

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Recognizing Second District Black History Month Honorees

African American History Month, also known as Black History Month, is an annual global observance which began as Negro History Week in 1926 and has since evolved into a monthlong celebration. Throughout this year’s Black History Month, residents of Los Angeles County (County) have recommitted to observing Black history, learning the critical lessons of the past, and building a more just and equitable society. In addition to the well-known historical figures we celebrate each year, Angelenos can draw inspiration from today’s change makers as history unfolds here in the County. This year, the Second District honors several individuals and organizations whose everyday contributions empower their communities to overcome barriers faced in the struggle for justice and equality.

In recognition of the legacy of the first African American military aviators in the United States Armed Forces in World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (TAI) of Leimert Park partners with community agencies to provide programs to foster youth interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and other opportunities in related fields. Every year, TAI donates to the Tuskegee Airmen Scholarship Foundation to help youth further their education in STEM fields.

Lot XI, a community-conscious urban apothecary originally from Compton, supports local farmers and entrepreneurs and gives back to the community. With all products curated and crafted by hand, Lot XI uses environmentally safe and organic ingredients purchased through fair trade. Lot XI takes pride in sowing seeds in

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MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

February 23, 2021

Page 2

communities from which it benefits by giving back to where there is need. 15 percent of its sales are donated to community-based organizations and mental health support groups dedicated to serving students.

Poet and activist Amanda Gorman of Los Angeles focuses the work of her nascent – yet prolific – career on issues of oppression, feminism, race, and marginalization, as well as the African diaspora. Gorman was the first person to be named National Youth Poet Laureate and was chosen as the youth poet laureate of Los Angeles in 2014. In 2015, at the age of 17, Amanda Gorman's first poetry book "The One for Whom Food Is Not Enough" was published, several years before the nationally televised performance of her poem "The Hill We Climb" at the inauguration of President Joe Biden. In addition, Gorman founded the nonprofit organization One Pen One Page, a youth writing and leadership program.

Local artist Lauren Halsey, founder of Summaeverythang, created a community center which donates and delivers organic produce from local farms to residents in South Los Angeles. After witnessing COVID-19's disproportionate impact on employment and food security in South Central LA, Summaeverythang's Food Program has fed over 14,000 families completely free of charge. Lauren Halsey also connects with her community on an artistic level, depicting the realities of urban neighborhoods like South Central Los Angeles in her architecture and installation art which has been featured in exhibits around the world.

Kamarie Brown made history in 2020 by becoming the first African American woman to serve as a Student Board Member for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). A senior at Crenshaw High School Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) Magnet, she is enrolled in Advanced Placement and Honors classes at Crenshaw High School and is at the top of her class with a 4.4 grade-point average. Kamarie was chosen by seniors from high schools across LAUSD to engage with students and present their thoughts and opinions at LAUSD Board of Education meetings. During her term, her two focuses will be on the Student Bill of Rights and equity.

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

February 23, 2021

Page 3

The example of local leaders and change makers not only inspires but challenges us to reflect on our individual contributions towards the work of eliminating the barriers of racial inequality faced by many of our fellow Angelenos. As we continue to learn and share the lessons of Black history, it is critical that we also renew our commitment to the work of building a more just equitable society.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

In honor of African American History Month in Los Angeles County, acknowledge and recognize the contributions of Tuskegee Airman, Inc., Lot XI, Amanda Gorman, Lauren Halsey, and Kamarie Brown, for their selfless contributions to the present while honoring the past.

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(SL/CAS)