

BY COUNCIL MEMBER GABRIELA SANTIAGO-ROMERO

RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE JUNE AS NATIONAL CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

WHEREAS, 2024 marks the 25th anniversary of the founding of the National Caribbean American Heritage Month since its recognition in August 1999 by The White House with a Caribbean Community Briefing. The Institute of Caribbean Studies worked with the Office of Congresswoman Barbara Lee to galvanize support for the Bill from organizations across the country and organized events on Capitol Hill in recognition of June 2004. The Bill was reintroduced and passed the House in June 2005, and the Senate in February 2006. A Proclamation making the Resolution official was signed by President George Bush on June 5, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants from the Caribbean region have been settling in Michigan since the 1800's. First families found lodgings in the established Black neighborhood of the Lower East Side, known as Black Bottom

- St. Matthew's Episcopal Church- *Deemed the "West Indian Church"*
- Bethel AME
- St. Cyprian

WHEREAS, In 1925, thirteen leaders of the Black community founded Detroit Memorial Park as a response to the segregation at local cemeteries. Joseph Gomez (Trinidad) was one of three founders and members of the board of directors of West Indian origin. Others included Jamaican James M. Gregory, a dentist who later became a practicing lawyer, and Vollington Bristol from Barbados, who owned a funeral parlor on Joseph Campau and Macomb.

Reference: Dr. Beard, Kathryn Lorraine, "Higher than those of their race of less fortunate advantages: Race, ethnicity, and West Indian political leadership in Detroit's African American community, 1885-1940" (2011). Wayne State University Dissertations. Paper 269.

WHEREAS, National Caribbean American Heritage Month (NCAHM) has declared the theme for this year's commemoration to be "Honoring our journey, shaping our future" and has encouraged people in all countries to join the global conversation of celebration of inclusivity and diversity; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED That the City of Detroit

- Recognizes the 25th anniversary of the establishment of National Caribbean American Heritage Month (NCAHM), as well as the needs for and benefits of celebrating inclusivity and diversity; and
- Affirms the importance of promoting awareness and understanding of the roles Caribbean Immigrants have played in the City of Detroit; and
- Applauds Caribbean Nationals for the services they provide in the growth and development of the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan

- Encourages residents of all ages in the City of Detroit to commemorate and celebrate the mission, vision and purpose of the Caribbean led organizations to Support, Empower and Advocate for Caribbean Nationals in the Americas; and
- Calls on the United States government to reaffirm its support for the Caribbean region and its citizens to create a sustainable welcoming environment for them and their families; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED

That the Detroit City Council recognizes June 2024 as National Caribbean American Heritage month.