



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

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IDOT Celebrates African-American History Month

Events open to the public throughout February

SPRINGFIELD — The Illinois Department of Transportation will host a month of special events celebrating African-American History Month in February. This year's theme, "Uncovering Our Rich History," will be reflected in activities focused on art, mathematics, politics, engineering and education.

"We are proud to recognize African-American History Month with a full schedule of fun, interesting and informative events," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. "The public is welcome and encouraged to attend."

The following events are open to the public and will be held at IDOT's Harry Hanley Building, 2300 S. Dirksen Parkway, in Springfield:

Feb. 1, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., lobby: The festivities will kick off with an evening of art led by local artist Michelle Smith. Participants will paint a landscape while enjoying refreshments. A \$25 fee will cover supplies and refreshments. Please call (217) 557-6693 or (217) 785-1664 to register. Payment is due Jan. 30.

Feb. 2, noon to 1 p.m., auditorium: Dr. John M. Flack, director of the Hypertension Clinic at SIU School of Medicine, will discuss women's heart health on National Wear Red Day. Everyone is encouraged to wear red to help raise awareness of this important issue. Blood pressure checks will be provided, with a fun exercise activity rounding out the event. Brown bag session. Free.

Feb. 5, noon to 1 p.m., auditorium: Local genealogist J. LaVon Wilson will provide helpful tips for those interested in researching their roots. Brown bag session. Free.

Feb. 6-8, noon to 1 p.m., Room 021: "Hidden Figures," a film in which three African-American mathematicians cross race and gender lines to launch astronaut John Glenn into space, will be shown over two one-hour segments Feb. 6 and 7 with a discussion following on Feb. 8. Brown bag session. Free.

Feb. 7, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., lobby: The Black Art Expo will feature work from local African-American artists. Free.

Feb. 9, noon to 1 p.m., auditorium: Robert Moore, retired Illinois State Police Special Agent Sergeant, retired U.S. Marshal, former Chief of Police of Jackson, Miss., and author of “The President’s Men: Black United States Marshals in America,” will discuss the history of black U.S. Marshals. Brown bag session. Free.

Feb. 13, 15 and 16, noon to 1 p.m., Room 021: “Marshall,” a film based on an early trial in the career of Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court justice, will be shown over two one-hour periods Feb. 13 and 15, with a discussion following on Feb. 16. Brown bag session. Free.

Feb. 21, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., lobby: A vendor fair will feature a variety of goods and services related to African-American History Month. Items will be available for purchase, and the Springfield Southeast High School Jazz Band will perform at 10:30 a.m.

Feb. 23, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., cafeteria: African-American cuisine from Nickey’s Southern Style Kitchen will be available for purchase. The cost is \$7 per plate or \$3 per item.

Feb. 28, noon to 1 p.m., cafeteria: The month of celebrations will conclude with a fashion show featuring African-inspired designs. Brown bag session. Free.

Any donations collected throughout the month will be given to a local charity.

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