

**TO:** PCI STAFF  
**FROM:** Sharon Small, Ph.D.  
**DATE:** February 3, 2021  
**RE:** CEO MESSAGE



*“PCI...Demonstrating Resilience, Commitment and Heart!”*

.....

Greetings!

I hope you are having a wonderful week and looking forward to **Valentine's Day February 14, 2021!** I hope you know *“On Valentine's Day and every day, I'm grateful for you.”*

**February 2, 2021 was Ground Hog Day!**



Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, so he predicts we will have six more weeks of winter! Bundle up!

**Friday, February 5, 2021, the children, and staff of PCI** will celebrate **Black History** with various presentations at each of our centers. Due to COVID-19, I look forward to hearing how children will celebrate this year. With such creative ECCs and Teachers, I can only imagine!

The 2021 BLACK HISTORY THEME: THE BLACK FAMILY: Representation, Identity, and Diversity!



*"In the United States, the month of February is observed as Black History Month or National African American History Month, and we use the month to remember the important contributions and achievements of African Americans throughout our nation's history."*

**-Regina Edmondson**



Practically every state in the United States celebrates Black History Month each February and remembers the contributions of African Americans in the United States with numerous events and cultural programs. The **Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial** in Washington, DC honors Dr. King's national and international contributions and vision for all to enjoy a life of freedom, opportunity, and justice. We, as part of the PCI family, should always think of how we can make things better for not just one race, but for all races. There is no one race superior to another. Uniqueness comes in diversity. Let's make the diverse personalities and gifts each of our cultures bring for the betterment of PCI, the children we serve and our families.

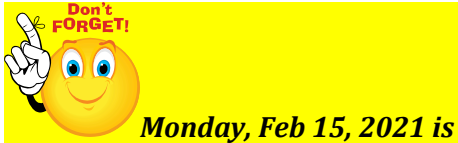


Storytime is just one of the many occasions when you can teach children about the accomplishments of black pioneers and trailblazers. At the end of this CEO Message are **suggested books** that can be read to children during Black History Month to include the link to hear the **22-year-old National Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman, recite her poem, "The Hill We Climb," on Inauguration Day.** You probably watched this, but did your kids? Enjoy!



### **Celebrate Dual Language Learner Week February 15 - 19!**

Dual language is a form of education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. Most dual language programs in the United States teach in English and Spanish, though it also includes languages such as Arabic, Chinese, French, Hawaiian, Japanese, or Korean. Dual language programs use the partner language for at least half of the instructional day basically in the elementary years. Therefore, dual language learning is so important early on. Thank you, Mrs. Norma Bernal and teachers that utilize dual language, in their classrooms for introducing it at such a crucial time in the child's life. Activities will be set up for the week for classroom and home enjoyment.



**Monday, Feb 15, 2021 is Staff Development Day. All PCI employees** are expected to report to their assigned centers, departments, or sessions. More information will be forth coming.



**“Let’s Rodeo, PCI of San Antonio!”** Friday, February 19th is **PCI Rodeo Day!** Children and staff are welcome to wear cowboy/cowgirl duds if they have them!



February is designated as PCI **Board Recognition Month** to build awareness and understanding of the vital function board members plays in the existence of the agency. PCI expresses its appreciation of our Board members for caring about the future of every child and family enrolled in our agency. Though January is the official month of recognition, their work takes a year-round commitment. Our Board is a volunteer board, so the time they put in is strictly because of their commitment to the agency – they receive no compensation for their tireless efforts. These are extraordinary people who voluntarily tackle the enormous job of governing this agency. Their actions and decisions affect the present and future lives of all our children, families, and staff. We are blessed to have members that have withstood the test of time and have remained advocates for the agency. Our board will receive special recognition during the **February Annual Board Meeting and Dinner.**

**Congratulations to PCI Board Member, Dr. Ernest Thomas**



Our own Board Member, Dr. Ernest Thomas was chosen by Texas A&M University-San Antonio to take part in a documentary on how it is for African American men to live in San Antonio. As part of the documentary, a portrait of Dr. Thomas

was completed and will hang in the university along with 32 other African American gentlemen from the San Antonio area. This is a great honor to have been selected for this project. PCI Congratulates you Dr. Thomas!



Have you stopped to think about the paid time our PCI Board of Directors has approved without using PTO? **1-week paid Thanksgiving Break; 2-weeks paid Christmas Break; 1-week paid Spring Break? Not to mention the countless hours of volunteer time on behalf of the agency! Thank you, Board of Directors – PCI APPRECIATES YOU!**



Soon we will celebrate the nominee representatives for **Teachers of the Year and Teacher Assistants of the Year for each center!** The purpose of this event is to recognize the outstanding teachers and/or teacher assistants in each PCI Early Head Start and Head Start center and select an overall **Teacher of the Year for 2020– 2021** in both groups. Due to the Pandemic, information is being revised as to how teachers will be observed, etc. Please stay tuned for specific information.



A mid-year review of performance is an informal conference between the supervisor and employee to discuss the employee's performance to date and to review the progress toward established performance goals. This conference provides an opportunity for the employee and supervisor to confirm and clarify expectations and exchange information. The conference should be an **"employee-based discussion"** where the supervisor listens 80 percent and talks 20 percent of the time. The length of time scheduled should be between 5 – 30 minutes. Candid and honest discussion regarding accomplishments as well as problems or obstacles will lead to improved communication and improved employee performance. The Mid-Year Performance Conference Form is utilized to document information exchanged at this conference. Supervisors may want to utilize the Early Dismissal Day on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February or Staff Development Day on the 15<sup>th</sup> to finalize the review. Please ask your Executive/Supervisor for copies of the form.



#### WHAT IS VITA?

The 2021 VITA San Antonio season has arrived! VITA is a free tax preparation program supported by the Catholic Charities Archdiocese of San Antonio, City of San Antonio, and

United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County. Tax services will be available **virtually through April 15th at 10 separate locations across San Antonio**. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program provides free income tax return preparation to hard working taxpayers earning up to \$60,000 annually. VITA helps working families take advantage of all the tax credits they are eligible for including the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit (CTC), and education credits. Please call the United Way Helpline at 2-1-1 for more information on VITA services, locations, and hours. For even more information visit VITASA.ORG.

### **NEXT EARLY RELEASE/DISMISSAL – FEBRUARY 24, 2021**

The quality of instruction for our PCI children can improve even greater with teachers having more time to prepare quality lessons, develop assessments, analyze student data, and collaborate with our Education/Training staff as well as our Distance Learning Facilitator/Trainer. The Board of Directors approved our teachers to have additional planning time. The first day for early dismissal will be Wednesday January 13, 2021. All children should be picked up by parents at 11:45 a.m. The Nutrition Department will share with you when children should be fed lunch and their snack. Please remember the purpose of this day. I look forward to hearing the outcome.



Being in 100% Compliance is important to assure our centers, children and staff are safe.

Congratulations to the following Centers for being in 100% Compliance with Education, Disabilities and Mental Health:

- Place for Life Head Start – Ms. Lisa Sifuentes and Staff
- Place for Life Early Head Start – Mrs. Patricia Cardenas and Staff
- Lost Creek – Leticia Aldaba and Staff
- Imperial – Mrs. Rina Lyda and Staff
- PCI Early Learning Academy-Early Head Start - Ms. Erika Trevino and Staff
- PCI Early Learning Academy-Head Start Staff - Mrs. Stacy Almendarez and Staff
- East Central – Michelle Salsedo and Staff
- West Hutchins – Mrs. Zella Burns and Staff
- Terry O'Connor – Mrs. Della Misher and Staff
- Evelyn King – Ms. Mevelon Lott and Staff
- George Gervin – Mrs. Erma Marshall and Staff

**A special Way to Go!** to Ryan Garza, Virginia Ledesma, Angie Rodriguez, and Compliance Monitor Carla Mandujano for taking Health Care out on Wheels! Also, thanks for Mr. Joe Segura for setting it all up. Great job! Distance Learning children were able to receive their heights and weights utilizing PCI's Technology van! Special thanks to the ECCs and Family Service Workers for contacting the parents and assuring their child came to the van site. Great innovation all! Way to go, PCI!

**Way To Go! to All who participated or will participate in the Following February Activities**

- Leadership PCI Session VI
  - 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School
  - Children's Black History Presentation
  - Policy Council Meeting
  - Board of Directors Meeting
- \*\*Please see calendar for specific events.

**Great things are happening throughout PCI and as always, I thank you for all you do!**

**We Are a SUCCESS...Because we Try!**

I'M A SUCCESS  
by  
DR. SHARON SMALL

I'M A SUCCESS AND I KNOW WHY  
Soy un éxito y sé por qué

MY MOTTO IS TO TRY, TRY, TRY  
Mi lema es tratar, tratar, tratar

TO DO AND BE MY VERY BEST  
Para hacer y ser mi mayor esfuerzo

THAT IS WHY, I'M A SUCCESS!  
Por eso, ¡Soy un éxito!

"PCI...Growing San Antonio's Tomorrow...Today!"

# FEBRUARY

## AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

### *PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CYCLE TIMELINE*

JAN 18 – APR 16	5. Continue Observing Job Performance	COACH FOR SUCCESS	SUPERVISOR
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**FEBRUARY Monthly Events: Board Recognition Month & Annual Meeting \***  
 Daily/Weekly Compliance Debriefing, Important Information – Center Visits – CLASS \*  
 Comments from Parent/Teacher Conference for Annual Report \*National Dental Month,  
 \*Birdies for Charity Kick-off \*American Heart Month\* Quarterly Parent  
 Gazette\*Quarterly Strategic Plan Update \*CDBG \* 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School \*Monitoring  
 Review

#### **February**

- ❖ 2 – Groundhog Day
  - Leadership PCI Session VI – Organizational and Staff Development 4:30 – 6:00

- EHS/CCP Directors ZOOM calls
- ❖ 3 - 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School
- ❖ 4 - Executive Team Meeting
  - United Way Help Me Grow Meeting 1:30 – 2:30
- ❖ 5 – Children’s Black History Presentation
  - Payday
  - Miranos – 11:00
- ❖ 9 - CEO/Fiscal Budget Meeting
- ❖ 10– Policy Council Meeting
  - CACFP Live 10:30 - 12
  - Head Start Consortium Meeting Zoom 8:30 – 10:30
- ❖ 11 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 12 - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield
- ❖ 14 – Valentine’s Day
- ❖ 15 - Bad weather make-up day/ Student Holiday/Staff Development Day/Presidents Day
- ❖ 15-19 Dual Language Learner Celebration Week
- ❖ 15 – March 5 – Head Start and Early Head Start Roundup
- ❖ 16 – Annual Board of Directors Meeting
- ❖ 17 – Ash Wednesday
  - Fatherhood (Male) Initiative Meeting – Virtual – 6:00 – 8:00
- ❖ 18 - Executive Team Meeting
  - Parent Curriculum Training
- ❖ 19 - Data Assessment & Accountability Initiative Meeting
  - Payday
  - PCI Rodeo Day
- ❖ 22 - 26 – National Schools Week
- ❖ 22 – March 5 – Book Fair
- ❖ 24 – Health/Nutrition Advisory (Virtual)
  - Early Release 11:45
- ❖ 25 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 26 - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield
  - EHS/CCP Team Meeting
  - Children’s Recognition Day
  - IRS 1099 Report Due

## **MARCH**

### **SELF ASSESSMENT MONTH**

## ***PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CYCLE TIMELINE***

JAN 18 – APR 16	5. Continue Observing Job Performance	COACH FOR SUCCESS	SUPERVISOR
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**MARCH** \*National Nutrition Month\* Music Month, Art Month, National Middle Level Education Month\*HEAD START ROUNDUP; Read Across America \*Self-Assessment\*Security and State Franchise Tax Due \* Daily/Weekly Compliance Debriefing, \* Center Visits – CLASS

### **March**

- ❖ 1 - 5 – National Breakfast Week
- ❖ 1 – CLASS-Virtual/Face to Face Observations Begin
- ❖ 2 - 5 - Parent Gazette Spring Edition
- ❖ 2 – National Read Across America Day
  - Texas Independence Day
  - Leadership PCI Session VII – Food Service 4:30 – 6:00
  - EHS/CCP Directors ZOOM calls
- ❖ 4 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 5 - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield
  - Payday
- ❖ 8 - 12 Spring Break /Centers & Offices Closed
- ❖ 9 – 11 NHSA Winter Leadership Institute
- ❖ 10 – CACFP Live – 10:30 - 12
- ❖ 11 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 14 – Daylight Saving Time Begins (Turn clocks ahead 1 hour)
- ❖ 15 - CEO/Fiscal Budget Meeting
  - New Staff Orientation
- ❖ 17 - 28 – Agency Self-Assessment Timeframe
- ❖ 17 – Shared Program Governance Meeting & Self -Assessment Training
  - Self-Assessment Training
  - St. Patrick’s Day
- ❖ 18 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 19 - Data Assessment & Accountability Initiative Meeting
  - Payday
- ❖ 20 – Spring Begins.
- ❖ 24 - Early Release 11:45
- ❖ 25 - S.T.E.A.M. Fair
  - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 26 - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield
  - EHS/CCP Team Meeting
- ❖ 27 – Passover Begins.
- ❖ 28 – Palm Sunday
  - April 4<sup>th</sup> Champions for Charity Golf Tournament
- ❖ 31 - Children’s Recognition Day



# APRIL

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT MONTH

**APRIL is Child Abuse Awareness Month**

### *PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CYCLE TIMELINE*

JAN 18– APR 16	5. Continue Observing Job Performance	COACH FOR SUCCESS	SUPERVISOR
APRIL 1 - 16	6. Self-Evaluation	EMPLOYEE SELF-EVALUATION	SUPERVISOR AND EMPLOYEE
APRIL 23	7. Portfolios	EMPLOYEE SUBMIT PORTFOLIO	EMPLOYEE

**APRIL** \* ECC Nomination Committee Site Visit\* Partnership/Volunteer Awards and Recognitions\*Kids Day at the Park\*Child Abuse Awareness \*Community Assessment \*Week of the Young Child \* Daily/Weekly Compliance Debriefing, Center Visits – Class \* Health & Wellness Fair\*

#### **April**

- ❖ 1 – April Fools’ Day
  - Executive Team Meeting
  - Champions *fore* Charity Ends.
  - EHS-CCP & Expansion Application due
  - Community Assessment Timeframe
  - Teacher and Teacher Assistant Nominee Interviews Begin
- ❖ 2 – Good Friday Holiday/ Centers & Offices Closed
  - Payday
- ❖ 4 – Easter
  - Passover ends.
- ❖ 5 – 9 TDA Review (CACFP)
- ❖ 6 - Leadership PCI Session VIII – Human Resources/Fiscal 4:30 – 6:00
  - EHS/CCP Directors ZOOM calls
- ❖ 7 – Miranos – 9:00
- ❖ 8 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 9 - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield
- ❖ 12 - New Staff Orientation
- ❖ 12 -16 -Week of the Young Child
- ❖ 13 - CEO/Fiscal Budget Meeting
- ❖ 14 – Policy Council Meeting
- ❖ 15 – Tax Day
  - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 16 - Data Assessment & Accountability Initiative Meeting
  - Payday
- ❖ 19 – 23 National Head Start Conference, Columbus, OH

- ❖ 20 – Board of Directors Meeting
- ❖ 21 – Administrative Professionals’ Day
- ❖ 22 -Transition/ Education Advisory Board Meeting
  - Earth Day
  - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 23 - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield
  - Battle of Flowers Holiday /Centers & Offices Closed
- ❖ 27 - 29-Dinosaur Exhibits (TBA)
- ❖ 28 – Health/Nutrition Advisory (Virtual)
  - Early Release 11:45
- ❖ 29 – Executive Team Meeting
  - SF-425 Semi-Annual Report Due HS/HSII/EHS/EHSII
  - SF-425 Final Annual Report Due HS/HSII/EHS/EHSII
  - Federal Cash Transaction Report Due
- ❖ 30 – Arbor Day
  - Payday
  - EHS/CCP Team Meeting
  - Children’s Recognition Day
  - Teacher/Teacher Assistant Nominees Announced

## MAY

### *PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CYCLE TIMELINE*

MAY 3 – MAY 14	8. Annual Written Performance Evaluation	PREPARE WRITTEN PERFORMANCE EVALUATION	SUPERVISOR
MAY 17 – MAY 28	9. Formal Performance Evaluation	CONDUCT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE CONFERENCE	SUPERVISOR

**MAY** \*National Physical Fitness & Sports Month \*Teacher Appreciation Week \*Nurse Appreciation Week \* ECC Nomination Committee Site Visit Quarterly Parent Gazette \*EHS / HS Transition Ceremony\*Quarterly Strategic Plan Update\*Single-wide Audit Month **Monthly Events:** \* Daily/Weekly Compliance Debriefing, \* Important Information – Center Visits – CLASS

#### **May**

- ❖ 3 - 7 – Teacher Appreciation Week
- ❖ 3 - 7 -Child Nutrition Appreciation Week
- ❖ 4 – National Teacher Day
  - Leadership PCI Session IV – Leadership Panel Q & A 4:30 – 6:00
  - EHS/CCP Directors ZOOM calls
- ❖ 5 – Cinco De Mayo
- ❖ 6 – National Day of Prayer
  - National Nurses Day
  - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 7 - Teacher of the Year Recognition
  - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield

- ❖ 9 – Mother’s Day
- ❖ 11 - CEO/Fiscal Budget Meeting
- ❖ 12 – Policy Council Meeting
  - New Staff Orientation – Zoom
  - Head Start Consortium Meeting Zoom 8:30 – 10:30
- ❖ 13 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 14 - Payday
  - Human Resources Newsletter
- ❖ 15 – Armed Forces Day
- ❖ 17 - Distribute Layoff Letters (Head Start Staff)
- ❖ 18 - Board of Directors Meeting
- ❖ 19 – Early Release 11:45
  - Fatherhood (Male) Initiative Meeting – Virtual – 6:00 – 8:00
- ❖ 20 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 21 - Data Assessment & Accountability Initiative Meeting
  - CPR/First-Aid Class-3:00-Fenfield
- ❖ 27 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 28 – Payday
  - EHS/CCP Team Meeting
  - Children’s Recognition Day
- ❖ 31 – Memorial Day Holiday/ Centers & Offices Closed

## JUNE

JUNE 1	10. Performance Evaluation completed on all employees	SUBMIT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TO HUMAN RESOURCES	SUPERVISOR
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**JUNE** \*Center Transition Day\*No Board or Policy Council Meeting this month\*input Male Recognition Event \*Fire & Property Insurance bid\* Executive Planning Retreat\*Day Home Provider Recruitment **Monthly Events:** \* Daily/Weekly Compliance Debriefing, \*Important Information

### June

- ❖ 1- 4 EHS/CCP Directors ZOOM calls
- ❖ 1 - PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS DUE TO HR
  - Leadership PCI Class Dinner
- ❖ 3 - Last day for Head Start.
  - Transition Ceremonies
- ❖ 4 – Bad weather make-up day/Staff Workday
- ❖ 7 - First Day of Summer Dress Code
- ❖ 8 - CEO/Fiscal Budget Meeting
- ❖ 10 - 11– CEO Virtual Planning Retreat
- ❖ 11 - Payday
- ❖ 14 – Flag Day

- ❖ 17 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 19 – Juneteenth
- ❖ 20 – Father’s Day
- ❖ 21 – Summer Begins.
- ❖ 24 - Executive Team Meeting
- ❖ 25 – Payday
- ❖ 30 - EHS-CCP Fiscal Year Ends
  - EHS Children Recognition Day

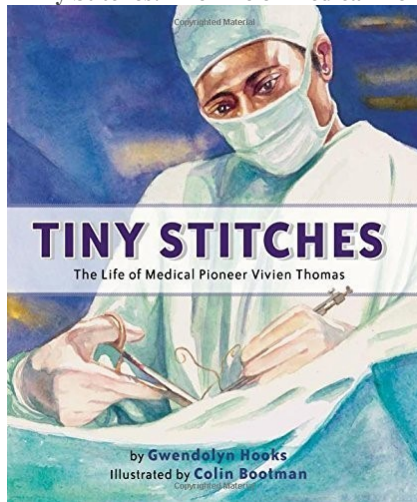


***“PCI...Demonstrating Resilience, Commitment and Heart!”***

## 24 Children’s Books to Read to Your Kids in Honor of Black History

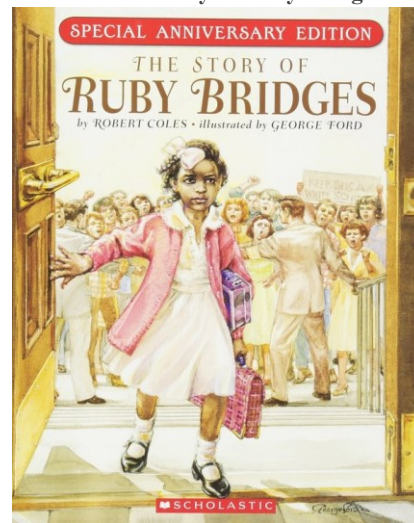


### “Tiny Stitches: The Life of Medical Pioneer Vivien Thomas”

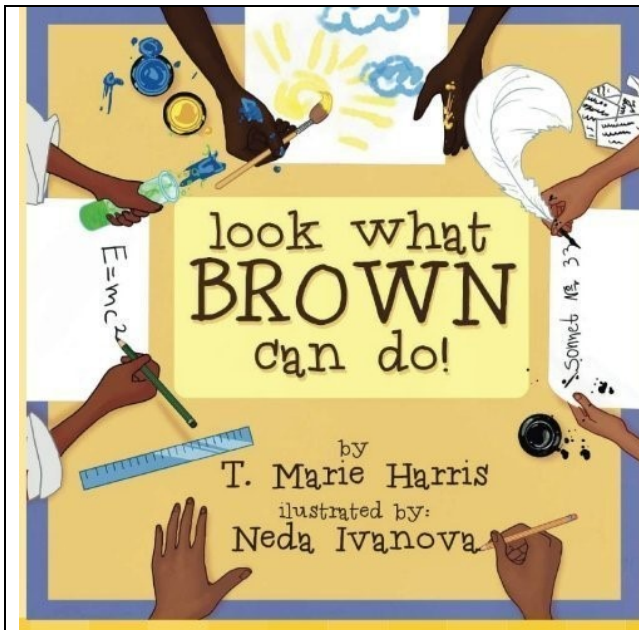


*Tiny Stitches* highlights the accomplishments of [Vivien Thomas](#), an often-forgotten pioneer in the world of surgical technology. (By Gwendolyn Hooks, illustrated by Colin Bootman)

### The Story of Ruby Bridges

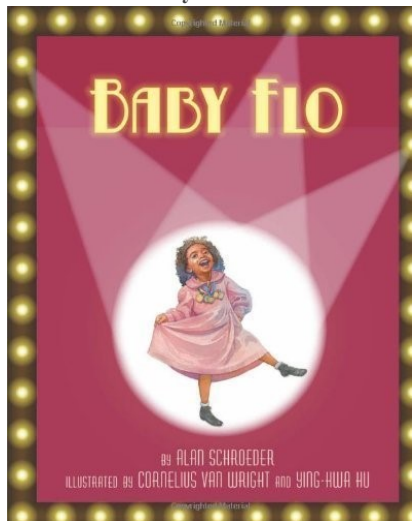


This book tells the story of [Ruby Bridges](#), who became the first African-American child to integrate a white southern elementary school. (By Robert Coles, illustrated by George Ford)

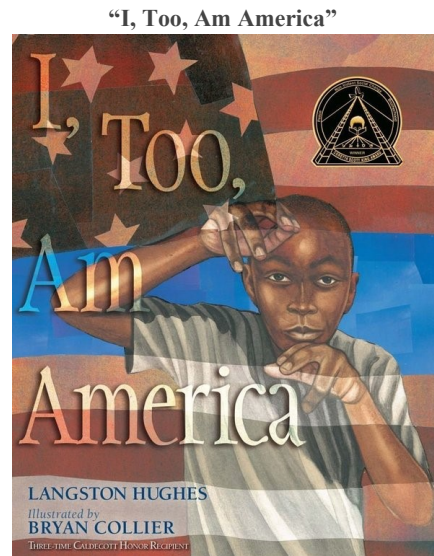


Called a “modern black history book,” *Look What Brown Can Do!* teaches readers about inspiring contributions to black history and encourages kids to dream big. (By T. Marie Harris, illustrated by Neda Ivanova)

“Baby Flo: Florence Mills Lights Up the Stage”



*Baby Flo* tells the story of Harlem Renaissance figure Florence Mills, who was known for her talents in singing, dancing and comedy. (By Alan Schroeder, illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa Hu)



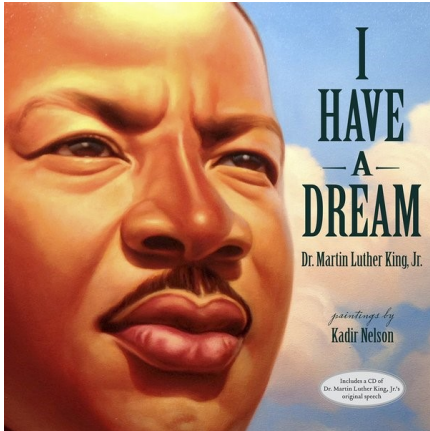
Bryan Collier presents an illustrated version of Langston Hughes’ famous poem “I, Too, Am America.” (By Langston Hughes, illustrated by Bryan Collier)

“Mae Among the Stars”



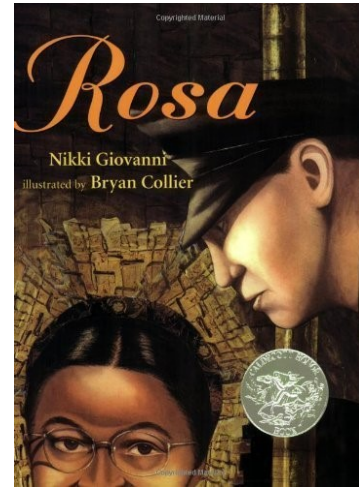
Mae Jemison was the first African American woman in space, and this book shares her dreams as a child, her hard work and ultimately, her success in and out of space. (By Roda Ahmed, illustrated by Stasia Burrington)

“I Have A Dream”



*I Have a Dream* offers an illustrated version of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s [inspiring speech](#) about the importance of equality. (By Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., illustrated by Kadir Nelson)

“Rosa”



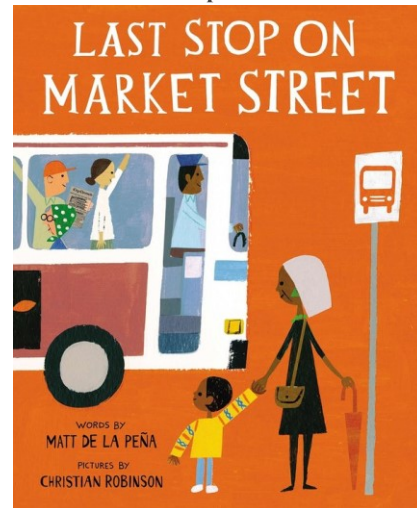
With this book, kids can learn about [Rosa Parks'](#) bravery and resilience as she refused to give up her bus seat in Alabama, playing an important role in the civil rights movement. (By Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Bryan Collier)

“Coretta Scott”



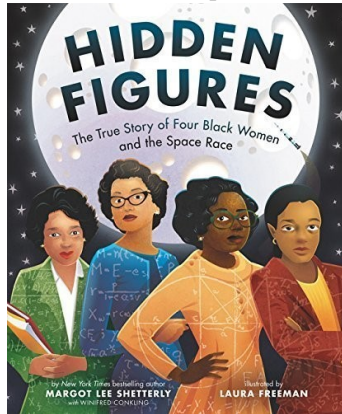
Kadir Nelson also illustrated this book about [Coretta Scott King](#), the civil rights activist and leader who married Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (By Ntozake Shange, illustrated by Kadir Nelson)

“Last Stop on Market Street”



*Last Stop on Market Street* highlights the relationship between a child and his grandmother, who shows him what he's overlooking in their day-to-day life. (By Matt de la Peña, illustrated by Christian Robinson)

“Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race”



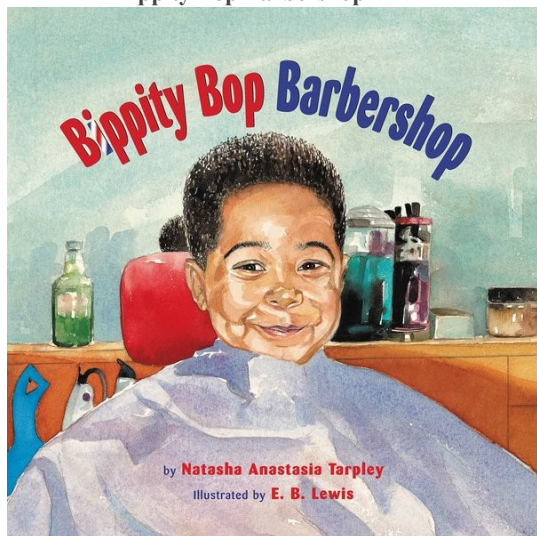
You’ve probably seen [the movie](#), but you can also use reading time to introduce the black women whose hard work and perseverance advanced the space race. (By Margot Lee Shetterly with Winifred Conkling, illustrated by Laura Freeman)

“Juneteenth for Mazie”



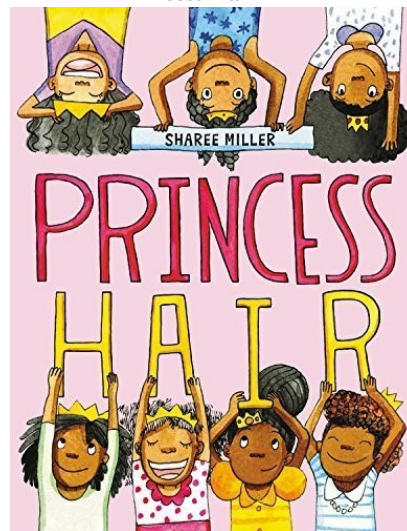
Kids can accompany the titular character Mazie as she celebrates [Juneteenth](#), the day in 1865 that marked the end of slavery in the United States, even though President Abraham Lincoln had passed the Emancipation Proclamation two years earlier. (By Floyd Cooper)

“Bippity Bop Barbershop”



*Bippity Bop Barbershop* highlights the role barbershops play in black culture, and what it’s like to conquer your fears as a child. (By Natasha Anastasia Tarpley, illustrated by E.B. Lewis)

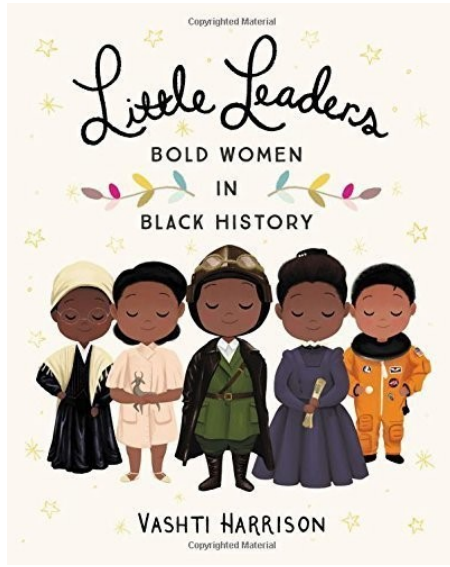
“Princess Hair”



*Princess Hair* encourages black girls to embrace their hair in all its many forms. (By Sharee Miller)

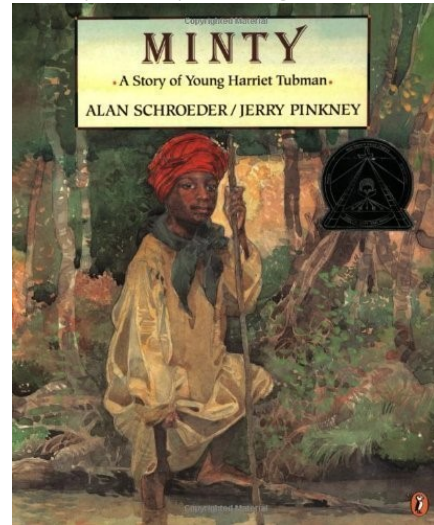


“Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History”



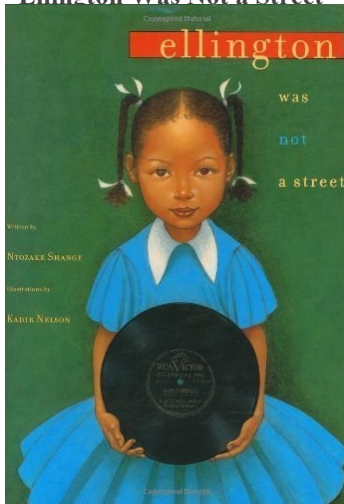
*Little Leaders* includes a variety of stories about black women who never backed down in the face of adversity. (By Vashti Harrison)

“Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman”



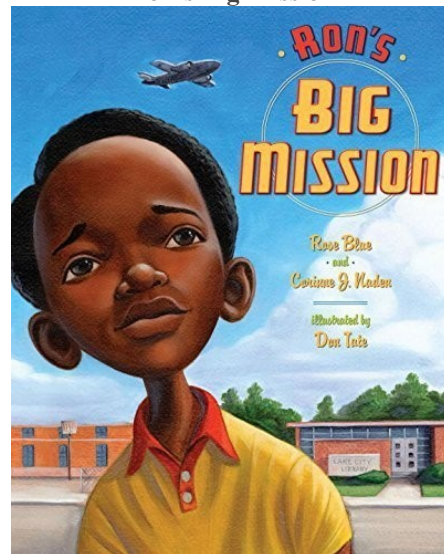
*Minty* tells a fictionalized version of the backstory of [Harriet Tubman](#), a significant figure in black history who led enslaved people to freedom on the Underground Railroad. (By Alan Schroeder, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney)

“Ellington Was Not a Street”



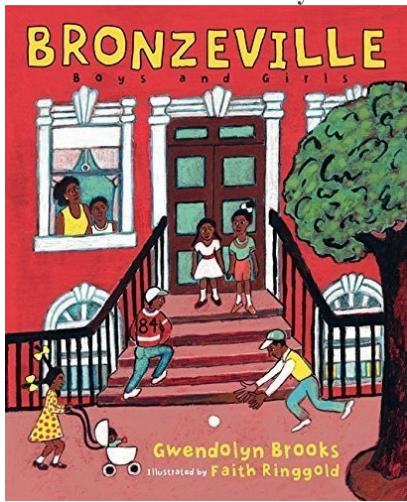
Poet Ntozake Shange tells the stories of her community and how its members, despite the obstacles in their way, persevered. (By Ntozake Shange, illustrated by Kadir Nelson)

“Ron’s Big Mission”



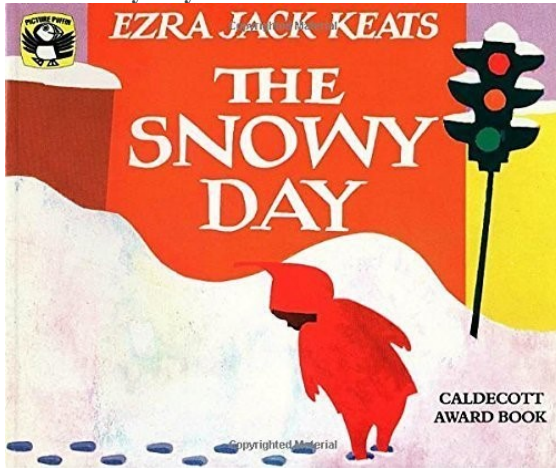
*Ron's Big Mission* shares the accomplishments of Ronald McNair, an American physicist and NASA astronaut who died during the Space Shuttle Challenger launch, and the lesser-known story of how [he helped integrate a library as a kid](#). (By Rose Blue and Corinne Naden, illustrated by Don Tate)

“Bronzeville Boys and Girls”



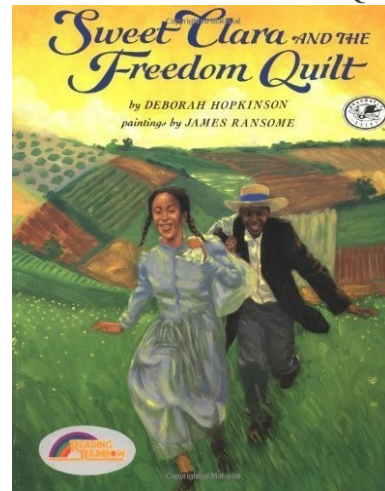
Kids can learn the importance of community by reading Gwendolyn Brooks’ poems about Chicago’s Bronzeville section. (By Gwendolyn Brooks, illustrated by Faith Ringgold)

“The Snowy Day”



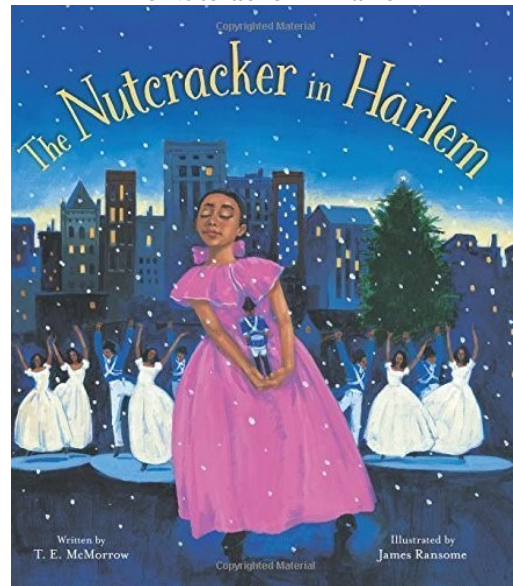
*The Snowy Day* was one of the first children’s books to focus on a non-caricatured African American character. It remains a favorite for both parents and kids. (By Ezra Jack Keats)

“Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt”



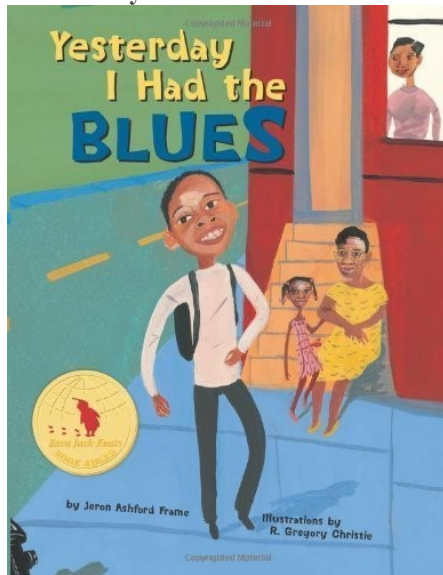
This 1995 classic is a fictional story of a seamstress who helps fellow enslaved people find freedom on the Underground Railroad using a quilt. (By Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by James Ransome)

“The Nutcracker in Harlem”



This book is a twist on the classic holiday tale, set during the Harlem Renaissance. (By T.E. McMorrow, illustrated by James Ransome)

“Yesterday I Had The Blues”



*Yesterday I Had The Blues* offers insight for kids about openly discussing their emotions and the colors associated with them. (By Jeron Ashford Frame, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie)



22-year-old National Youth Poet Laureate **Amanda Gorman** recites her poem, “**The Hill We Climb**,” on Inauguration Day

<https://youtu.be/LZ055iIiN4>

*“Stand up for justice. Sometimes it gets hard, but it is always difficult to get out of Egypt, for the Red Sea always stands before you with discouraging dimensions. And even after you’ve crossed the Red Sea, you have to move through a wilderness with prodigious hilltops of evil and gigantic mountains of opposition. But I say to you this afternoon: Keep moving. Let nothing slow you up. Move on with dignity and honor and respectability.”*

— **King, Martin Luther, Jr.**



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