



February 2018

## *February is Black History Month*

### *Morrison's Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Sanctuary Shares Her Thoughts*

The declaration for Black History Month was made by President Gerald Ford in 1976 during the celebration of the United States Bicentennial. It was first proposed by black educators and the Black United Students at Kent State University in February 1969.

At that time, I was 14 years old. I recall asking: "What is Black history and why is it different from other history?" I also recall the pride my parents expressed in reaction to the declaration; and the hope it inspired in them.

So, what is Black History Month? The celebration of Black History Month began as "Negro History Week," created in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, a noted African American historian, scholar, educator, and publisher. It became a month-long celebration in 1976. The month of February was chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

African American history educator Pero Gaglo Dagbovie claims that Woodson created Negro History Week to integrate the teaching of black history into the curricula of America's schools. By doing so, he hoped to expose black people, especially youth, to black history. Woodson also believed that by exposing whites to the accomplishments of African-Americans, he could help to eliminate racial prejudice.

Noted historian and civil rights activist John Hope Franklin had a less optimistic view: "The expansion of the 'week' into a 'month' does not necessarily mean that we are moving toward the Woodson ideal... the commercialization of the 'month' provides hucksters with a longer period in which to sell their trinkets and souvenirs, corporations a greater opportunity to display their special brand of 'civic awareness' and lecturers the golden chance to show off their knowledge of black history."



I wonder which of these observations are synonymous with what Black people are saying today about Black History Month? I, personally, am haunted by the same angst that perplexed me over 40 years ago. I ask myself today the same question that I did as a 14 year old when Black History Month was established: Why is the history of people who have the same cultural makings that I do separate from American history? After all, I was born in America, and so were my parents and grandparents and great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents. Are we not American because we are Black? Or are we some sub-category of American because we are Black?

Black History Month celebrates the contributions of Black people in the United States, with a focus particularly on those with African heritage. While many Black people in America can trace their history along slave routes from Africa, there are also those whose origins took a different path. Personally, I chose not to identify as 'African' American because I have no cultural relationship with Africa. Genetics tell me that me and my family have ancestry rooted in Africa or the Caribbean or other parts of the world where indigenous populations are brown-skinned. I am not ashamed of my genetics, I just do not have a familiarity or connection to the customs or the communities of other brown-skinned people who originate beyond the US. This speaks to my concern about the categorization of history made by people who look like me as somehow apart from American history.

Perhaps there is a special month dedicated to Black history in the United States because systemic institutional racism has caused the dilution or elimination of historical accounts by people who are Black and from other non-white cultures. Black people have been erased from history books and public celebrations throughout history, minimizing their contributions to our country. Not surprisingly, little has been done to accurately update or disseminate these records.

That said, I am hopeful that- as more people share their stories and demand accurate representation- that the experiences and contributions of every member of the American community will be captured, recorded, and celebrated as part of our collective American history.

- Patricia Weekley, Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Sanctuary

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On March 14, 2018, Morrison Child and Family Services will host our 5th Annual [Silver Linings Luncheon](#) in the Governor Ballroom at the Historic Sentinel Hotel in downtown Portland. More than 300 of our city's most prominent business and community leaders will gather to celebrate the programs and services Morrison provides.

Silver Linings is an opportunity to increase public awareness of Morrison's community impact. It is also a chance to visit our program gallery and to meet the staff who work directly with the children and families we proudly serve. Every year, we present a video to share a behind-the-scenes view of one of our programs. This year, we highlight our [SAGE Youth Residential program](#).

SAGE, which opened in January 2015, is a secure residential program for long-term stabilization for teenaged girls (ages 11-17) who are survivors of commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC). Commercial sexual exploitation includes a range of crimes and activities involving the sexual abuse and/or exploitation of a person for the financial benefit of any person, or in exchange for anything of value or the promise thereof, given or received by any person. According to the National Hotline for Human Trafficking, in 2017 there have been 3,186 verified reports of human trafficking and 1,438 of those were reports on minors.

This year's keynote speaker is local attorney, victims' advocate, and policy adviser Joel Shapiro. Joel has extensive sex trafficking policy experience, including serving as Chief Counsel to U.S. Senator Ron Wyden, where he crafted the first federal legislation focused on child sex trafficking, as a policy advisor to Multnomah County Commissioner Diane McKeel, and as the lobbyist for the "Kids Are Not For Sale in Oregon Coalition." Joel presently represents victims of sex trafficking and other

crimes in civil litigation. Joel also serves on the Oregon Department of Justice's Trafficking Intervention Advisory Committee, and continues to advocate on behalf of sex trafficking victims at the Oregon Legislature. Joel holds a B.A. in Political Science from Grinnell College, and a J.D. from Lewis & Clark Law School.

To learn more about how your company can sponsor our event or how to join us as a guest, please contact Deanna Kavanaugh at 503-258-4244 or [deanna.kavanaugh@morrisonkids.org](mailto:deanna.kavanaugh@morrisonkids.org).

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## Get to Know Morrison

### Featured Staff: Paige Wayton

February's featured Morrison staff member is Paige Wayton, a mental health therapist with our SAGE Youth Residential program. Paige, who has been with Morrison for a year and a half, began her work at Morrison as a master's student intern before being hired soon after graduation.

As an intern, Paige wanted to work specifically with the CSEC population, so she approached SAGE's program manager, Kelli Doolittle, about completing an internship there. Morrison is one of the only agencies in Oregon that provides intensive treatment for CSEC youth, so Paige jumped at the opportunity to join the SAGE team. Working with SAGE has provided many opportunities for training and professional development that were not available at other agencies she has worked with. She appreciates the strong focus on self-care for people in all kinds of roles at Morrison, which is very important and so often overlooked.



During her internship and later as a new staff member, Paige felt supported by her supervisor and the program staff. They included her in training opportunities and valued what she brought to the table, so she knew that Morrison was where she wanted to stay. Paige's friends and family are proud of the work she does with SAGE and the educators in her life often request information about Morrison's services that could potentially benefit children in their classrooms.

Paige is an art therapist and uses art with all of her clients. Expressive arts therapy is regularly utilized at SAGE and provides mediums that allow the girls to communicate their experiences in new ways. As an artist in her personal as well as professional life, Paige loves that being creative is an important part of her work.

When asked what she would tell someone who is thinking about contributing to Morrison, Paige said that Morrison offers a lot of support and training to volunteers and really invests in their supporters to become a part of the "Morrison Family." To donors, she says that we have really special programs and that the willingness of our community to provide the resources for us to do this work is critical to our ongoing success.

In her spare time, Paige likes to hang out with her dog, Frida, hike, work on her own art, and listen to music. She also eats lots of chocolate.

The SAGE program makes a difference in the lives of youth every day thanks to dedicated clinicians like Paige. Thanks for everything you do for Morrison and for the SAGE girls, Paige!

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## Sustainability Tip of the Month

### This February, show the planet some love

This month, we want to talk about recycling. Recycling can be complicated and varies from place to place. While there are many enthusiastic recyclers out there, it is important to check your local recycling guidelines before wishful recycling. While many materials are "recyclable" that does not guarantee that they are recycled everywhere - there has to be a profitable market for the material for something to be recycled. You may notice that recycling guidelines change periodically, which is

often the result of changes in the materials marketplace. For example, before this year Portland residents had many options for dropping off their recyclable items, but market volatility has resulted in a reduction in the amount of recyclable materials sold at our port. That is a great reminder that while recycling is an important part of materials management, it should be viewed as the last step, after reducing and reusing.

Before tossing a piece of waste, ask yourself:

1. Am I finished with this or can it be reused?
2. Is this item acceptable for my curbside recycling bin?
3. If not, is there somewhere else I can take this item to be recycled?
4. How can I reduce my use of this material?



Here are some tips to make recycling a bit easier:

Do	Don't
Do rinse materials to remove food before putting in the curbside recycling cart	Don't just read the label - <a href="#">in Portland</a> , the number on a plastic container does not matter- it refers to the type of plastic, not its recyclability. Refer only to the shape and size
Do put shredded paper in a paper bag and staple the top before putting in the curbside cart	Don't put plastic bags in the curbside recycling - they jam up the sorting machines
Do check out Portland's new Bottle Drop to get money back on redeemable containers	Don't just landfill your foil - clean it and crumple into a large ball for recycling
Do put glass in the glass-specific receptacle, not in the roll cart	Don't put caps or lids in the recycling, this includes things like yogurt tub lids that come off and accidentally get mixed in with the paper
Do recycle planting pots that are 4 inches in diameter or larger	Don't throw syringes or sharps in the recycling, these are dangerous for people working in waste management. For \$5 you can buy a receptacle from Metro and dispose of sharps for free
Do put small pieces of metal like bottle caps and screws in a tin can and crimp the lid closed. Material that is too small cannot be sorted by the machines so collecting similar materials together makes sorting and recycling possible	Don't treat all paper the same: a cereal box can be recycled whereas a frozen food box cannot. Often, paper that is expected to hold up to extreme temperatures like in the freezer and microwave is mixed with plastic to make it stronger.
Check your city's recycling guidelines. Here are <a href="#">Portland's Curbside Recycling Basics</a> . While not always reliable, you can check the label on the packaging which may point you to a website where you can check if the item is recyclable in your area.	These things cannot be recycled: Plastic bags, diapers, propane cylinders, coffee cups/lids/pods, rigid plastics including "clamshells," plastic containers under 6 oz., prescription medicine bottles, latex gloves, disposable utensils, produce baskets, plastic lids and caps, plastic bottles that have come in contact with motor oil, pesticides and herbicide bottles, Tupperware, Rubbermaid, other reusable dishware, freezer and refrigerator boxes, hard copy books, light bulbs, drinking glasses, flower vases, ceramics, broken glass.

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## Our Mission

At Morrison Child and Family Services, we partner with families and communities to provide effective and responsive services for children and youth coping with adversity and trauma.

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