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January 29, 2024
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Celebrate Black History Month at the Milwaukee Public Library with a Challenge and Renowned Author Events

Milwaukee, WI – The Milwaukee Public Library (MPL) invites the community to join in celebrating Black History Month with an array of enriching activities and programs designed to honor the contributions and legacy of African Americans.

Building upon our commitment to serving as a hub for learning, culture, and community engagement, the Milwaukee Public Library is kicking off Black History Month on February 1 with an event at the Good Hope Branch and a system-wide monthly challenge for all ages.

The Black History Month Challenge aims to engage participants in exploring the rich heritage of Black history and uplifting Black voices. Participants are invited to take part in at least three activities during the month of February that include reading or listening to a book by a Black author or illustrator, watching a movie or documentary on a Black History change-maker, or attending one of the many Black History Month programs.

The challenge kick-off event will take place on Thursday, February 1 at the Good Hope Branch from 3:30- 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room. This event features a scavenger hunt, book bar, snacks, and fun for all ages.

Adding to the month's highlights, MPL is honored to host several prominent author events throughout the month. Local historian John Gurda will present *The History of Black Milwaukee* with program facilitator Clayborn Benson, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Black Historical Society, on Tuesday, February 6, from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Center Street Branch. Villard Square and Washington Park Branches will also host this program at later dates.

Author and illustrator Charly Palmer and esteemed co-author and wife Dr. Karida Brown will discuss their latest projects including *The New Brownies' Book: A Love Letter to Black Families* on Saturday, February 10, from 2-4 p.m. at Milwaukee Public Library Centennial Hall. This program also features DJ Bizzon's live music mix and a social hour.



On Friday, February 16, author Jonathan Eig, in conversation with Cree Myles, bookfluencer and curator of Penguin Random House's All Ways Black, will discuss Eig's latest book *King: A Life*. This book is the first major biography in decades of the civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr. and the first to include recently declassified FBI files. This event takes place from 6:30-8 p.m. at Milwaukee Public Library Centennial Hall.

These events promise to be enlightening and engaging, providing attendees with a unique opportunity to delve into the narratives that have shaped our nation.

"Through initiatives like the Black History Month challenge and our author events, we invite the community to immerse themselves in the cultural fabric of our community," said City Librarian Joan Johnson. "At MPL, we see every day as an opportunity to celebrate and learn about the diverse histories that make up our community. While we dedicate February to celebrating Black History Month, it's crucial to remember that Black history is American history and deserves recognition and honor every day of the year. Through our library's yearlong initiatives and programs, we aim to keep the spirit of this celebration alive throughout all seasons."

For more information on the Black History Month activities and programming at the Milwaukee Public Library, including details on the Black History challenge and entry form, please visit mpl.org/BlackHistoryMonth.

Challenge participants can complete and return an entry form to any MPL location or track progress online by March 1, 2024 to be eligible for a prize drawing.

About Milwaukee Public Library

Milwaukee Public Library is an anchor institution that helps build healthy families and vibrant neighborhoods – the foundation of a strong Milwaukee. Since 1878, Milwaukee Public Library has been a free provider of education and information for residents of Milwaukee and beyond. With 13 locations, and more than three million items in circulation, MPL offers free access to a rich collection of materials both physical and digital, access to technology, classes, exhibitions, programming and more. From toddlers to scholars, MPL serves more than one million patrons who come through its doors annually and many more around the globe who use its resources at www.mpl.org. To offer this wide array of free programming, MPL relies on both public and private funding. Learn more about how to support Milwaukee Public Library at mpl.org/support.

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