to marry before the fourth century).

When word of these events reached Claudius, he ordered that if Valentine would not immediately deny his faith, he should be beaten and afterwards beheaded. Far from being intimidated by Claudius' command, Valentine apparently tried to convert the emperor — an action which secured his fate.

Just before his death on February 14, around 270 A.D., Valentine is said to have penned a tender farewell letter to the daughter of Asterius, who had visited him regularly during his confinement. He signed the letter, "From Your Valentine."

## How Did St. Valentine's Day Begin?

In 496 A.D., Pope Gelasius officially set aside February 14 to honor St. Valentine. It is believed that Christians came to associate Valentine's Day with romantic love because they were trying to supplant a popular pagan Roman festival called Lupercalia, celebrated on February 15.

For the Lupercalia celebration, Roman boys would choose a partner by drawing the name of a girl from a box or urn; the couple would then exchange gifts. The partnership would sometimes last until the next Lupercalia celebration, or it may even result in marriage.

Christian leaders tried to replace this custom by encouraging believers to draw saints' names from a box. The saint would then be your patron saint for the year. But this tradition never quite caught on. Rather, Christians chose to celebrate the virtue of love, particularly romantic love, on St. Valentine's Day. By all accounts, St. Valentine's life modeled this virtue (in the pure and selfless way described in 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8 of the Bible). It seems fitting that the day set aside to remember him would be a day to celebrate love!



## February and the heart: More than Valentine's Day

February is Heart Month, and with it, I hope many people make a commitment to getting heart healthy. As a cardiologist, many well-intentioned people will come to my office seeking guidance, especially about weight loss.



While January sees an uptick in gym memberships, by the time February rolls around, dedication to working out becomes challenging. Exercise is, of course, heart healthy and everyone should make an effort to stay physically active. But few people can lose weight with exercise alone, and for weight loss, this dreaded phrase still rings true: count your calories.

After a decade of devising many approaches to help motivate my patients, it turns out that perhaps the simplest plan has been our most successful. Sharing is caring, as my father-in-law used to say, so here we go.

### Three simple steps toward weight loss and a healthier heart

**1. Picture a plate as a peace sign** (or Mercedes sign if you prefer), with three equal sections. If you have trouble picturing thirds, then I recommend buying a set of sectional plates for the house. They work for those under the age of 10 as well, should you have picky eaters (also known as children). Now, place a different food group or item in each section. I am friendly with many of my patients, so the smart alecks will sometimes ask: does splitting a burger into thirds count? (It doesn't.)

**2. No seconds.** It's really that simple. Mindful eating is an exciting method that is catching on, generally with people who already are into a healthy lifestyle. I myself took a class in it. While it is fun in the moment ... it is very hard to teach others. However, if family and friends are partaking in "seconds" while you are at the table ... slowing down your pace and enjoying your food is your only defense. "No seconds" breeds mindful eaters.

**3. Have three bites of anything yummy and delicious.** Whether you have a sweet tooth or it's the savory items that excite you, three bites are the limit. The first bite is because you want it. Enjoy it. The second bite is an act of defiance. Revel in it. The third bite is the last and should be savored the most. It is the last one because you respect yourself and have a laudable goal that you will achieve. Some people have asked whether we could stretch that out to five bites. A few thoughts. In five bites, I could finish a large slice of pumpkin pie (*and this is in fact a diet*). We don't like calling it this, but in essence we are curbing calories. So, no. Three bites it is.

### Finding your plan for a healthy weight and a healthy heart

This plan may not work for everyone. For those who can afford dieting systems with prepared foods, or are facile with calorie-counting apps, those may be better. But for the average person, who just wants to see some progress in his or her weight loss, this might be for you. Some people hear this and think it will be easy, until they start. Others are concerned that it seems too restrictive, but the process is actually easier than they thought. Most people are able to stick with it long enough to see some small gains (actually, losses), which is sometimes all the motivation you need to dedicate yourself to the plan for a bit longer. Whatever your plan, make it approachable, stick with it, and forgive yourself if you stray – but get back on board quickly.

Happy Valentine's Day to all, and here's to a healthy and well-moderated New Year.



# Numbers Linked to Ideal Heart Health

How well are you protecting yourself against heart disease, the nation's leading cause of death? A check of five important numbers can give you a good idea: blood pressure, blood sugar, LDL cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and waist circumference. Those values provide a picture of a person's overall health and, more specifically, what factors they may need to address to lower their chance of a heart attack or stroke.

Below are the ideal values for each measurement, along with why they're important and targeted advice for improving them. Universal suggestions for improving all five measurements appear at the very end.

## **Blood Pressure**

### **Less than 120/80 mm Hg**

Blood pressure readings tell you the force of blood pushing against your arteries when your heart contracts (systolic blood pressure, the first number) and relaxes (diastolic blood pressure, the second number). Your blood pressure reflects how hard your heart is working (when you're resting or exercising, for example) and the condition of your blood vessels. Narrowed, inflexible arteries cause blood pressure to rise.

**Why it matters to heart health:** High blood pressure accelerates damage to blood vessels, encouraging a buildup of fatty plaque (atherosclerosis). This sets the stage for a heart attack. High blood pressure forces the heart's main pumping chamber to enlarge, which can lead to heart failure. Finally, high blood pressure raises the risk of strokes due to a blocked or burst blood vessel in the brain.

**What helps:** A diet rich in potassium (found in many vegetables, fruits, and beans) and low in sodium (found in excess in many processed and restaurant foods); minimizing alcohol.

## **LDL cholesterol**

### **Less than 70 mg/dL**

A cholesterol test (or lipid profile) shows many numbers. Doctors are usually most concerned about low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, particles that makes up about two-thirds of the cholesterol in the blood.

**Why it matters to heart health:** Excess LDL particles lodge inside artery walls. Once there, they are engulfed by white blood cells, forming fat-laden foam cells that make up atherosclerosis.

**What helps:** Limiting saturated fat (found in meat, dairy, and eggs) and replacing those lost calories with unsaturated fat (found in nuts, seeds, and vegetable oils).

## **Triglycerides**

### **Less than 150 mg/dL**

Perhaps less well-known than cholesterol, triglycerides are the most common form of fat in the bloodstream. Derived from food, these molecules provide energy for your body. But excess calories, alcohol, and sugar the body can't use are turned into triglycerides and stored in fat cells.

**Why it matters to heart health:** Like high LDL cholesterol, elevated triglyceride values have been linked to a higher risk of heart attack and stroke.

**What helps:** Limiting foods that are high in unhealthy fats, sugar, or both; eating foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (such as fish); avoiding alcohol.

## **Blood Sugar**

### **Less than 100 mg/dL (fasting)**

High blood sugar defines the diagnosis of diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is most common. It occurs when the body develops insulin resistance (insulin enables cells to take in sugar) and does not produce enough insulin to overcome the resistance.

**Why it matters to heart health:** High blood sugar levels damage blood vessel walls and cause sugar (glucose) to attach to LDL. This makes LDL more likely to oxidize – another factor that promotes atherosclerosis. Excess sugar in the blood also makes cell fragments called platelets stickier so they're more likely to form clots, which can trigger a heart attack or stroke.

**What helps:** Avoiding sugary beverages and foods high in sugar; eating whole, unprocessed grains instead of foods made with refined grains (white flour, white rice).

## **Waist circumference**

### **Whichever number is lower:**

### **Less than half your height in inches OR**

### **Women: Less than 35 inches**

### **Men: Less than 40 inches**

Measure your waist around your bare abdomen just above your navel (belly button). A big belly – what doctors call abdominal or visceral obesity – usually means fat surrounding internal organs.

**Why it matters to heart health:** Visceral fat secretes hormones and other factors that encourage inflammation, which triggers the release of white blood cells involved in atherosclerosis.

**What helps:** Consuming fewer calories, especially those from highly processed foods full of sugar, salt, and unhealthy types of fat.

## Here's the story behind Black History Month — and why it's celebrated in February



At the March on Washington on Aug. 28, 1963, African Americans carry placards demanding equal rights, integrated schools, decent housing and an end to bias.

*Warren K Leffler/Universal History Archive/Getty Images*

Every February, the U.S. honors the contributions and sacrifices of African Americans who have helped shape the nation. Black History Month celebrates the rich cultural heritage, triumphs and adversities that are an indelible part of our country's history.

There is no American history without African American history," said Sara Clarke Kaplan, executive director of the Antiracist Research & Policy Center at American University in Washington, D.C. The Black experience, she said, is embedded in "everything we think of as 'American history.' "

### **First, there was Negro History Week**

Critics have long argued that Black history should be taught and celebrated year-round, not just during one month each year.

It was Carter G. Woodson, the "father of Black history," who first set out in 1926 to designate a time to promote and educate people about Black history and culture, according to W. Marvin Dulaney. He is a historian and the president of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH).

Woodson envisioned a weeklong celebration to encourage the coordinated teaching of Black history in public schools. He designated the second week of February as Negro History Week and galvanized fellow historians through the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, which he founded in 1915. (ASNLH later became ASALH.)

The idea wasn't to place limitations but really to focus and broaden the nation's consciousness.

Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950) was an American historian, a scholar and the founder of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Woodson was instrumental in launching Negro History Week in 1926.



"Woodson's goal from the very beginning was to make the celebration of Black history in the field of history a 'serious area of study,' " said Albert Broussard, a professor of Afro-American history at Texas A&M University.

The idea eventually grew in acceptance, and by the late 1960s, Negro History Week had evolved into what is now known as Black History Month. Protests around racial injustice, inequality and anti-imperialism that were occurring in many parts of the U.S. were pivotal to the change.

Colleges and universities also began to hold commemorations, with Kent State University being one of the first, according to Kaplan.

Fifty years after the first celebrations, President Gerald R. Ford officially recognized Black History Month during the country's 1976 bicentennial. Ford called upon Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history," History.com reports.

### **Why February was chosen as Black History Month**

February was chosen primarily because the second week of the month coincides with the birthdays of both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. Lincoln was influential in the emancipation of slaves, and Douglass, a former slave, was a prominent leader in the abolitionist movement, which fought to end slavery.

Lincoln and Douglass were each born in the second week of February, so it was traditionally a time when African Americans would hold celebrations in honor of emancipation, Kaplan said. (Douglass' exact date of birth wasn't recorded, but he came to celebrate it on Feb. 14.)

Thus, Woodson created Negro History Week around the two birthdays as a way of "commemorating the black past," according to ASALH.

Forty years after Ford formally recognized Black History Month, it was Barack Obama, the nation's first Black president, who delivered a message of his own from the White House, a place built by slaves.

"Black History Month shouldn't be treated as though it is somehow separate from our collective American history or somehow just boiled down to a compilation of greatest hits from the March on Washington or from some of our sports heroes," Obama said.

"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," he continued.

(Canada also commemorates Black History Month in February, while the U.K. and Ireland celebrate it in October.)