Happy Black History Month Everyone!

Every February reminds us to celebrate the contributions of Black people to this country and to civilization. This February, our reminder to celebrate is happening during an unprecedented time of tragedy between COVID-19 and the violent backlash against protests for racial justice.

We would like to encourage everyone to use this month (and all months) to recognize and celebrate Black art, music, culture, food, institutions, leadership, and joy. But we would also like to remind you that celebrating the contributions of Black people is not all that is needed at this time. We must also value and protect Black lives and fight the structures and systems that threaten them. Our Vincentian Mission requires us to fight for lasting and systemic change to create justice. The quest for racial justice is far from over, and our commitment to racial equity is needed more now than ever. We must continue our efforts to change policies, structures, and attitudes working toward racial equity of power, privileges, and rights beyond this year. We made commitments to racial justice after the murder of George Floyd, some of which have succeeded. But what is needed is an ongoing effort to fight for the changes in these commitments and to make greater commitments as we have wins.

This year, not only were the lives of Black Americans continually threatened through systemic physical violence, but they have also been the victims of the pervasive systemic racism that has caused more deaths of Black people from COVID-19. We hope that your empathy drives you to be emboldened by these tragedies to make lives better and to end these injustices. This ask can be challenging, but ultimately celebratory. There will be much more shared joy if we are able to lift burdens caused by systemic racism.

That said, please use the virtual sphere we are in to travel across the U.S. to view Black art, culture, and history from organizations close to home—like the DuSable Museum—and those farther away—like the National Museum of African American History & Culture in Washington, D.C. Please see the links below for online plays, videos, photo galleries, and virtual museum tours and programs. There are also family centered Black History Month activities, like coloring pages and programming from the Field Museum.

Staff Council will be using our remaining Diversity Mission & Inclusion Office Hours this month to celebrate Black history.

- Tuesday 2/16: Black U.S. History Trivia
- Tuesday 2/23: Black Feminist Theory Discussion


Check out the virtual exhibits of the National Museum of African American History & Culture:
https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/exhibitions


Art as Activism: Graphic Art from the Merrill C. Berman Collection:

Matt Brooks and Higher Learning Photography present this homage called- "There Is Beauty In Being Black." ["There Is Beauty In Being Black": Black Chicago Appreciation Project](#)

**Family Activities:**

Black History Coloring Pages: [https://coloringbookfun.com/misc/black-history](https://coloringbookfun.com/misc/black-history)

Chicago Children’s Choir Black History Month Concert (February 25th -6:45 pm): [https://ccchoir.org/black-history-month-2021/](https://ccchoir.org/black-history-month-2021/)

Field Museum Black History Month Events: [https://www.fieldmuseum.org/visit/daily-events/black-history-month](https://www.fieldmuseum.org/visit/daily-events/black-history-month)

Support Black Owned Businesses in Chicago: [https://blackshopfriday.com/shops?neighborhood=all](https://blackshopfriday.com/shops?neighborhood=all)