

DIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT

DiversitySpotlight.com
February 2022

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2022

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February is Black History Month!

This year's national theme is Black Health and Wellness.

The month of February was chosen as Black History Month because it celebrates the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, both of whom dramatically affected the lives of African Americans. Frederick Douglass was a writer, lecturer, editor, and civil rights activist who escaped slavery at age 21 and went on to campaign for the abolition of slavery, establish a newspaper, and hold the office of Minister to Haiti. He was a major voice in the anti-slavery/civil rights movement of his time. Abraham Lincoln as the sixteenth president of the United States, issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, thereby declaring that all slaves within the Confederacy would be permanently free. Therefore, we remember the sacrifices, celebrate the contributions, and advocate for equality and inclusion for African Americans, and for all people.

This month please make a conscience effort to work towards better health and wellness. Small changes add up and have a huge impact. Just standing up at your desk each hour and stretching can make a difference. Increase your water intake, eat more vegetables, and limit consumption of products high in sugar. Lastly, try a mid-day walk to clear your head. I'm adding a few resources in this edition that promote better health and wellness. Remember to take care of your mind, body, and spirit. Make the time! Take the time! You're worth it!

Lastly, thank you to all the federal employees who contacted me with kind words of support and feedback. Let me say that these things take time and it is your commitment to federal service that fuels my passion to serve along with you. Don't see things as they are, instead see what they can and will become – diverse, equal, inclusive.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter. Please take a minute to [send us feedback](#), make a suggestion, or find out how we can work together to promote diversity and inclusion within the federal workforce. I need your feedback!

Until next time and with each new day, let's be better than the day before.


LESTER ENOCH

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BEFORE ROSA PARKS

Before there was Rosa Parks there was Ms. Claudette Colvin, civil rights activist and medical professional. Born on 5 September 1939 in segregated Montgomery, AL, Claudette Colvin was first to refuse to give up her seat to a white person in 1955 months before Rosa Parks did. Ms. Colvin was 15 years old at the time, and served as one of four plaintiffs in the landmark legal case *Browder vs Gayle*, which helped to end the practice of segregation on Montgomery public buses.

In refusing to give up her seat Ms. Colvin is noted as saying, "It is my constitutional right to sit here as much as that lady. I paid my fare, it's my constitutional right!" Later in an interview with Newsweek Ms. Colvin said, "I felt like Sojourner Truth was pushing down on one shoulder and Harriet Tubman was pushing down on the other, saying 'Sit Down Girl!' I was glued to my seat." The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) considered taking Ms. Colvin's case, but because she was an unwed pregnant teenager, the NAACP decided against using Ms. Colvin's case to challenge segregation in Montgomery claiming concerns that her status (unwed pregnant teenager) would draw too much negative attention in a public legal battle. Despite proclaiming her innocence of any wrong doing in court, citing her constitutional rights, the courts ruled against Ms. Colvin and placed her on probation. Even though she received a light sentence, Ms. Colvin could not escape the court of public opinions. As a result of the public's perception of her and branding her a troublemaker, Ms. Colvin had to drop out of college and experienced many challenges finding employment to take care of her son Raymond who was born in 1956.

Ms. Colvin is still alive today and was last known living in NYC where she worked and retired as a nurse in 2004. Famous Quote: "I knew then and I know now that, when it comes to justice, there is no easy way to get it. You can't sugarcoat it. You have to take a stand and say, 'This is not right.'" In 2005, Colvin told the Montgomery Advertiser that she would not have changed her decision to remain seated on the bus: "I feel very, very proud of what I did," she said. "I do feel like what I did was a spark and it caught on. I'm not disappointed. Let the people know Rosa Parks was the right person for the boycott. But also let them know that the attorneys took four other women to the Supreme Court to challenge the law that led to the end of segregation." On May 20, 2018 Congressman Joe Crowley honored Colvin for her lifetime commitment to public service with a Congressional Certificate and an American flag. (Source: wikipedia.org)

In 2021, Claudette Colvin's juvenile record was expunged, 66 years after she was arrested for refusing to give her bus seat to a White person. [Click here](#) to see this short video.



BLACKS IN GOVERNMENT



Blacks In Government (BIG) was organized in 1975 and incorporated as a non-profit organization under the District of Columbia jurisdiction in 1976. BIG has been a national response to the need for African Americans in public service to organize around issues of mutual concern and use their collective strength to confront workplace and community issues.

The goals of BIG include:

- To be an advocate of equal opportunity for Blacks in government.
- To eliminate practices of racism and racial discrimination against Blacks in government.
- To promote professionalism among Blacks in government.
- To develop and promote programs which will enhance ethnic pride and educational opportunities for Blacks in government.
- To establish a mechanism for gathering and disseminating information for Blacks in government.
- To provide a nonpartisan platform on major issues of local, regional and national significance that affect Blacks in government.

TOP 5 REASONS TO JOIN BIG

1. **BIG Works for You:** BIG is the only organization dedicated to the interests of the African American public servant. Other organizations may touch upon the problems that impact you but BIG is made up of people who share your interests, your concerns, and your problems.
2. **BIG is an Advocate:** BIG speaks out on issues affecting the government workplace. BIG testified before the Congress on legislations reforming the EEO process, racial discrimination in government, and affirmative employment. BIG also spoke out on the disparate rate of discharge of African Americans from the federal service, the national performance review, and downsizing. BIG recently had a public hearing on the assault against affirmative action.
3. **BIG is an employee support group:** If you have a problem on the job, your BIG chapter can be an excellent resource for help and counsel. Many BIG members have dealt with similar problems and can suggest strategies for combating them. BIG also has a list of attorneys experienced in handling the type of problems BIG members may encounter.
4. **BIG is a professional development organization:** Every year BIG sponsors a national training conference which brings together national leaders and experts from around the country to address Black government workers. The conference is a unique training experience for government workers, providing you an exposure to issues often overlooked in the day-to-day workplace.
5. **BIG is a community resource:** Your BIG chapter can be a strong force in the community helping to fight such community problems as drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, AIDS, illiteracy, and voter registration. The skills you develop on the job can be invaluable in promoting community activities through your BIG chapter.

[Click here](#) to learn more about BIG and how you can join.

There may even be a BIG chapter located at your agency.

Bass Reeves, the Lone Ranger?

Bass Reeves was born into slavery in Crawford County, Arkansas, in 1838. He was named after his grandfather, Bass Washington. Reeves and his family were slaves of Arkansas state legislator William Steele Reeves.

When the American Civil War began, George Reeves, Bass' owner, joined the Confederate Army, taking Bass with him. It is unclear how, and exactly when, Bass Reeves left his owner, but at some point during the Civil War he gained his freedom. One account recalls how Bass Reeves and his owner had an altercation over a card game. Reeves severely beat his owner, and fled to the Indian Territory where he lived as a fugitive slave among the Cherokee, Creeks and Seminoles. Bass stayed in the Indian Territories and learned their languages until he was freed by the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, in 1865.

Reeves and his family farmed until 1875, when Isaac Parker was appointed federal judge for the Indian Territory. Parker appointed James F. Fagan as U.S. marshal, directing him to hire 200 deputy U.S. marshals. Fagan had heard about Reeves, who knew the Indian Territory and could speak several Indian languages. He recruited him as a deputy; Reeves was the first black deputy to serve west of the Mississippi River. Reeves was assigned as a deputy U.S. marshal for the Western District of Arkansas, which had responsibility also for the Indian Territory. He served there until 1893.

Reeves worked for 32 years as a federal peace officer in the Indian Territory, and became one of Judge Parker's most valued deputies. Reeves brought in some of the most dangerous criminals of the time, but was never wounded, despite having his hat and belt shot off on separate occasions.

In addition to being a marksman with a rifle and revolver, Reeves developed superior detective skills during his long career. When he retired in 1907, Reeves claimed to have arrested over 3,000 felons. He is said to have shot and killed 14 outlaws to defend his life.

Once, he had to arrest his own son for murder. One of his sons, Bennie Reeves, was charged with the murder of his wife. Deputy Marshal Reeves was disturbed and shaken by the incident, but allegedly demanded the responsibility of bringing Bennie to justice. Bennie was eventually tracked and captured, tried, and convicted. He served his time in Fort Leavenworth in Kansas before being released, and reportedly lived the rest of his life as a responsible and model citizen.

When Oklahoma became a state in 1907, Bass Reeves, then 68, became an officer of the Muskogee Police Department. He served for two years before he became ill and retired.

Historian Art Burton postulated the theory that Bass Reeves may have served as inspiration for the character of the Lone Ranger. Burton makes this argument based on the sheer number of people Reeves arrested without taking any serious injury, coupled with many of these arrested were incarcerated in the Detroit House of Correction, the same city where the Lone Ranger radio plays were broadcast. (Source: Wikipedia.org)

Check out the new Netflix film *"The Harder They Fall"* starring Delroy Lindo as Bass Reeves. A fictional western adventure with all-star cast Jonathan Majors, Idris Elba, Zazie Beetz, Regina King, LaKeith Stanfield, RJ Cyler, Edi Gathegi, Danielle Deadwyler and Deon Cole. (Rated R)

[Click here](#) to see the official Netflix trailer.

TOP SOCIAL MEDIA POST



EXECUTIVE ORDER 14035

"This order establishes that diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are priorities for my Administration and benefit the entire Federal Government and the Nation."

Joseph R. Biden Jr.



diversityspotlight.com

[Read the Executive Order](#)

**"Checking a box
is *not* how you promote
Diversity & Inclusion"**



DIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT
DiversitySpotlight.com

PROMOTE
DIVERSITY
EQUALITY
INCLUSION
ACCESSIBILITY
CHANGE
ACTION
LEADERSHIP



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EXECUTIVE ORDER 14035

Establish a Government-Wide initiative to promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce

#THAT PART

[Read the White House Strategic Plan](#)



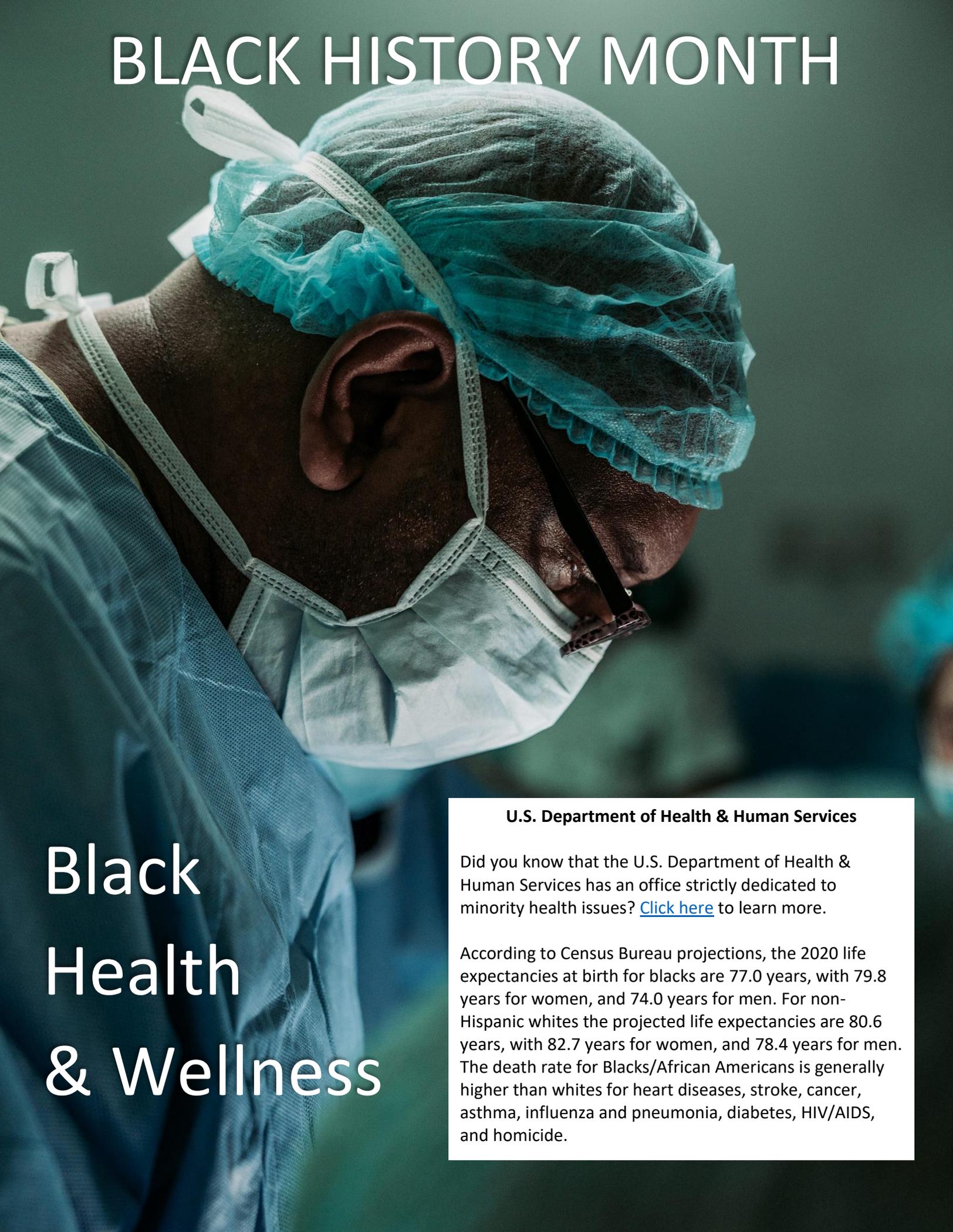
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FOLLOW US & STAY CONNECTED



Promoting Diversity and Inclusion Throughout the Federal Workforce!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Black Health & Wellness

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Did you know that the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services has an office strictly dedicated to minority health issues? [Click here](#) to learn more.

According to Census Bureau projections, the 2020 life expectancies at birth for blacks are 77.0 years, with 79.8 years for women, and 74.0 years for men. For non-Hispanic whites the projected life expectancies are 80.6 years, with 82.7 years for women, and 78.4 years for men. The death rate for Blacks/African Americans is generally higher than whites for heart diseases, stroke, cancer, asthma, influenza and pneumonia, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and homicide.

WORTH CHECKING OUT

HEALTH & WELLNESS

SPIRITUAL

PHYSICAL

EMOTIONAL

SOCIAL

[Health & Human Services](#): Prevention and wellness information.

[National Institute of Mental Health](#): Signs, symptoms, risk factors, treatments.

[Office of Personnel Management](#): Overview, tools, and resources for health and wellness.

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#): Workplace health promotion.

[Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#): Nutrition and physical activity.

[University of Delaware](#): Health and wellness resources.

[Johns Hopkins Medicine](#): 9 benefits of yoga.

[Mayo Clinic](#): Prayer is the best known and most widely practiced example of meditation.

[The Hot Box Boxing & Fitness](#): If you're in the Maryland area, please contact Mr. Chris Brown 301-343-1385, Director of Operations and Personal Training for more information.

53rd NAACP IMAGE AWARDS

Check out the NAACP Image Awards. February 26, 2022 – 8:00PM EST
A celebration of African American stories and excellence!
[Click here](#) for more information.

FED NEWS!

Dr. Sharon Harrington was recently selected as the new Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer at the Defense Intelligence Agency ([DIA](#)). Congratulations Dr. Harrington! Looking forward to new and exciting initiatives coming from my former home agency.

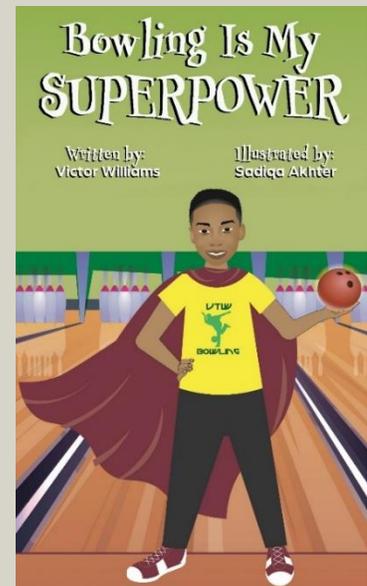
[Contact us](#) and share your news and updates with the federal workforce! DEI employee profiles-spotlights, diversity award winners, diversity rockstars, new initiatives, best practices, upcoming recruiting & hiring events, special observance events, etc.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Victor is a 12-year-old who finds that bowling gives him the confidence to be successful in dealing with school, making friends, and being confident. Bowling has become an outlet that provides a safe place for Victor's feelings and helps him cope with the challenges of growing up.

Bowling Is My Superpower is now available on [Amazon](#).



A TRADITIONAL SOUL FOOD RECIPE

Soul food is an ethnic cuisine traditionally prepared and eaten by African Americans. The cuisine originated with the foods that were given to black people during slavery. However, soul food was strongly influenced by the traditional practices of West Africans from its inception. Due to the historical presence of African Americans in the region, soul food is closely associated with the cuisine of the American South although today it has become an easily identifiable and celebrated aspect of mainstream American food culture. Here is a traditional soul food recipe we hope you will enjoy.

Collard Greens

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 slices bacon or substitute with a piece of smoked turkey
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 3 cups chicken broth or substitute with water
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes
- 1 pound of fresh collard greens, cut into 2-inch pieces

Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add bacon, and cook until crisp. Remove bacon from pan, crumble and return to the pan. Add onion, and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Add garlic, and cook until just fragrant. Add collard greens, and stir until they start to wilt.

Pour in chicken broth, and season with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 1 hour, or until greens are tender.

General Charles Edward McGee

December 7, 1919 – January 16, 2022

African American

Father

Husband

Eagle Scout

U.S. Airman

Tuskegee Airman

American Hero



White House Photo

[Watch](#) one of General McGee's final interviews as he answers questions about race and his incredible life.

Hosted by the Friends of the National World War II Memorial

SIDNEY POITIER

February 20, 1927 – January 6, 2022



Bahamian American
Father
Husband
Actor
Director
Author
Ambassador
Cultural Icon

“Sidney Poitier advanced the nation's dialogue on race and respect” and “opened doors for a generation of actors.”

- Barack Obama



Black Education on the Rise

Population age 25 and older with a Bachelor's degree or higher

30.5% Black Females

24.7% Black Males

27.8% Black Total

[Source:](#) U.S. Census Bureau - 2020

DISCLOSURE

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TOGETHER WE CAN – TOGETHER WE MUST