BLACK LEGACY MONTH
FEBRUARY 2026

WHEREAS, in 1926 during the middle of the Harlem Renaissance in America, a movement where artists embraced pride in Black life and identity, awareness grew of the inequalities and discrimination Black Americans were experiencing, and;

WHEREAS, through their work, Carter G. Woodson and Minister Jesse E. Moorland laid the foundation for Black History Month with the celebration of "Negro History Week" to document achievements of Black Americans and highlight Black representation in important policy decisions, and;

WHEREAS, in 1976, President Gerald Ford made Black History Month a national observance, declaring that, "in celebrating Black History Month, we can take satisfaction from this recent progress in the realization of the ideals envisioned by our Founding Fathers. But, even more than this, we can seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history", and;

WHEREAS, the Allen School founded in 1887 in Asheville, offered basic education classes for girls, boys, and adults; later becoming a boarding school for girls that produced nationally and internationally recognized women including singer, songwriter Nina Simone and Dr. Christine Darden, one of the first Black female aerospace engineers for NASA, and;

WHEREAS, the Young Men's Institute, now called the YMI Cultural Center, is one of the oldest Black cultural centers in the United States. Founded in 1892, the YMI offered community spaces including kindergartens, pharmacies, doctors' offices, and a public library for Black people, and;

WHEREAS, since February 2015 the local Christine Avery Learning Center ensures marginalized communities are enhanced by "equipping, empowering, and energizing the next generation of socially conscious leaders," unwaveringly expanding access to high quality early learning, fostering a community that serves as a trusted anchor for families, and;

WHEREAS, Buncombe County has furthered its commitment to access through inclusive, accessible, authentic engagement when developing and implementing programs, plans, or policy to reach all community members, and;

WHEREAS, Buncombe County has furthered its commitment to access through inclusive, accessible, authentic engagement when developing and implementing programs, plans, or policy, and;

WHEREAS, this Black Legacy Month we lift up the legacy of education and entrepreneurship within the black community by recognizing those who work every day for its advancement, and;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners hereby resolves and declares **February 2026** as **Black Legacy Month,** a time to celebrate the rich and diverse cultures of Black people, to raise awareness about our shared history, and to shed light on the invaluable contributions pioneered by Black communities locally and throughout the nation.

This 3rd day of February 2026.

Amanda Edwards

Amanda Edwards, Chair
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners