



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Roxanne J. Persaud

Senator Roxanne J. Persaud Celebrates February As Black History Month

SENATOR ROXANNE J. PERSAUD February 1, 2016

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(Brooklyn, NY) Senator Roxanne Persaud (D) Senate District 19; today recognized February as Black History Month and urged New Yorkers to celebrate the many accomplishments African Americans have made to New York and the United States.

“It is important to take time this month to reflect upon, and celebrate, the priceless contributions of African Americans to our community, state and nation,” Senator Persaud

said. “Black History Month serves as an important reminder of our continued and shared fight for greater social and economic justice for all.”

Originating in 1926 as “Negro History Week,” historian Carter G. Woodson chose February for this celebration because the second week of the month marks the birthdays of both President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist and former slave Frederick Douglass. In 1976, the week of recognition and celebration was later extended to the entire month of February. The 2016 theme is Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories.

Senator Persaud concluded, “There are numerous African Americans whom have essentially re-shaped the course of American history and helped build a stronger, fairer and more just society. I strongly encourage all New Yorkers to embrace the African American experience and take part in Black History Month celebrations and remembrances in our community.”

Black History Month Events

January 21–February 26

America: The Legacy of African American Public Service at the Central Park Arsenal

Despite the presence of slavery, segregation and prejudice, an African American was elected to US public office as early as 1768—and many more have followed, including Barack Obama, whose 2008 election made him the first black president of the United States. This exhibition features art, celebrating those public servants and their achievements.

February 1–29

Black History Month at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

The month kicks off with a discussion on Basquiat (February 1); other events include a talk

about the musical version of *The Color Purple* (February 8); a showing of African-American photography taken from the Kamoinge archives (February 9); and an appearance by music producer LA Reid (February 23).

February 1–29

Louis Armstrong House Museum Celebrates Black History Month at Louis Armstrong House Museum

The museum will spend the month honoring Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five—among the most influential bands in jazz history. All museum visitors will receive a reproduction scrapbook page from the just-opened exhibition *Hotter Than That* (which runs through mid-October). Visitors can also take house tours that emphasize Armstrong's role as a civil rights pioneer.

February 4 and 18

Black History Month Events at Brooklyn Historical Society

"Why New York? Slavery on Long Island" (February 4) is a panel about slavery's role in Long Island's development. February 18 brings a screening and discussion of *The Green Book Chronicles*. The film tells the story of (and is named for) Victor H. Green's guidebook, which listed a network of white- and black-owned businesses that welcomed African Americans during segregation and helped ensure safe travel prior to the passage of the Civil Rights Act.

February 6

First Saturday at the Brooklyn Museum

The museum's monthly free Saturday night of music, film and other public programming follows a Black History Month theme in February. Among the highlights are a Romare Bearden-inspired art-making activity; a screening of *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*; and performances by Tai Allen, Dasan Ahanu, Latasha Alcindor and Charles

Perry.

February 16

Celebrate Black History Month: George Washington Carver Workshop at Queens Botanical Garden

Botanist George Washington Carver was known as the Wizard of Tuskegee for his groundbreaking research into the cultivation of and alternative uses for crops like sweet potatoes, peanuts and soybeans. Children attending this workshop will learn about Carver's achievements, paint with plant dyes and plant a peanut seed that they can take home for further observation.

February 27

Black History Month Trolley Tour at Green-Wood Cemetery

Learn about the monumental achievements and civil rights activism of noted New Yorkers on this trolley circuit. Stops include the graves of Susan Smith McKinney Steward, the first female black doctor in New York State; the (Brooklyn-born) downtown artist Jean-Michel Basquiat; and Jeremiah Hamilton, New York City's first black millionaire.

For more information about Black History Month, please visit:

<http://www.africanamericanhistorymonth.gov/>

For Black History Month educational resources, please visit:

http://smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/african_american_resources.html

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