

Proclamation

CITY OF RACINE, WISCONSIN

WHEREAS, in 1985, a group of dedicated community members came together to explore how Racine could better inspire Black and minority youth and encourage parents to take a more active role in their children's development; and

WHEREAS, these accomplished founders—leaders in community activism, civic engagement, military service, counseling, administration, small business, and higher education—combined their talents to create the **Black History Youth Achievement Awards (BHYAA)**, a program designed to honor the achievements of Black Americans and motivate young people to embrace their heritage and potential; and

WHEREAS, the first BHYAA celebration debuted in 1985 by its founding members – the late Julian Thomas, the late Irma Walker, Maggie Cobb, Cecelia Edmond, and Donnie Snow at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center to an overflow crowd, and within two years expanded to Memorial Hall, where “standing room only” became the annual tradition; and

WHEREAS, the founders believed that when a community pours love, affirmation, and confidence into its children, those children begin to walk, speak, and believe differently—carrying themselves with the knowledge that they, too, can achieve; and

WHEREAS, for 40 years, this annual event is held the last Saturday in February and BHYAA has remained a powerful institution in Racine, uplifting African American culture, celebrating education, and inspiring youth through its focus on **Academics, Arts, Athletics, and Super Person**; and

WHEREAS, the BHYAA continues to unite the community, provide a platform for local talent, amplify the voices of community leaders, and offer opportunities for local businesses to give back and invest in Racine's children;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cory Mason, Mayor of the City of Racine, do hereby proclaim **February 28, 2026** as **Black History Youth Achievement Awards Day** in the City of Racine, and encourage all residents to celebrate this longstanding tradition and the bright future of our youth.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Racine to be affixed.



Accomplished at the City Hall

this 28th day of February 2026.

Cory Mason

Mayor