

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY


CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER CARROLL FIFE

RESOLUTION IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY AND FUTURE MONTH IN FEBRUARY 2024 BY HONORING BLACK CHANGE-MAKERS IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND WORKING TOWARDS A TRANSFORMATIVE FUTURE THAT SEEKS TO DISMANTLE OPPRESSIVE SYSTEMS AND ADVANCE TRUE LIBERATION, SAFETY, AND OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Black History Month provides us the opportunity to recognize the innumerable achievements, contributions, and impact of Black people, while acknowledging the extensive work that still needs to be done to address the fact that the Black community in the City of Oakland and across the nation continues to grapple with racist structures that perpetuate inequality in housing, education, health care, jobs and more; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that the history of Black people in this country is the history of this country; from chattel slavery and emancipation to Jim Crow policies of segregation and the enduring fight for socioeconomic justice; and

WHEREAS, the vestiges of these oppressive systems remain to this day and in spite of the injustice, inequality, and brutality that Black people in America have faced and still face, they continue to serve and advance their communities and this nation as innovators, educators, leaders, organizers, activists, artists and so much more; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the following individuals and organizations for their work to help shape a better Oakland; and

WHEREAS, District 1 hereby recognizes honoree **Ali Rasheed** for his work helping those in underserved communities build better lives for themselves. Ali has served with many organizations in Oakland including SPAAT, the Sparkpoint Center, Oakland Unite Street Services, and Center Point Inc. These groups have been invaluable to our city with SPAAT and Oakland Unite working to help young Oakland residents steer themselves on the right path and into advanced education and jobs going forward. Ali Rasheed led the efforts of Center Point Inc. in Oakland has been invaluable in our city providing rehabilitation and treatment services to combat issues such as substance abuse, poverty and homelessness. Center Point Inc's rehabilitation services for those formerly incarcerated, have been proved to reduce instances of substance abuse, relapse and recidivism among those who participated in the program. We can't thank Ali Rasheed

enough for his work here, and we hope to honor his legacy of service here in Oakland by prioritizing the initiative he has worked on throughout his career.

WHEREAS, District 2 recognizes **Dr. Tanisha Cannon** for her work as a cultural strategist where she focused on the creation of safe and equitable spaces for all community members at Lake Merritt, with an emphasis on engagement with vendors who have historically been present at the Lake. Through her work, she initiated equitable shifts in the way the city understands its own role in governing public space, its perceived impacts on vendors who are Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, and how the city supports vendors in policy and practice, while also increasing understanding between different groups of people who use the Lake. Dr. Cannon believes in the power of civic engagement and community organizing to drive meaningful change. She is the managing director at Legal Services for Prisoners with Children and has worked in government and nonprofit organizations. She holds a doctorate in Educational Leadership from California State East Bay. Dr. Cannon ensures that her work is guided by empathy, respect, and a commitment to amplifying marginalized voices. She seeks to create a space that recognizes and values the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, fostering an environment that promotes equity, justice, and positive change.

WHEREAS, District 3 is proud to honor **Rashida Chase**. A performing vocalist, artist advocate, and Oakland native whose artistic palette has expanded to include real estate development; Rashida Chase is focused on building out the East Bay for future generations. Her unwavering commitment to promoting equitable growth and development for underrepresented communities in Oakland and around the world is evident in her work as an artist, as the director of AMP Oakland (a curated performance series and cultural placemaking initiative piloted in Downtown Oakland), and as a Masters candidate for Real Estate Development and Design at UC Berkeley, and an Arcus Social Justice Fellow.

As a dedicated advocate for art, wellness, and culture, Chase has a distinguished history of community organizing and a wealth of experience with organizations founded by both artists and community members including working with local activists to increase cultural funding and reinstate the Cultural Affairs Commission, serving as a grant panelist for Oakland's Cultural Funding program, being chosen as a participant in the Creatives in Place program, serving on the inaugural Artist Council for Bridge Live Arts, and founding Liberated Culture, a cultural enterprise that supports local artists and works to repair intergenerational gaps.

Deeply rooted in Oakland, Rashida actively works to protect and preserve the authentic culture of Oakland and believes in the importance of creating pathways for up-and-coming artists. She is excited to be on the Advisory Board for her alma mater, Skyline High School's, Visual and Performing Arts Academy, enjoys being a mentor for a young artist with Young Climate Leaders of Color, and a community partner with School Partners USA, a Thrive Collective initiative.

WHEREAS, District 4 is proud to honor **Karega Bailey**, a prominent activist, educator, and artist whose work emphasizes healing and mental well-being for Black men and families. He challenges societal norms through the power of art and activism through compassion, love, and self-discovery. Karega is the lead vocalist of SOL Development, a hip-hop, jazz, and soul ensemble, whose latest album Legacy Talks focuses on promoting self-care. Karega and his wife Felicia are the co-authors of SOL Affirmations, an affirmation book that has fostered transformative safe spaces for collectives of artists.

Karega serves as the Dean of Culture at Roses in Concrete, a K-8 school in Oakland that aims to disrupt urban poverty and violence through education and a holistic model of care and support services for young people. Throughout his career, Karega's message has been one of peace and

centering compassion, emotional balance, and personal wellness. His most recent project has been starting the Men's Wellness Fellowship, a community space for men of color to promote emotional balance and redefine perceptions of masculinity.

WHEREAS, District 5 is proud to honor **Paul Cobb**, publisher, and editor of the Oakland Post Newspaper, since 2004. When he purchased the city-wide newspaper, he made a commitment to print stories that impact the African American community, while acknowledging and not excluding stories of other race and ethnicities, recognizing that many social issues are experienced by multiple communities.

As a member of the Afro-American Association, he was a radio commentator and lectured on Black History to the founders of the Black Panther Party and many other groups. He served as a member of the national board of C.O.R.E (Congress of Racial Equality) and as a speechwriter and national black voter participation for the 1972 Presidential campaign.

A long-time civil rights activist in West Oakland, Paul Cobb once led the Oakland Citizens Committee for Urban Renewal, a social activist, government monitoring, and watchdog organization that fought for jobs on state highway projects. Paul went to jail protesting the non-hiring of Blacks in construction projects. Under his leadership at OCCUR in 1976, race-based policy advocacy was initiated and challenged at every city county and regional agency.

He also served as a mayoral appointee to of the Oakland Unified School District Board of Education alongside Councilmember Noel Gallo. As Chairperson of the Oakland Black Caucus, he also went to jail demanding the Oakland Public Schools hire a Black superintendent, which it eventually did, in Marcus Foster. Cobb was then appointed twice to serve on the Alameda County Grand Jury.

He organized CERT (Citizens Emergency Relief Team) to rebuild Oakland after the Loma Prieta Earthquake. CERT led the effort to reroute Highway 880 which helped stimulate transport access to the Port of Oakland and spurred the Emeryville business and shopping Center developments. Paul and Gay Plair Cobb, his wife, persuaded Mayor Lionel Wilson to rename Cypress Street to Mandela Boulevard. Wilson had been the attorney for some West Oakland residents who had sued to prevent the building of the freeway in 1954.

Mr. Cobb helped lead the project to gather the 4 million names that the Oakland Post and the LDS church donated to the National Museum of African American Culture. Cobb and the late Pastor John Collins authored Blacks on the Money, a compendium of what happened to the Congress-established Freedmen's Bank which accepted \$Millions of dollars deposited by ex-slaves and loaned to whites who defaulted which Congress closed the bank leaving Frederick Douglass to receive the blame. The Post News Group will be providing the status report of the 450,000+ black depositors to the US Congress and the various reparations committees.

Cobb and writer Marvin X Jackmon founded the Black Arts Movement Business District and they worked with Councilperson Lynette Gibson McElhaney to receive designation along with the renaming of 14th Street to Chauncey Bailey Way. Cobb and his wife Gay also persuaded Mayor Jerry Brown to rename 20th Street to Tom Berkeley Way.

He serves as a national advisory board member of the JustServe organization. He served as an advisor to the San Quentin Prison newspaper and employed several former inmates at the Oakland Post.

WHEREAS, District 6 honors **The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center** which was founded by Oakland community organizers under the leadership of longtime community activist and Oakland resident, Ira Jinkins. After years of organizing major region-wide commemorations of Dr. King's life and work, leadership from that body determined that an organization dedicated to carrying out the principles which guided Dr. King, would provide valuable community uplift in

the nettlesome task of navigating impacts of race divides, poverty, and violence affecting schools and communities. The Martin Luther King Jr Freedom Center shares a longstanding partnership with the Peralta Community Colleges District (PCCD) and is housed at Merritt College.

WHEREAS, District 7 is honoring **Charles ‘Chuck’ Johnson**: a producer, entrepreneur, activist, hip-hop curator, and community leader. As the new CEO of the Soul Beat Entertainment Network, Johnson is committed to continuing the legacy of Oakland’s first Black-owned television network. Established in 1978, Soul Beat is a multi-generational multimedia platform that preserves the history, culture, and spirit of Oakland in today’s fast-moving world.

Throughout his career, Chuck has established media companies such as The Chuck Johnson Company and co-founded The Town Business Network and The Ultimate Gaming League. Johnson has worked with an extensive list of high-profile clients, including BET, Showtime, Spike TV, and the NFL’s San Francisco 49ers. In addition, Johnson served as the Co-Chair of the Mayor’s Community Task Force for Sports and Entertainment, developing recommendations for cultivating Oakland as a growing entertainment destination, expanding public safety, and bridging barriers to communication with Oakland youth. Johnson has also taken on a new role to serve as District 7’s 2024 Cultural Strategist in Government. We honor Chuck for his dedication to and leadership in the Oakland community and proudly nominate him as District 7’s 2024 Black History Month honoree.

WHEREAS, The At Large Office is honoring the late **Eddie R. Dillard**, who passed away on December 21, 2023, was a stalwart advocate for small minority owned businesses has left an indelible mark on not just Oakland, but the entire Bay and beyond. Mr. Dillard’s passion for advocating for small minority-owned businesses was kindled in 1980 as the Northern California Delegate for the first White House Conference on Small Business Development under then President Jimmy Carter in Washington, D.C. His pivotal role in the City of Oakland’s Office of Economic Development laid the groundwork for minority businesses to flourish. As the meticulous steward of HUD’s \$25 million loan program for 15 years, Mr. Dillard helped shape Oakland’s economic landscape into one of opportunity and growth. He cemented his legacy and love for all things Oakland when he established the Oakland Black Board of Trade and Commerce, where as President and CEO, Mr. Dillard transformed the prospects of local Black contractors, aiding them in securing over \$100 million in contracts.

His efforts, however, were not confined to the boardroom: Mr. Dillard’s voice resonated in the corridors of power to influence policy to reflect the needs and aspirations of communities he championed. At the State Department of Transportation and on the BART Small Business Advisory Committee, Mr. Dillard was a force for change, significantly increasing minority contract participation and pioneering inclusive labor agreements. His consultancy work with nonprofits and major construction firms further extended his impact, leaving a legacy of inclusive business practices that resonate to this day. We celebrate the life of Eddie R. Dillard, a true titan and trailblazer. His memory inspires us to continue the work with the same tenacity and integrity he exemplified throughout his remarkable life.

WHEREAS, the Office of the Mayor is honoring **Aminah “Chef Mimi” Robinson-Briscoe**, a proud Oakland native and founder of the Black Food & Wine Experience. Chef Mimi passionately merges Black culture and food to create extraordinary culinary experiences and has dedicated herself to exploring the intersection of food, social justice, and entertainment for over a decade. As a board member for the Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce, Chef Mimi is working to support other Black women-owned businesses cement themselves in Oakland and find lasting success; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council, in celebration of Black History and Future Month 2024, hereby recognizes Ali Rasheed, Dr. Tanisha Cannon, Rashida Chase, Karega Bailey, Paul Cobb, The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center, Charles ‘Chuck’ Johnson, Eddie R. Dillard, and Aminah “Chef Mimi” Robinson-Briscoe for their exemplary work and contribution towards a safer, healthier, and more equitable Oakland; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: The City of Oakland commits to working towards a transformative future that seeks to dismantle oppressive systems and advance true liberation, safety, and opportunities in our community.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, JENKINS, KALB, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, REID, AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____

ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California