

Salt Lake County

A PROCLAMATION OF THE SALT LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL CELEBRATING AFRICAN HERITAGE IN UTAH AND SALT LAKE COUNTY

Whereas, On June 1st, 2024, African immigrants in Salt Lake County and Utah will celebrate the African Heritage Festival; and

Whereas, The African Heritage Festival recognizes and commemorates the cultural heritage, diversity, courage, and freedom of African Immigrants and Refugees in Salt Lake County, Utah, and beyond; and

Whereas, The African Heritage Festival was first organized and Celebrated during the first week of June in 2021 by the Ngoma y’Africa Cultural Center; and

Whereas, African Americans and Africans make up 2.9% of Salt Lake County’s population, a percentage that is higher than the percentage of the African American population in Utah; and

Whereas, Utah's population includes 67,000 Black or African Americans, 52% of whom live in Salt Lake County and more than 50% of whom are African Immigrants; and

Whereas, since 2010, Utah’s Black population grew 55% while the total state population grew only 18%, causing the Black share of the state population to increase from 1.6% to 2.1%; and

Whereas, African Immigrants and Refugees are the primary contributors to this growth in the black share of the population; and

Whereas, The African Heritage Festival can serve as a reminder that the foundation of the United States is built by people from many nations and diverse cultures who recognize the importance of freedom and that of their God given rights; and

Whereas, this Celebration also serves as a reminder of the crucial socio-economic ties between the continent of Africa, Salt Lake County, the State of Utah, and the United States of America; and

Whereas, Ngoma y’Africa Cultural Center houses, welcomes, builds, and assists Utah and Salt Lake County Residents who have immigrated from multiple African Countries; and

Whereas, African Immigrants and Refugees have become a valuable part of the Salt Lake County Community; and

Whereas, African Immigrants and Refugees have enriched Salt Lake County, and we celebrate their culture, traditions, and heritage; and

Whereas, Residents of African descent have a profound and positive impact on Salt Lake County through their economic contributions, their strong commitment to our community, to faith, to hard work, and to their numerous acts of community service, and their civic engagement efforts; and

Whereas, we acknowledge the generations of Africans from Salt Lake County who have served in the Armed Forces, in government, as first responders, advocates, educators, scientists, lawyers, entrepreneurs, essential workers and frontline service providers, artists, and private and public sector leaders; and

Whereas, Salt Lake County is home to African youth; young leaders who will shape our future as they enter the education system, workforce, and our Salt Lake County community to create a hopeful future for all; and

Whereas, we honor the resilience of those past and present who have strived and sacrificed to overcome many challenges, often in the face of prejudice, in order to embrace and establish the opportunities of the American Dream for themselves, their families and the future of Salt Lake County;

Now, therefore, We, the Salt Lake County Council, on this 21st Day of May 2024, do hereby recognize and celebrate all the African residents of Salt Lake County, and the African Heritage Festival created to celebrate their unique and vibrant cultures.

Council Member Laurie Stringham, Chair

Council Member Dea Theodore, Vice Chair

Council Member Aimee Winder Newton

Council Member David Alvord

Council Member Sheldon Stewart

Council Member Arlyn Bradshaw

Council Member Ann Granato

Council Member Jim Bradley

Council Member Suzanne Harrison
