



City Attorney's Office

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER LOREN TAYLOR, COUNCILMEMBER
CARROLL FIFE, AND COUNCILMEMBER TREVA REID

**RESOLUTION IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN
FEBRUARY 2021 HONORING COURAGEOUS BLACK INDIVIDUALS
AND ORGANIZATIONS, WHO THROUGH THEIR INNOVATIVE,
GROUNDBREAKING WORK, HAVE PROMOTED POSITIVE CHANGE
AND UPLIFT FOR THE CITY OF OAKLAND**

WHEREAS, the individuals and institutions we honor today have made significant contributions to the City of Oakland, through their dedication to the celebration, expansion, and preservation of the unique contributions of African Americans and these historic contributions are woven into the fabric of American history in the City of Oakland, the United States and the world; and

WHEREAS, District 1 is honoring **SOS Meals on Wheels**, a nonprofit organization founded in Alameda County more than 50 years ago to provide meals to home-bound seniors, serving many Oakland—including District 1—residents, roughly two-thirds of whom are African American. SOS Meals on Wheels has many active and influential members of the Black community of Oakland at its helm, including **Sylvia Stadmire**, an SOS Meals on Wheels board member and long-time community leader and volunteer who also serves on the Mayor's Commission on Aging; **Eric Gremillion**, Kitchen Manager and Head Chef, such that without Eric's work, there would be no meals to deliver; and **Cynthia Arrington** who serves as the all-important Volunteer Coordinator for SOS Meals on Wheels. The work of SOS Meals on Wheels, even more so during the pandemic, ensures that many seniors in District 1, greater Oakland and beyond continue to thrive. We are grateful for those in Oakland's Black community for the critical positions they hold that enable the organization to carry out its mission, which includes promoting nutritional health, decreasing the possibility of premature institutionalization, and fostering the independence and dignity of homebound seniors in City of Oakland; and

WHEREAS, District 2 is honoring the **Black Organizing Project (BOP)**: Long before the recent swell in consciousness for Black Lives after the murder of George Floyd, BOP, led by Jackie Byers, laid the groundwork for the incredible change we're now seeing in our institutions. Ten years ago, BOP's coalition of students, teachers, parents and community members began urging OUSD to eliminate its police department from our public schools. Our city has a long record of disproportionately suspending, expelling, involuntarily transferring and arresting black students into the criminal justice system. While black students are 26% of OUSD students, they represent 73% of all students who are arrested. Removing law enforcement from our K-12 schools is a crucial step in dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, repairing systemic racism, and healing the historic trauma of overpolicing and brutality faced by our black and brown youth in Oakland. In June 2020, thanks to the incredible organizing by BOP, the OUSD School Board unanimously passed the "George Floyd Resolution to Eliminate Oakland Schools Police Department." The annual \$2.5 million spent on the 10 total sworn officers and police administrators is being redirected toward other student support services and restorative justice efforts. BOP is engaged in a thoughtful and nuanced process with OUSD to implement its vision, grounded in restorative justice and a public health framework, and is a national model for the movement towards police-free schools; and

WHEREAS, District 3 is honoring **Roosevelt King and the King-Thomas L. Berkley Foundation**. Roosevelt King and his family distributes free food to members of the community, helping to alleviate food insecurity and hunger in Oakland. Since 2016, the King-Thomas L. Berkley Foundation, Inc. has distributed food at several locations in Oakland, including multiple Islamic community events and mosques, DeFremery Park, Lowell Park, McClymonds High School and at other community events. Roosevelt King, President of the King Thomas L. Berkley Foundation, a District 3 resident, says everyone is entitled to food, clothing and shelter and he hopes his work through the years has helped members of the community to acquire these necessities. Food distribution is done in partnership with the Aaron and Margaret Wallace Foundation and receives food donated from local businesses and organizations; and

WHEREAS, District 4 is honoring **Bertram Harris** who has worked in Oakland for the past decade as a Designer and Building Contractor, designing and building Accessory Dwelling Units. Bertram currently works with Redesign2Renovate, a member of the U.S. Green Building Council. Mr. Harris was born and raised in Indiana before moving to the Bay Area and finally settling in Oakland. He realized the potential for unused spaces in yards to become a creative solution to create more housing by building Accessory Dwelling Units. Bertram has designed, built, and renovated Accessory Dwelling Units in Oakland, Alameda, Berkeley, Foster City, Harbor Bay, and Hillsborough. His work has taken him all over the Bay Area, and he has immersed himself in many Bay Area communities. In addition to designing Accessory Dwelling Units, Mr. Harris has advised clients on how to overcome funding challenges to complete a new Accessory Dwelling Unit, creating more housing options for community members based in Oakland; and

WHEREAS, District 5 is nominating **Billie J. Simmons** who is the board president and property owner of Agnes Memorial Church of God in Christ located at 2372 International Blvd. Ms. Simmons is a critical member of Agnes Memorial Church, who has been a cornerstone of the Oakland Community and Fruitvale District for over 50 years. She embodies their mission to have a positive community impact through a church that is family-oriented, youth-centered, and community-minded ministry rooted and grounded in love for all. One of the many projects she is leading is their senior housing project which aims to create homes for low income seniors who otherwise may be displaced. She also oversees The Agnes Memorial Christian Academy which has provided free food and quality education for children K-12 since 1978. Ms. Simmons is an influential active community leader who is passionate about uplifting our communities through her work; and

WHEREAS, District 6 is proud to honor the **East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative (BCZ) and CEO Carolyn Johnson**. Since 2014, the East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative has worked with a coalition of residents, government agencies, churches, and grassroots organizing groups to help keep Black folks in Oakland. Through a strategy of building power, securing land, and directing more dollars to community driven projects in East Oakland that allow the East Oakland neighborhoods to thrive. In coordination with the City of Oakland, the BCZ runs a successful outdoor farmer's market that has provided a space for local Black and LatinX entrepreneurs to support themselves and their families by selling locally crafted goods and a space for the community deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to have access to healthy food in an area that is a food desert. The BCZ has also acted as a distribution center, providing hundreds of meals to residents during the pandemic and it served as a COVID-19 testing location. The space in District 6, affectionately known as Liberation Park, through BCZ's incredible work and resourcefulness has become a place of community gathering and healing. The BCZ has provided summer employment to youth and a supportive and welcoming environment for artists. In an area where many East Oakland residents face physical and emotional stress, the BCZ has followed recommended health guidelines and hosted drive in movie nights and provided space for the community to safely display local art, gather for yoga and other spiritual and emotional healing; and

WHEREAS, District 7 is proud to honor **Roots Community Health Center**, a nonprofit based in East Oakland, whose mission is to "uplift those impacted by systemic inequities and poverty...through medical and behavioral health care, health navigation, workforce enterprises, housing, outreach, and advocacy." Founded in 2008, Roots Community Health Center strives to address troubling health issues in East Oakland and the greater Bay Area. Their programs and services are focused around medical care, mobile medical services, research and evaluation projects aimed at assessing and improving access to health care, empowerment initiatives and their Clean 360 social enterprise. Most recently, Roots continues to be a vital pillar in the community, quickly coming to the aid of residents and doing their part to mitigate the spread of the novel COVID-19 virus in East Oakland by operating COVID-19 testing sites at both of their East Oakland locations, hosting weekly online COVID-19 briefings, and continuing to educate the public on safety and preventative measures to stop the spread of the virus, which has disproportionately impacted communities of color. Through their programs and services, they are positively impacting and empowering communities of African descent to become more resilient, healthy, self-sufficient, and self-determined, to thrive from one generation to the next; and

WHEREAS, the At Large Office nominates **Aimee Allison/She the People**. In a year when the political and organizing might of Black women and other women of color were recognized for the many contributions they made to the electoral process, Oakland's own Aimee Allison and her organization, She the People were significant contributors. Ms. Allison witnessed first-hand the political power, savvy, and brilliance of women of color candidates, organizers, and strategists when she was President of Democracy in Color. Women of color transformed the political landscape of Georgia, and Black women led a winning coalition in Alabama. In an era of extreme and racially-targeted voter suppression efforts, Black women and other women of color are bringing forth action to strengthen democracy and remedy injustice. Ms. Allison founded *She the People* from the conviction that we need to lift each other up, we need to create spaces where we can talk to each other, and unite in the common cause of justice. She the People brings together a national network of women of color — voters, organizers, movement builders, elected leaders -- to transform our democracy. She the People unites women under shared values — to love our own and others, to make justice the law of the land, to create a country where everyone belongs, and to make this American democracy live up to its greatest promise. *She the People* has successfully organized to support Black women's leadership and a multiracial coalition that is leading the nation into a new political and cultural era; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Mayor Libby Schaaf honors **Dr. Kim Rhoads**, a volunteer at the Acts Full Gospel Church in Oakland and a UCSF doctor who engaged, tested, and ultimately saved many Black residents impacted by COVID-19. To address the devastating racial disparities caused by this pandemic, Dr. Rhoads wasted no time securing funding and resources to educate and empower Black residents and meet people where they are - in the community - through pop-up testing sites spread out across East and West Oakland. As a leader with Umoja Health or "United Health" a coalition of Black clinics, churches, the Alameda County Public Health Department, and organizations like Brotherhood of Elders Network, and Friends of Frank, Dr. Kim Rhoads partnered with trusted community leaders for the health and lives of Oakland's Black families. Rhoads holds a master's degree in health and medical science from the University of California-Berkeley School of Public Health, a medical degree from UC-San Francisco and an MPH from the Harvard School of Public Health. She has formal training in community organizing at the Center for Third World Organizing in Oakland; and is a Community Based Participatory Research member. Before joining the faculty at UCSF, Rhoads founded the Community Outreach and Engagement program for the Stanford Cancer Institute. Rhoads is a proud Oaklander, she lives with her husband of 13 years, Bill Rhoads, MD, a pediatric anesthesiologist at Children's Hospital, Oakland, and her two children, Nia and Julian; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland hereby honors and commends the following individuals and organizations in recognition of Black History and Heritage Month 2021:

- SOS Meals on Wheels
- Black Organizing Project (BOP)
- Roosevelt King and the King-Thomas L. Berkley Foundation
- Bertram Harris
- Billie J. Simmons
- East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative (BCZ) and CEO Carolyn Johnson
- Roots Community Health Center
- Aimee Allison/She the People
- Dr. Kim Rhoads

;and be it;

FURTHER RESOLVED: That these Black individuals and organizations are recognized for their courageous spirits, their innovation to address community challenges, and their steadfast commitment to social change, which have yielded great results that have strengthened, enhanced, and improved the City of Oakland and the lives of all its residents.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, TAYLOR, THAO AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____

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

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