

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2022-1003

TITLE: Resolution Commemorating Black History Month

AUTHOR(S): Minority Party Leader Gabrielle Adekunle

SPONSOR(S): Deputy Minority Party Leader Faith Corbett, Rules & Ethics Chairwoman Camille Consolo, Senator Oscar Santiago, Senator Olivia Green, Senator Spencer Gorelick, Senator Connor Panish, Senator Ethan Sawyer, Senator Andrew Fenning, Senator Kyle Fohrman, Senator Adrienne Weston, Senator Brendan Lamboglia, Judiciary Vice Chair Sean Harkins

WHEREAS, each February commemorates Black History Month, a period which honors and appreciates the rich culture, history and contributions of Black and African Americans throughout their continuous struggle for liberation and equity in a multitude of disciplines; and,

WHEREAS, Negro History Week, created by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, was expanded into Black History Month in 1976 by President Gerald Ford, who urged more Americans to recognize the contributions of African-Americans to America's life and culture [1]; and,

WHEREAS, Black History Month is a time to reflect on the struggles and victories of Black and African Americans throughout our country's history and to recognize their numerous contributions to this nation; and,

WHEREAS, 6.70% of the University of Florida's enrollment is comprised of Black or African American students as of 2020 [2]; and,

WHEREAS, the black community has contributed immensely to the success and prosperity of the University of Florida since desegregation in 1958; and

WHEREAS, on June 2021, it was reported that the University of Florida approved a historical marker to honor Black students' history [2]; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Marsha McGriff was selected to be the university's chief diversity officer after an 8-month search and committed to use "data and assessments when making decisions about diversity, equity and inclusion strategies and programs on campus" [3]; and,

WHEREAS, Judge Stephan P. Mickle, the first Black undergraduate at the University of Florida and the second Black person to obtain a law degree from the UF Levin College of Law,

passed away on January 26, 2021 and was recently honored by naming the Alachua County Criminal Courthouse after him in January 2022 [4]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida's Black Affairs aims to create, sustain, promote, and affirm Black scholarship, culture, history, and leadership [6]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida's Black Student Union hosts various events to celebrate Black History Month in partnership with many other student organizations; and

WHEREAS, the rebuilt Institute of Black Culture was reopened on Saturday, November 16, 2019, to serve as a home for black community building and cultural enrichment at the University of Florida [6]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Student Government must remain committed to supporting students and constantly working to become more culturally aware and inclusive; and,

WHEREAS, although Black History Month is an annual opportunity to celebrate progress, it is also a time to solemnly remember the work of those who fought for that progress, and continue to march on until victory is won; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the continued significance of Black History Month as an important time to celebrate the contributions of Black and African Americans to this nation's history.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate should fervently support and defend the interests of the Black and African American community at the University of Florida.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate is committed to supporting initiatives aimed at encouraging the continued recruitment and retention of Black American leadership at the University of Florida.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate commemorates February 1st through February 28th as Black History Month and calls upon the student body of the University of Florida to come together to embrace and celebrate the Black American community.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to University of Florida President W. Kent Fuchs, Provost Joseph Glover, Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Marsha McGriff, Vice President of Student Affairs D'Andra Mull, Executive Director of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs Will Atkins, Director of Black Affairs Carl Simien, and Black Student Union President Sherise Tracey.

[1] <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/commemorative-observations/african-american.php>

[2] <https://ir.aa.ufl.edu/uffacts/enrollment-1/>

[3] https://www.alligator.org/article/2021/06/uf-approves-historical-marker-recognizing-first-black-students?ct=content_open&cv=cbox_latest

[4] https://www.alligator.org/article/2021/11/new-uf-chief-diversity-officer-marsha-mcgriff?ct=content_open&cv=cbox_latest

[5] <https://www.alligator.org/article/2022/01/alachua-courthouse-renamed> [6] <https://blackaffairs.multicultural.ufl.edu/>



Elizabeth Hartzog
Senate President

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Date

