



"Let's  
celebrate our  
Black icons while  
they're alive –  
not just after  
they're gone."  
We give you  
flowers today  
and we will mourn  
you tomorrow.



**BLACK**  
**HISTORY**  
**MONTH**

**IMPORTANCE OF BLACK RESISTANCE**

# Black History Legends

**Black History is not just a reflection of the past — it is a living, breathing legacy carried by the icons who still walk among us.** From the artists who shift culture, to the elders who held the line when the world pushed back, to the everyday heroes whose names may never trend but whose impact shapes generations, we salute them now.

Even if their paths, choices, or voices don't align with our own, they deserve their flowers while they can still feel the warmth of our gratitude. Because honoring our legends is not about perfection — it's about recognizing the courage it takes to carve a path where none existed. **(Before you judge, what have you done in life to reflect the legacy you will leave behind)**





**Barack Obama**



**The First Black Family**



**Michelle Obama**



## The 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States BARACK OBAMA

**The White House began construction in 1792**, and for the next several years enslaved African Americans quarried stone, cut timber, made bricks, and built the walls of the President's House. Their forced labor shaped the very seat of American power long before freedom reached the District of Columbia in 1862, when slavery was finally abolished there.

More than two centuries after enslaved people laid its foundation, the nation elected Barack Obama in 2008, making him the first Black president to sit in the Oval Office — the same building where enslaved workers once lived in bondage and served presidents who owned them. The irony is profound: a house built through the exploitation of Black labor became the place where a Black man would rise to lead the country.



## From forced labor to the Oval Office The Making Of A President

**Barack Obama, a first-term U.S. Senator from Illinois, launched a groundbreaking 2008 campaign built on hope, unity, and political change.** After a hard-fought primary against Hillary Clinton, he defeated John McCain in the general election and became the first African American president.

In 2012, Obama ran for re-election during a slow economic recovery, highlighting achievements like the Affordable Care Act, the auto industry rescue, and the mission that killed Osama bin Laden. Facing Mitt Romney, he secured a second term with a message focused on rebuilding the middle class and continuing national recovery.



## Faces of Leadership and Greatness

Barack Obama's presidency was historic — but never easy. From day one, he faced relentless opposition. A divided House and Senate blocked key reforms, slowed progress, and resisted change.

Yet through it all, he led with resolve. These images show not just leadership, but the quiet strength it takes to govern when the system itself pushes back.



# Black Excellence In The White House



**We give you your flowers now with much appreciation and respect for a job well done Mr. President Obama.**

# Meet Angela Davis



**Angela Yvonne Davis is one of the most enduring architects of modern liberation movements** — a scholar, organizer, and abolitionist whose life’s work has challenged the very foundations of racial violence, state power, and mass incarceration. Born in Birmingham’s “Dynamite Hill,” where Black families faced constant terror from white supremacist bombings, Davis grew up understanding that resistance wasn’t optional — it was survival. Her political awakening carried her from the segregated South to global liberation movements, from philosophy classrooms to the front lines of struggle. When the state attempted to silence her through incarceration and political persecution in 1970, the world responded with a massive “Free Angela” campaign — proving that collective action can confront even the most powerful systems.

**After her acquittal, Davis became a leading voice in exposing the prison-industrial complex, co-founding Critical Resistance and pushing the national conversation toward abolition long before it was mainstream.** Her work insists that justice is not punishment, that safety is not surveillance, and that liberation requires imagination, courage, and community.

Today, Angela Davis remains a guiding force for movements like ours - reminding us that transformation is possible when people organize, tell the truth, and refuse to accept a system that cages, discards, and dehumanizes our communities.

## The many faces of Angela Davis Life journey







Angela Davis

We salute Angela Davis and give her the flowers she has long deserved. At a time when Black men were being incarcerated at alarming rates – torn from their families, their communities, and their futures – it was Black women who stepped forward and took the helm. They became the strategists, the organizers, the protectors, and the truth-tellers in the fight for social justice and criminal justice reform.

Angela Davis stands as one of the clearest examples of that legacy. She showed us what it looks like to confront a system designed to silence us and still speak with courage. She showed us how to turn personal pain into collective power. And she showed us that liberation is not a theory – it is a practice, a discipline, and a lifelong commitment.

# Meet Jesse Jackson



**Jesse Jackson: A voice that moved a movement** Jesse Jackson rose from the segregated South to become one of the most influential civil rights leaders of his generation. As a protégé of Dr. King, he carried the movement forward — fighting for economic justice, voting rights, and political power for Black America. **In 1966, he founded Operation Breadbasket in Chicago**, pushing major companies to hire and invest in Black communities.

In Illinois, his impact was unmistakable. Through **Operation PUSH in Chicago**, he pushed corporations to hire Black workers, invest in underserved neighborhoods, and expand opportunities for youth. His **Rainbow Coalition**, also rooted in Illinois, built multiracial political power and helped shape the state’s progressive direction. Jackson’s organizing strengthened voter turnout, elevated Black candidates, and laid groundwork for broader representation across the state. He didn’t just call for change — he built the pathways that made change possible.

## Expanding Power at Home and Across the World



**Jesse Jackson transformed Illinois-born activism into a national and global force for justice.** His groundbreaking 1984 and 1988 presidential campaigns pushed the country to imagine new possibilities, building the historic **Rainbow Coalition** that united Black voters, Latinos, labor, farmers, students, and the poor. By earning millions of votes and reshaping the political map, Jackson forced America to confront issues of poverty, voting rights, and economic fairness on a national stage.



That same moral courage carried him into **international diplomacy**, where he negotiated the release of hostages in Syria, Cuba, and Iraq – proving that a civil rights leader from Chicago could influence global peace through dialogue and dignity rather than force.



Today, Jackson's blueprint lives on in every modern movement for justice. **The organizing models he built through Operation PUSH and the Rainbow Coalition continue to shape voter-mobilization, youth empowerment, and multiracial coalition-building across Illinois and the nation.** From grassroots organizers to national campaigns, his legacy is visible wherever people gather to demand equity, voice, and power.





## Jesse and jacqueline Jackson And The First Family



We give Rev. Jesse Jackson his flowers now — for a lifetime spent expanding justice, lifting communities, and proving that courage, unity, and moral conviction can reshape a nation.

# Meet Stevie Wonder



## The Soundtrack of Justice

### **The Artist**

A Motown prodigy who became one of the most influential musicians in American history, Stevie Wonder used his genius to reshape soul, R&B, and pop. His music blended joy, truth, and spiritual depth — a sound that carried generations.

### **The Activist**

Wonder turned his platform into a force for justice. Through songs like *Living for the City* and *Higher Ground*, he confronted racism, poverty, and political neglect with honesty and hope.

### **The Civil Rights Leader**

He didn't just sing about change — he organized for it. Stevie Wonder led the national push to make Dr. King's birthday a federal holiday, rallying millions until Congress finally acted. His lifelong advocacy for civil rights, disability rights, and global human rights cements him as a leader whose voice moved more than music — it moved a nation.

## A Young Stevie Wonder



Stevie Wonder was born Stevland Hardaway Judkins in 1950 in Saginaw, Michigan, arriving six weeks premature and losing his sight shortly after birth due to complications that damaged his retinas. His family struggled financially, but music became his refuge early. As a small child, he tapped rhythms on pots and tabletops, mimicked melodies after hearing them once, and showed a natural sense of pitch that adults couldn't ignore.

After the family moved to Detroit, the Black church became his first training ground. He sang in the choir, played instruments during services, and absorbed gospel as the heartbeat of his sound. By age 8, he had already taught himself piano, harmonica, and drums — a level of talent that stunned everyone who heard him.

A family friend introduced him to Ronnie White of The Miracles, who immediately recognized his extraordinary gift. At just 11 years old, Motown signed him and introduced him to the world as "Little Stevie Wonder," setting the stage for one of the most influential careers in American music.

When young Stevie Wonder traded jokes with Muhammad Ali, it was two rising icons shaping America in their own ways — one lifting us with music, the other with courage — and the people embraced them both for the hope they carried.

# Stevie Wonder Kids



Beyond the spotlight, Stevie Wonder built his greatest legacy at home — a loving father of nine who poured the same care into his children that he poured into his music. Through three marriages and a growing family, he stayed focused on their future, teaching them creativity, compassion, and purpose. His home was a place of guidance and joy, and his children grew up knowing they were part of something bigger than fame — they were part of his heart.



We give Stevie Wonder his flowers now — for the music that moved a nation, the courage he brought to the fight for justice, and the way his voice became a soundtrack for hope. His art lifted generations, and his activism helped bend the arc of America toward something better.”

# Black History Legends

Black history is bigger than any page we could ever design. The legends we highlighted here are only a few of the voices who shaped our culture, lifted our communities, and pushed this nation forward. There are countless others — artists, activists, thinkers, builders — whose impact deserves the same light. Project Sound Off offers our deepest respect, and our apologies, for every giant we could not include in this edition. Their stories still guide us, and their legacy still moves us.”

As we honor the legends who shaped our past, we also look forward with purpose. Black history is not only what we’ve overcome — it’s what we continue to create every day. Through our art, our leadership, our innovation, and our unshakable hope, we keep pushing this nation toward its better self. The story isn’t finished, and our contribution as a people grows with every new voice that rises.

