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LACCD BOARD APPROVES RESOLUTION CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

LOS ANGELES—The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board of Trustees this week unanimously approved the following resolution celebrating the importance of Black History Month. The resolution was presented by Trustee Nichelle Henderson and Board President Steven Veres.

IN RECOGNITION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO LACCD

WHEREAS, The birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, The month of February is officially celebrated as Black History Month, which dates to 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period of time in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, 2020 marked the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment ratification to the Constitution in 1870 when African-American men first obtained the right to vote following the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, The theme for the *2020 H.RES 869 Recognizing and Celebrating the Significance of Black History Month* called out the lessons we have learned from the struggle for voting rights for African-American men and women, and the continued challenges they face in exercising that right; and

WHEREAS, The Georgia race to fill both the U.S. Senate seats held on January 6, 2021, further demonstrated that every vote counts – spearheaded by Stacy Abrams and a legal onslaught against voter suppression -- African American and disenfranchised Georgia voters turned out in record numbers and handed Democrats control of the United States Senate by giving them control of Congress for the first time in a decade; and giving President Joe Biden the power to potentially enact sweeping legislation for low income, working and middle income people; and

WHEREAS, African Americans in all walks of life have made significant contributions throughout the history of the United States, including through the arts, music, literature, athletics, science, political representation and the military; and

WHEREAS, For over 36 million people of African-American descent, the designation and observation of February as Black History Month represents the nation's acknowledgment of the contributions, significance and continuing role of African-Americans in shaping the culture and history of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Central to the role and history of African-Americans is the acquisition of a thorough and meaningful education, which provides the tools to design, control and determine their own destiny, including economic, educational and political; and

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WHEREAS, The Los Angeles Board of Trustees recognizes that the shameful legacy of the intentional structuring of opportunity, implementation of policies and practices, and assignment of value, based solely on skin color and other physical characteristics, has created unfair disadvantages to African Americans and people of color that persist today; and

WHEREAS, The Chancellor and members of his Cabinet have taken the affirmative steps toward eliminating systemic bias and institutional racism by establishing the Framework for Racial Equity and Social Justice to take action in rooting out racism and to internalize anti-racist policies and practices at LACCD; and

WHEREAS, The Framework for Racial Equity and Social Justice speaks to the values of equity, diversity and inclusion at LACCD and directs specific action steps and commitments that will allow our colleges and district to set a cultural tone and to actively build anti-racist organizational capacity and resilience, and move toward a more socially and racially-just academic community; and

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles Board of Trustees, in August 2020, passed a Resolution in support of the LACCD Board of Trustees Framework for Racial Equity and Social Justice, which cites the killing of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, by a Minneapolis police officer that sparked global protests and has inspired a multitude of interventions and advocacy to address not only the issue of racialized violence at the hands of law enforcement, but systemic inequities and racist structures that have plagued this nation for centuries; and

WHEREAS, The Framework called upon the Chancellor to establish a Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Black/African American Student Affairs to provide advice, guidance and expertise to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees on issues impacting the Black/African American faculty, staff and student community; and

WHEREAS, The "avenue of equal opportunity access to education" has been the basic premise around which the community colleges of California have acquired support and credibility, and current figures and statistics indicate that there are still challenges to sustaining enrollments of African-American students attending educational institutions; and

WHEREAS, The Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Black/African American Student Affairs has identified the recruitment, retention and graduation of African American students, and the hiring of full-time faculty and staff as top priorities for the District; and

WHEREAS, Data show that 12.5% of employees at LACCD are of African American decent and the LACCD Board of Trustees recognizes that the District can and must do more to increase representation of African American faculty and staff; and

WHEREAS, Data show that at the Los Angeles Community College District 8.13 percent of the District student body is comprised of African American students, as compared to the County of Los Angeles population, which is 9.0 percent; and

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles Community College District has experienced a sharp decline of African American male student enrollments and has established partnerships with community-based organizations including, the Brotherhood Crusade, the Urban League of Los Angeles, and the National Council of Negro Women to assist with African American student outreach, recruitment and enrollment; and

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WHEREAS, Included in the Los Angeles Community College District's 2021 Legislative Advocacy Agenda, the District has included two major advocacy priorities that will benefit African American students, including: 1) Introduction of a State legislative bill that would mandate community college students statewide to complete at least one three-unit course in Ethnic Studies as a requirement to obtain an Associate's degree, including courses in Black/African American Studies, and 2) Introduction of a 2021-2022 State Budget request to expand and increase funding for the Umoja Program. The Umoja Program is dedicated to enhancing services and the educational experience of African American Students enrolled in the community college system; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District joins with the nation in recognizing and celebrating February as Black History Month by acknowledging the significant and impactful contributions of African Americans to this nation, to our higher education community and to LACCD, and encourages its colleges and student organizations to promote historical and cultural awareness by featuring various programs, exhibits, and other relevant activities and by participating in events sponsored by local communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Chancellor distribute a copy of this resolution to all nine campuses to increase awareness about Black History Month.

The LACCD colleges include: [Los Angeles City College](#); [East Los Angeles College](#); [Los Angeles Harbor College](#); [Los Angeles Mission College](#); [Los Angeles Pierce College](#); [Los Angeles Southwest College](#); [Los Angeles Trade-Technical College](#); [Los Angeles Valley College](#) and [West Los Angeles College](#).

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About the Los Angeles Community College District

We are the Colleges of Los Angeles! LACCD (www.laccd.edu) is the nation's largest community college district, educating about 250,000 students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing an important learning pathway for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities while also offering two-year degrees and certificated training programs to Southern California's diverse workforce in many specialized trades and professions. Follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/LACCD>, @LACCD, and on Twitter, <https://twitter.com/laccd> @laccd and Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu/ @laccd_edu.

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