

An invitation to bring healing and community change in response to tragedy

Making the Dream a Reality



The beginning of February marked the start of Black History Month—a month to celebrate the achievements and contributions Black people have always made to this nation. This year, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) gave February the theme of "Black Health and Wellness." The goal is to recognize the legacy of Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birth workers, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The Association for the Study of African American Life and History promotes studying Black history as a discipline and to celebrate the accomplishments of African Americans.

Why is February Black History Month? In 1926, Dr. Carter Goodwin Woodson, the founder of ASALH, established “Negro History Week” during the second week of February. This week holds the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln; two men who are American symbols of freedom.

This first week-long celebration in 1926 allowed for a new understanding of Black culture and literature among middle class America. During the Civil Rights Movement, schools in the south utilized “Negro History Week” as an opportunity to critique the lack of Black historical figures in textbooks about the Civil War and in general. It was universities and colleges across the U.S. that transformed the week into a Black History Month on campuses. President Gerald Ford made Black History Month a national observance in 1976.

Below are ways to celebrate Black History Month at a national and Minnesota-state level.

Museums and Exhibits

- Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery
- Somali Museum of Minnesota
- Mia

Support Black Owned Businesses

- Boutiques and shops
- Restaurants
- Black artists and creatives

Watch Documentaries and Read Books

- TPT Twin Cities PBS has an extensive schedule of documentaries for Black History Month
- “Black History Is American History” is a collection of films and documentaries on Netflix
- Goodreads recommended books to read for Black History Month (and beyond)



February is the month of love. There is room for reflection to appreciate people close to us and those who have made positive impacts in our lives. Philando Castile comes to mind as someone who made a difference in the lives of others.

Philando spread love in his day-to-day life, but also in his job as a nutrition services supervisor at J.J. Hill Montessori School. Not only did he work to pay off lunch debts of J.J. Hill students, but he served as an important role model and mentor to students by helping them feel included in the lunchroom.

So, in honor of Philando, spread some love this month by donating to the Philando Castile Peace Garden. Please ask your friends and family to donate, too.

Your donations will help us complete beautification projects, like planting flowers and other greenery, but also to maintain the garden so it can be appreciated by many generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support!



The Philando Castile Peace Garden has made a lot of progress in the past couple of months! It is not finished—there is still signage, lights, and artwork to be installed—but let's take time to appreciate where we are today and how far it's come.

Check out the video below to take a virtual stroll through the Philando Castile Peace Garden on a sunny winter day.



Click the video to visit the Peace Garden!

DONATE NOW

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