



## Despite Limits, We Achieve!

It has been nearly 100 years since Carter G. Woodson established Black History Month, an intentional effort to never forget the inhumane acts against Black people in America while elevating the indelible impact that Black people have had on society worldwide. The current attempts in our nation to reframe, suppress, dilute, and censor Black history to soothe the souls and dull the consciousness of our nation, makes the establishment and commemoration of Black history even more prolific, prophetic, and important.

Now is the time to speak truth and memorialize it; it is a time to institutionalize Black history so that it is never forgotten, manipulated, suppressed, or categorized as alternative facts. It is a time to enshrine Black history and the struggles on the hearts and minds of our future leaders of all cultures and backgrounds so that we will not reproduce human and civil rights tragedies like the [Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921](#) or the killing of 25-year-old [Ahmaud Marquez Arbery \(2020\)](#).

February typically highlights contributions made by Black Americans to improve the educational, social, and political evolution of this nation, people such as Harriet Tubman, Dr. Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. However, this year we must not only pay homage to the foundational work of the greats; we must recognize that this also is a time for us to tell the stories of modern-day change agents and of the unfinished work that remains for us.

This is a time when we celebrate and tell the story of [“Made at Sac State” Black filmmaker Ryan Coogler](#), 35, who directed “Fruitvale Station” (2013) and “Black Panther” (2018), which is the highest-grossing film directed by a Black filmmaker, third-highest-grossing film in the U.S. and Canada, and the second-highest-grossing film of 2018. This is a time to tell the story of the youngest poet laureate and inauguration poet in U.S. history, Amanda Gorman, 23, who captured the hearts of many as she compelled the nation with her powerful poem “The Hill We Climb” at the 2021 inauguration of President Joe Biden and the first Black-South-Asian female vice president, Kamala Harris.

The list of greats is long, and their achievements have not been made by walking on a [“crystal stair.”](#) To properly celebrate Black History Month, the stories we tell must include the context from which Black people excel and positively impact American culture.

Despite involuntary enslavement, we achieve.  
Despite racial discrimination, profiling, bomb threats and realities, we achieve.  
Despite educational and social segregation, and anti-Blackness, we achieve.  
Despite cultural taxation, police brutality, and mass incarceration, we achieve.  
Despite systemic racism, economic exploitation, and political sabotage, we achieve.

Despite limitations, the Black community’s struggle and sacrifice for protection, freedom, and liberty have paved the way to improve the human condition for all: the poor of all cultural backgrounds, women, the LGBTQ+ community, communities with disabilities, the religiously persecuted, and many more. As we celebrate the great sacrifice and many achievements of Black people this month, let’s give credit where credit is due and share the truth of the Black experience uncensored. Let’s remove the barriers to achievement that create trauma and join together in the movement, because there is more work to be done.

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## Join in the Celebration!

Click here for information on [upcoming Black History Month events](#) at Sac State.

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