

STATE OF ALASKA



Executive Proclamation by Governor Mike Dunleavy

WHEREAS, in 1976, as Americans celebrated the national bicentennial, President Gerald Ford urged the nation to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history” and, for the first time, Black History Month was celebrated nationwide; and

WHEREAS, President Ford’s words rang true to the nation, and in that spirit, decades later, we stop to recognize and celebrate the incredible roles African Americans have played in Alaska’s history, and their many contributions to the wellbeing of our state; and

WHEREAS, the theme of Black History Month 2021 is “The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity”, which provides “a rich tapestry of images for exploring the African American past and present”; and

WHEREAS, the strong and positive influence African Americans have had on Alaska started well before statehood as a result of African American men migrating to Alaska to work in whaling, fur trading, and eventually gold mining; and

WHEREAS, we have long benefitted from the contributions of outstanding African American men and women, including Willard Bowman, who moved to Alaska after serving the nation in the U.S. Navy, went on to be appointed the first Director of the Alaska Human Rights Commission in 1963, and later served three terms in the Alaska House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, this month we honor our African American neighbors, their accomplishments and contributions, and together we celebrate the distinct influence they have on the cultural fabric of our Great State.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Mike Dunleavy, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA, do hereby proclaim February 2021 as:

Black History Month

in Alaska, and encourage all Alaskans to recognize the continuing impact African Americans have on our state and the lasting contributions they bring to the success of our communities.

Dated: February 1, 2021



A blue ink signature of Mike Dunleavy.

*Mike Dunleavy, Governor
who has also authorized the
seal of the State of Alaska to
be affixed to this proclamation.*