



Proclamation

Mayor Shaundel

City of La Crosse

Black history is American history. In La Crosse, we proudly honor the legacy, resilience, and achievements of Black Americans past, present, and future while recognizing the vital role Black leaders have played in shaping our city and our nation.

WHEREAS, in February 1926, Harvard scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson launched Negro History Week to study, teach, and celebrate the significant contributions Black people have made to the American Story; and

WHEREAS, Negro History Week grew into Black History Month, officially recognized in 1976 by Gerald R. Ford, who urged all Americans to honor the historic contributions of Black Americans as part of the nation's Bicentennial; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month was originated in the United States and is now observed globally, affirming that the pursuit of justice and equity, and the celebration of Black excellence, transcend borders; and

WHEREAS, 2026 marks one hundred years of Black history commemorations, 50 years of Negro History Week, and 50 years of Black History Month, a powerful milestone underscoring both progress made and the work still ahead ; and

WHEREAS, Black history is deeply woven into the fabric of La Crosse from the leadership and resilience of early Black residents to the ongoing work of organizations such as Black Leaders Acquiring Collective Knowledge (B.L.A.C.K.), Hope Restore and the Enduring Families project and others dedicated to the work that embraces history and empowers youth, families, and professionals; and

WHEREAS, the significant contributions of La Crosse individuals, including George Edwin Taylor, George Coleman Poage, Lillian Davenport, John Birney, Nathan Smith, and many others might have remained overlooked without the dedicated educational efforts of community historians, educators, and groups like the Enduring Families Project; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month calls us to confront past and present racism and inequality, to honor those who have faced adversity and fought for freedom and justice and to advance policies and practices that ensure equity, opportunity, and dignity for all; and

WHEREAS, La Crosse recognizes ongoing disparities in health, education, housing, employment, and civic participation, and affirms its commitment to Black health and wellness, community safety, and inclusive growth; and



Proclamation

Mayor Shaundel

City of La Crosse

WHEREAS, the City of La Crosse continues working to build an inclusive and diverse community, acknowledging historical inequities while embracing the responsibility to meet current and future challenges with courage, collaboration, and accountability.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, SHAUNDEL WASHINGTON-SPIVEY, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LA CROSSE, do hereby proclaim February, 2026, as

“BLACK HISTORY MONTH”

in the City of La Crosse and encourage all residents to learn, reflect, and participate in activities that celebrate Black history locally and nationally and to commit to the shared work of equity, justice, and inclusion.

Dated on this 1st day of February in the year Two Thousand Twenty-Six.

MAYOR SHAUNDEL

