

News Release**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Date: January 26, 2023****Contact:** Mahogany Waldon, 757/728-5316
mahogany.waldon@hamptoncvb.com**Black History Month events honoring culture, history in Hampton**

Hampton, VA - Black History Month is an annual observance of accomplishments by African Americans and a time for recognizing their pivotal role in U.S. history. Black History Month originally began as a week created in 1915 by Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans to honor and promote achievements by Black Americans and people of African descent. In the decades following its establishment, the week evolved into a month that is now celebrated throughout the world. Since 1976, Black History Month has been recognized by every U.S. president. Several organizations and establishments throughout Hampton will honor Black History Month with events throughout February.

Transit Equity Day**February, 3 (All Day)****Hampton Roads Transit**

In honor of Transit Equity Day, on Friday, February 3, Hampton Roads Transit will be providing free rides, available on all bus, light rail, ferry, paratransit and microtransit services. Transit Equity Day is a National Day of Action that commemorates the importance of investing in public transit for the benefit of all citizens. It also coincides with the birthday of civil rights icon and public transit rider Rosa Parks, which is on February 4. Bus headlights will remain on all day to symbolize the light Rosa Parks provided to our world and each bus will have a reserved front seat with notated signage, in honor of her courageous act in helping to make transit more equitable for all. For more information on bus routes in Hampton, visit <https://gohrt.com/routes/hampton/>

West African Drum Lesson - Drumming with Kam**February 5, 4:30-6 p.m. \$15****Y. H. Thomas Community Center****1300 Thomas Street**

West African Drum class with Kam is a multi-leveled experience that allows beginners to learn the history behind the drum, the basics of rhythms, and techniques while more experienced players learn and practice the accompaniment parts and solos that make up the poly-rhythms of the djembe orchestra. Each class is tailored to the skill level of the students attending. The class is taught by Kam Kelly, life long drummer, drum-maker and repairer. Kam's wealth of knowledge demonstrates the fascinating patterns of African drumming. He has studied with such teachers as M'Bemba Bangoura, Youssouf Kumbassa, Osei and Yao Ababio and Gene Osborne. Kam has traveled to Guinea to continue to study and learn more about music and culture. Please bring your own drum. If you do not have your own drum you may rent one. Wear comfortable clothing and bring water. Chairs will be provided.

There is plenty of free parking.

[An Evening with Dee Dee Bridgewater](#)

February 11, 8 p.m.
The American Theatre
125 East Mellen Street

Nobody sings jazz like Dee Dee Bridgewater. Don't miss this chance to hear the Grammy and Tony Award-winning vocalist put her unique spin on standards and re-envision jazz classics. Ever the fearless explorer, pioneer and keeper of tradition, Bridgewater fuses musical genres with each song she interprets. An NEA Jazz Masters Fellows Award recipient, Bridgewater has sung jazz, pop and musical theater (Billie Holiday, Lady Day; Glinda, The Wiz), and is known for her wildly successful tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, Dear Ella. Her latest album, Memphis... Yes, I'm Ready, celebrates yet another aspect of her musical prowess as a top-shelf soul singer.

[Front Porch Series with Akeylah Simone](#)

February 15, 6-8 p.m.
Hampton History Museum
120 Old Hampton Lane

Akeylah Simone delivers a stunning performance by fusing genres from Rock, Hip Hop, R&B, Pop and Jazz in an eclectic set of original music. A native of Hampton Roads, Akeylah is just getting her feet wet as a singer, songwriter and now recording artist. In just her first two years of releasing original music, she's landed 4 songs on the Grammy Ballot and voted Encore's 2021 Best Solo Artist. She was most recently voted the International Singer Songwriter Associations' 2022 Female Rising Star. She's also had numerous nominations across various publications including Best New Artist (Soul Tracks Reader's Choice Awards), and Song of the Year & Best R&B/ Soul (Veer Awards).

[Essential African Threads with Storyteller Dylan Pritchett](#)

February 18, 11 a.m.
Hampton History Museum
120 Old Hampton Lane

Come and enjoy a morning of entertaining and engaging stories of African American life at the Hampton History Museum. Storyteller Dylan Pritchett brings to life, through his stories, important touchstones during the time of slavery wound tightly with themes of family strength and morals as well as lessons that teach about character and survival. Dylan Pritchett shares his folktales with thousands of children and adults throughout the country, with positive messages that cross cultural boundaries. As the past president of the National Association of Black Storytellers, Dylan is dedicated to passing on the rich oral tradition of storytelling. In addition to live performances, Dylan has produced narration and served as a performer and consultant for a number of broadcast documentaries, including the PBS program, "View from the Mountaintop," the Thomas Jefferson biography.

Second Annual Black History Month Program
February 21, 6-8 p.m.

Y.H. Thomas Community Center

1300 Thomas Street

Join community members for a captivating Black History Month Program at the Y.H. Thomas Community Center on Tuesday, February 21 from 6-8 p.m. Reflect on the bravery, courage and triumph of African Americans locally and afar. To register, please call 757-727-1200.

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Partially bordered by the Hampton Roads harbor and Chesapeake Bay, Hampton, with the 344,000 sq. ft. Hampton Roads Convention Center and the award-winning Hampton Coliseum, is located in the center of Coastal Virginia and the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. Hampton is the site of America's first continuous English-speaking settlement, the site of the first arrival of Africans in English North America, and is home to such visitor attractions as the Virginia Air & Space Science Center, Fort Monroe National Monument, Hampton History Museum, Hampton University Museum, The American Theatre, among others.