

National Black History Month

The Presidential Proclamation on National Black History Month, 2022, noted that each February, National Black History Month serves as both a celebration and a powerful reminder that Black history is American history, Black culture is American culture, and Black stories are essential to the ongoing story of America — our faults, our struggles, our progress, and our aspirations. Shining a light on Black history today is as important to understanding ourselves and growing stronger as a Nation as it has ever been.

That is why it is essential that we take time to celebrate the immeasurable contributions of Black Americans, honor the legacies and achievements of generations past, reckon with centuries of injustice, and confront those injustices that still fester today. [Click here](#) to view the full text of President Biden's Proclamation on National Black History Month, 2022.



★ PRESIDENT'S DAY ★

While several states still have individual holidays honoring the birthdays of Washington, Abraham Lincoln and other figures, Presidents' Day is now popularly viewed as a day to celebrate all U.S. presidents, past and present. [Click here](#) to learn more about the history of President's Day in the United States.

Presidents' Day is a federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday in February. Originally established in 1885 in recognition of President George Washington, the holiday became popularly known as Presidents' Day after it was moved as part of 1971's Uniform Monday Holiday Act, an attempt to create more three-day weekends for the nation's workers.

February is American Heart Month, a time when all people can focus on their cardiovascular health. President Lyndon B. Johnson, among the millions of people in the country who had heart attacks, issued the first proclamation in 1964. Since then, U.S. presidents have annually declared February American Heart Month.



The [2022 Presidential Proclamation for American Heart Month](#), stated that "heart disease is a leading cause of death in the United States, claiming the lives of more than 650,000 people each year. During American Heart Month, we raise awareness of the risks of heart disease, remember those we have lost, and highlight steps we can all take to save the lives of countless loved ones and address the unequal burden of heart disease in high-risk communities."

Heart disease continues to be the greatest health threat to Americans and is still the leading cause of death worldwide, according to the American Heart Association's [Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics – 2021 Update](#). The update, published in the association's flagship journal *Circulation*, reports that nearly 18.6 million people across the globe died of [cardiovascular disease](#) in 2019, the latest year for which worldwide statistics are calculated. That's a 17.1% increase over the past decade. And 523.2 million cases of cardiovascular disease were reported in 2019, a 26.6% increase over 2010.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [provides tools, resources, and training materials](#) to develop and support programs that focus on preventing heart disease.

FEBRUARY 2022

Division Director's Message



U. Desmond Alufohai
Director

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Welcome to the month of February 2022. February comes from the Latin word *februua*, which means "to cleanse." The month was named after the Roman *Februalia*, which was a month-long festival of purification and atonement that took place this time of year. It is the only month to have a length of fewer than 30 days! Though it is usually 28 days, there are 29 days during the leap years such as 2020, 2024, 2028, etc.

In February the United States celebrates Black History Month, Presidents Day, American Heart Month, Valentine's Day, and more.

We extend a warm welcome to the Honorable Rene Pika, Consul General of Suriname in Miami, the Honorable Vincent Floreani, Consul General of France in Miami, and we also welcome Ms. Leany Moktar, the new Director/Trade Commissioner Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), Miami to South Florida. I will also like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Jalil Lee, our new Protocol intern to the team.

We commence our series about the seven continents with the African continent and we salute the nations celebrating their independence or national day this month.

As always, please be safe!

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DIPLOMATIC & CONSULAR RELATIONS

New Consul General of the Consulate of Suriname arrives in Miami



The Honorable René Pika is the new Consul General, Consulate General of the Republic of Suriname in Miami. He previously served in the position of Vice-Consul from 2012 - 2016 at the Consulate General of Suriname in Miami and thereafter retired from foreign service.

From 2006 - 2012, Mr. Pika served as a board member of the State Health Fund which is the largest government-owned health insurance company in Suriname. After his term at the Consulate General, he was appointed Policy Advisor to the Ministers of Sport and Youth Affairs (2017) and Natural Resources (2020). During his tenure as Advisor, he managed several climate and renewable energy projects in the interior of Suriname, enabling the country to switch from fossil fuel energy generation to the use of solar panels, and providing 24-hour energy for the villagers.

With his return to Miami, Mr. Pika seeks to continue building effective and productive working relationships with all the stakeholders in South Florida and beyond.

New Consul General of the Consulate of France arrives in Miami



The Honorable Vincent Floreani is the new Consul General, Consulate General of France in Miami. Prior to his arrival in Miami, he served as the Consul General of Hô Chi Minh City in Vietnam (2017 - 2021), Consul General of France in Chicago (2014 - 2017), Deputy Director, Communications (2012 - 2014) and Press Deputy Director (2011 - 2012) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, France. Mr. Floreani also served as the Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of France in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (2008 - 2011), Exchange Diplomat at the British Department of International Development (2007 - 2008), and Head of the Press and Communications Office at the French Embassy in London (2005 - 2007).

Additionally, Mr. Floreani served as First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in New York - Expert in the Security Council from 2002 to 2005. In 1999, he was assigned to the United Nations and International Organizations Division, Sub-Department of

Political Affairs in Paris. His responsibilities included Iraq, Libya, and reform of the Security Council. He is an alumnus of the "Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA). Earlier in his career, he served in Romania, Indonesia, Kenya, and Uganda. He is married and has three sons.

Meet Malaysia's new Trade Commissioner in Miami (MATRADE)



Ms. Leany Moktar is the Director/Trade Commissioner, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) Miami, USA. She assumed her new post on January 3, 2022. She has over 16 years of experience in the international trade profession. She was tasked to serve in various sections within the organization such as Trade Analysis, Corporate Communications, Malaysia Kitchen, F&B and Halal (MIHAS), to name a few.

Prior to her assignment in Miami, she served as Regional Director at MATRADE Sarawak, Borneo for six (6) years. As part of her duties with MATRADE, she received numerous opportunities and exposures in major international trade fairs and missions.

MATRADE Miami or Malaysia Trade Center Miami is a government agency under the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Malaysia. Established in 2006, the trade office is responsible for promoting Malaysia's exports of products and services in Florida, Georgia, Colombia, Venezuela and the Caribbean countries.

Protocol Intern - Jalil Lee

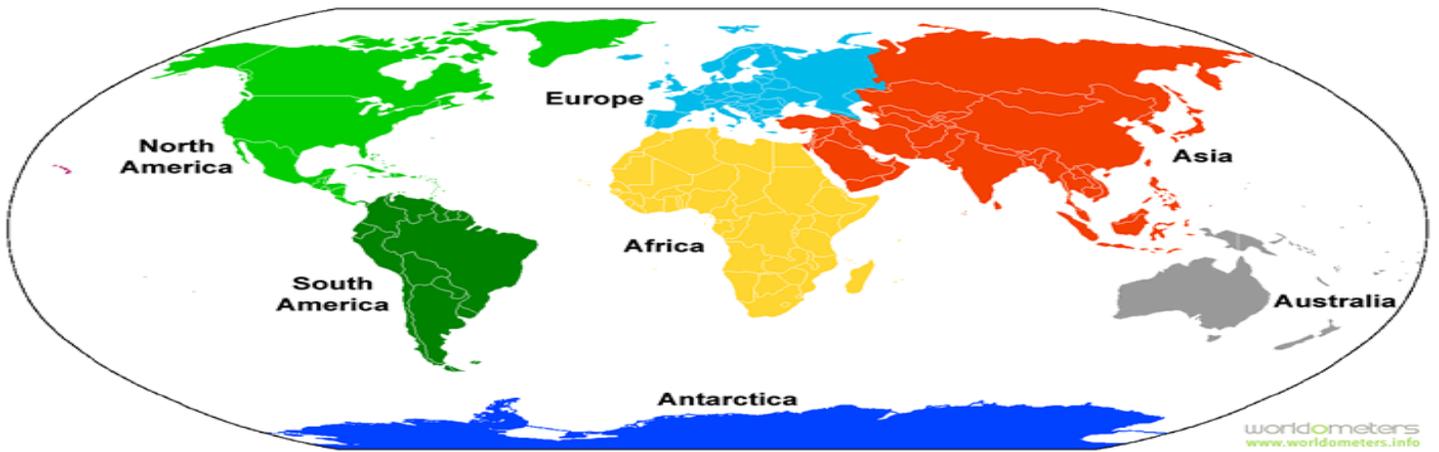


Mr. Jalil Lee is a student at Florida Memorial University, Miami Gardens, Florida, studying to obtain his Bachelor of Science degree in Aviation Management/Pilot. He has a GPA of 3.70 and his expected graduation date is December 2022.

He is a member of the following clubs and organizations: Student Advisory Board, Alpha Eta Rho-Aviation Club, Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals, National Business Aviation Association, University Aviation Association, and Kappa Alpha Psi, Inc. - Epsilon Mu Chapter.

Awards and honors include the following: Deans' lists for Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021, Student Worker MVP Award, Student Engagement Appreciation Award, The First 2021-22 Mister Junior of FMU, 2020 GMAA Scholarship Recipient, and 2020 FMU Aviation Department Scholarship Recipient.

THE AFRICAN CONTINENT



List of the seven continents - Ranked by Current Position

#	Continent	Population (2020)	Area (Km ²)	Density	Percentage of World
1	Asia	4,641 billion	31,033,131	150	59.54%
2	Africa	1,341 billion	29,648,481	45	17.20%
3	Europe	748 million	22,134,900	34	9.59%
4	North America	592 million	21,330,000	28	7.60%
5	South America	431 million	17,461,112	25	5.53%
6	Australia/Oceania	43 million	8,486,460	5	0.55%
7	Antarctica	0	13,720,000	0	0.00%

Africa is second largest continent in size and the second largest continent in population. The African continent is located mainly in the Eastern Hemisphere and to the major part in the Northern Hemisphere. Africa is bigger than the USA, Canada, and India combined. Africa covers an area larger than 30 million square kilometers/ 11.7 million square miles!

Interesting and fun facts on the African continent:

There are **54 countries in Africa** - and 9 dependent territories.

More than 1.3 billion people live on the African continent. This means about 15% of the world's total population live in Africa!

Largest Country: Algeria. This country is among the ten largest countries in the world.

The most populous country in Africa, however, is Nigeria, with more than 219 million people, but the country is only a third of the size of Algeria.

Largest City: Lagos, [Nigeria](#). With more than 22 million inhabitants, Lagos is also one of the biggest metropolitan cities in the world and is estimated to become the world's largest city by 2100 with more than 100 million inhabitants!

Smallest Country: [Seychelles](#), which is an archipelago (nation of islands) in the Indian Ocean. On the African mainland, the smallest country is The Gambia.

Biggest Island: Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world - after Greenland, New Guinea, and Borneo.

Longest River: Nile (6,852 km/ 4,258 miles). The Nile is the longest river in the world and passes through eleven countries. The Nile has two sources: The White Nile coming from Lake Victoria in Tanzania and the Blue Nile coming from Lake Tana in Ethiopia. The river mouth is in Egypt. The confluence in Khartoum/Sudan.

Highest Mountain: Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Mount Kilimanjaro has three volcanic cones and the highest volcanic cone of them is called 'Kibo'. The highest peak is called 'Uhuru Peak' with 5,895 m/ 19,340 ft. The mountain is in the Tanzanian highlands at the border to Kenya. Mount Kilimanjaro can only be climbed from the Tanzanian side but can even be seen from Nairobi, the capital of Kenya.

Biggest Lake: Lake Victoria (bordering [Uganda](#), Tanzania and [Kenya](#)) is also the world's second largest freshwater lake. Only Lake Superior in North America is bigger!

Driest Place: The Sahara in northern Africa is the largest hot desert in the world. The climate is extremely dry (arid) in this region.

Landlocked Countries: There are sixteen (16) landlocked countries in Africa. These countries are all located in the interior of the continent and have neither access to the Atlantic Ocean nor to the Indian Ocean. Two of these landlocked countries, the tiny countries of Eswatini and [Lesotho](#), are located within [South Africa](#).

BRIEFS & NOTES

A Brief History of the Winter Olympics



Beijing, capital city of the People's Republic of China (PRC) hosted the 2022 Winter Olympics from February 2 - 20, 2022. Beijing was selected as the host city of the 2022 Winter Olympics after beating Almaty by four votes on July 31, 2015 at the 128th IOC Session in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, marking the second time it hosted the Olympics, and the last three consecutive Olympics hosted in East Asia.

In 1889, the [first official speed skating world championship](#) was organized by the Amsterdam Speed Skating Club, and in 1901, five years after the birth of the modern Olympics, the [first organized international competition involving winter sports](#) was staged in Stockholm, Sweden. The Nordic Games were held every 4 years, with only Scandinavian countries competing. In 1908, figure skating had become so popular that it was included in the London Summer Olympics. Due to the logistical needs of the sport, the competition did not take place until October, some three months after the Olympics had ended.

In 1911, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) proposed staging a separate winter competition for the 1912 Stockholm Games, but this idea was opposed by Sweden. Germany had planned a Winter Olympics competition before the 1916 Summer Games in Berlin, but both were cancelled due to World War I. During the 1920 Antwerp Games, men's ice hockey joined figure skating as an official Olympic event, and Canada won its first of many hockey gold medals.

The IOC was soon able to reach an agreement with the Scandinavian countries to stage an IOC-sanctioned "International Winter Sports Week". The first one was held in Chamonix, France, from January 25 to February 4, 1924. Nearly 300 athletes, representing 16 nations, competed for medals in 16 events, including ski jumping, bobsledding, speed skating, ice hockey and figure skating. Thirteen (13) women also competed, but their participation was limited to figure skating events. Norway won the unofficial team competition with 17 medals, and American speed skater [Charles Jewtraw](#), who won the gold medal in the 500 meters in Chamonix on January 26, 1924, was the first Winter Olympics gold medalist. The event was so popular with both participants and spectators, that in 1925, the IOC created the Winter Olympics, retroactively making Chamonix the site of the first Olympic Winter Games.

Since its beginnings in 1924, the Winter Olympics has been staged 24 times. Due to World War II, neither the Summer nor Winter Olympics were held in 1940 and 1944. The number of participating athletes, nations, and events has also increased astronomically since its humble beginnings. While 300 athletes from 16 nations competed in 16 events in 1924, 2871 athletes from 91 nations, competed for medals in 109 events during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

2022 Winter Olympics: Top 12 Medal Table

Order	NOC	G	S	B	Total	Order by Total
1	Norway	16	8	13	37	1
2	Germany	12	10	5	27	3
3	People's Republic of China	9	4	2	15	11
4	United States of America	8	10	7	25	5
5	Sweden	8	5	5	18	6
6	Netherlands	8	5	4	17	9
7	Austria	7	7	4	18	6
8	Switzerland	7	2	5	14	12
9	ROC	6	12	14	32	2
10	France	5	7	2	14	12
11	Canada	4	8	14	26	4
12	Japan	3	6	9	18	6

Winter Olympic Trivia

Six sports have appeared in every Winter Olympics: cross-country skiing, figure skating, hockey, Nordic combined, ski jumping, and speed skating. Sonja Henie, Norway's legendary figure skater, made her debut in the 1924 Games at the age of 11. Although she finished last, she went on to win gold in 1928, 1932, and 1936. Norway has been a dominating force during the Winter Olympics, winning a total of 368 medals. Norwegian Marit Bjoergen is the most-decorated winter Olympian in history. A cross-country skier, she has earned 15 medals during her career: 8 gold, 4 silver and 3 bronze. Elana Meyers Taylor is not only the most decorated Black winter Olympian, but also the most decorated women's Olympic

bobsled athlete after winning her 5th medal in Beijing. In 2006, speed skater Shani Davis became the first Black American athlete to win a gold medal at the Winter Olympics (1000 meters).

"Do you believe in miracles? Yes!" Broadcaster Al Michaels famous exclamation as the U.S. men's hockey team beat the heavily favored Soviet Union 4-3 in Lake Placid in 1980. The United States has hosted 4 Winter Olympics, more than any other country, in 1932, 1960, 1980, and 2002. Denver was selected as the host of the 1976 Winter Olympics, but due to public opposition, Denver stepped down as the host and the games were moved to Innsbruck, Austria. Six athletes have won medals in both Summer and Winter Olympics. [American Eddie Eagan](#) is the only one so far who has won gold in both. In 1920, he won a gold medal in boxing, then in 1932, Eagan was a member of the first place four-man bobsled team. Although Swedish figure skater Gillis Grafström also won gold in both Games, he won them for the same sport, figure skating.

Norwegian ski jumper Jacob Tullin Thams won gold in ski jumping (1924) and silver in sailing (1936). In 1988, East German Christa Luding-Rothenburger became the only athlete to win medals in both Olympics during the same year. She won a gold and silver in speed skating, and a silver in short track cycling. Canadian Clara Hughes won a bronze in cycling and a gold in speed skating. American Lauryn Williams won a silver in the 100-meter dash, then a silver in the two-woman bobsled. While American Eddy Alvarez won a silver in the short-track relay race and a silver in baseball. Horses and dogs once participated in the Winter Olympics. In 1928, skijoring was a demonstration sport. In this event, competitors on skis raced each other while being towed by riderless horses. In 1932, dog sled racing was a demonstration sport in Lake Placid.

INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAYS (FEBRUARY)

Countries celebrating Independence / National Day in February

February 4, 1948 – Sri Lanka: British Ceylon gained independence from Great Britain on February 4, 1948. When it became a republic on May 22, 1972, it was renamed the Republic of Sri Lanka.

February 7, 1974 – Grenada: After becoming a self-governing state in association with the United Kingdom in 1967, Grenada became an independent nation on February 7, 1974.

February 11, 1929 – Holy See (Vatican City): On this date, the Holy See signed three treaties with Italy that acknowledged its full sovereignty and established its territorial extent. Currently, its National Day is celebrated on March 13, the election day of Pope Francis.

February 11, 660 BCE – Japan: National Foundation Day celebrates the founding of Japan by legendary Emperor Jimmu on 11 February 660 B.C.

February 13, 1913 – Tibet: After Tibetan troops had driven out the soldiers of the collapsing Manchu (Qing) Dynasty, the 13th Dalai Lama proclaimed independence from China on February 13, 1913. The Chinese never accepted this proclamation, and in 1949, it reoccupied the Himalayan region. Tibet is currently an autonomous area within the People's Republic of China but continues to fight for its independence.

February 15, 1804 – Serbia: Although Serbia gained independence from the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro on 5 June 2006, its National Day, known as Statehood Day is celebrated on 15 February. It marks two historical events, the beginning of the First Serbian Uprising in 1804 and the adoption of the First Serbian Constitution in 1835.

February 16, 1918 – Lithuania: On February 16, 1918 Lithuania gained independence from Soviet Russia and Germany; a day known as Restoration of the State Day. Lithuanians celebrate a second national day: March 11, Restoration of Independence Day, marking the day in 1990 when Lithuania declared independence from the Soviet Union.

February 17, 2008 – Kosovo: On this date, the Kosovo Assembly unanimously voted to declare independence from Serbia.

February 18, 1965 – Republic of The Gambia: The Gambia, the smallest country within mainland Africa and a British Crown colony and protectorate, gained independence from Great Britain on February 18, 1965. It remained a constitutional monarchy within the Commonwealth until it became a republic on April 24, 1970.

February 22, 1979 – St. Lucia: After being contested between the French and British throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, St. Lucia became a British Crown colony in 1814. On February 22, 1979, it gained full independence, choosing to remain within the Commonwealth as a parliamentary democracy.

February 23, 1960 - Japan: Naruhito is the current Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on May 1, 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Akihito. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. The Emperor's Birthday holiday date in Japan changes with the accession of a new emperor and is held on the day that the reigning emperor was born. The current emperor of Japan, Naruhito, was born on February 23, 1960, making this the date for the holiday

February 24, 1918 – Estonia: Estonia celebrates two independence days: Independence Day on February 24; the day they declared independence from Soviet Russia in 1918, and Restoration of Independence Day, on 20 August; the day they declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

February 25, 1963 – Kuwait: Under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, Kuwait gained independence from Britain on June 19, 1961. Starting in 1963, National Day celebrations were moved to February 25 to avoid the prevailing summer heat. The date was chosen to coincide with the anniversary of the Sheikh's coronation in 1950.

February 27, 1844 – Dominican Republic: On this date, Dominicans seized the fortress of Puerta del Conde and drove the Haitian army out of Santo Domingo. Since this day marked a turning point in the nation's history, it is celebrated annually as its Independence Day.

ABOUT US

The core mission of MDAD's Protocol and International Affairs Division is -

To facilitate the movement of official guests, delegations, dignitaries and VIPs through MIA and support the airport's international programs and initiatives.

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