

# Township of Verona

# Proclamation

WHEREAS, in 1776, people envisioned the United States as a new nation dedicated to the proposition stated in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness ..."; and

WHEREAS, African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of citizenship; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the vestiges of those injustices and inequalities remain evident in the society of the United States; and

WHEREAS, in the face of injustices, people of good will and of all races have distinguished themselves with a commitment to the noble ideals on which the United States was founded and have fought courageously for the rights and freedom of African Americans and others; and

WHEREAS, the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life throughout the history of the United States reflect the greatness of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Black History Months was first observed by students and faculty at Kent State University in 1970; and

WHEREAS, in 1976 it evolved into a month-long celebration and became a national holiday when President Gerald Ford recognized "the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history" in a speech to mark the United States Bicentennial; and

WHEREAS, the history of the United States is the story of people regularly affirming high ideals, striving to reach those ideals but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of that failure, before committing to try again..

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that I, Mayor Jack McEvoy on behalf of the Township of Verona do hereby acknowledge that all people of the United States are the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture. We recognize the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead; We acknowledge the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to commemorate the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the United States; We encourage the celebration of Black History Month to provide a continuing opportunity for all people in the United States to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; We agree that, while the United States began as a divided country, the United States must honor the contribution of all pioneers in the United States who have helped to ensure the legacy of the great United States; and move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as a nation "indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause the Official Seal of the Township of Verona, New Jersey, to be affixed this 8th day of February 2021



JACK McEVOY  
Mayor