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The Orange County Library System celebrates Black History Month

[Orlando, Fla.] In February, the Orange County Library System observes the accomplishments and contributions of African-Americans in our community with special events at a library location near you.

The Edgewater branch screens *Race: The Power of an Illusion*, a three-part PBS documentary series that challenges the concept of race in society, on February 4 at 6 p.m. Join the discussion lead by Dr. Ada Crosby and Deacon Tommy Tate, who will address myths associated with the word race and its history in science and society.

On February 12, the Hiwassee branch welcomes Dr. Naima Johnston Bush for *Echoes of My Sister's Voices*, an interactive presentation that uses music, poetry and storytelling to share the experiences of women whose lives were affected by slavery. Those stories include: Anna Kingsley's *From Slave to Plantation Mistress*, Sojourner Truth's *Ain't She a Woman?* and Mariah of Carnton Plantation's *Caring for the Enemy Dead*. Bush will use historical reenactment to bring the women's voices to life.

The West Oaks Branch & Genealogy Center hosts genealogy events all year round, but in February, the library hosts members of the Central Florida Chapter of Afro-American Historical Genealogical Society (AAHGS) during Genealogy for African-Americans on February 13. Learn more about African-American genealogy and how you can research your own history, heritage and genealogy.

The National African-American Read-In takes place on February 24 on the Orlando Public Library's main stage. This annual event celebrates and promotes diversity in literature by highlighting work created by African-American authors. It features guest presenters who will share readings from their favorite works of literature by African-American authors. The Read-In will highlight poems, stories, songs and more. This year's participants include Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings, Orange County Clerk of Courts Tiffany Moore Russell, Nerd Nite Orlando host Ricardo Williams, Paralympic athlete April Holmes and WESH-2 News anchor Jasmin Bailey.

During the month of February, the Orlando Public Library also hosts *Just Us*, a show that features pieces by local African-American artists and entries from the Boys & Girls Club of Central Florida's Youthful Expressions Art Contest. The artwork is on display on the first and third floors of the library.

All library branches host Black History Month events in February. To find events at a branch, visit ocls.info/black-history-month. To learn more about other resources that highlight African-American authors, artists, playwrights and inventors, visit libguides.ocls.info/blackhistory, where you'll find links to research resources, ebooks and more.

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