

## Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective Black History Month



Over the past several years, we have celebrated Black History Month by presenting a program that highlights the accomplishments, resilience, and influence black people have had on the world and us as individuals. We celebrate not because we are ignoring current-day issues but because our contributions have been exceptional and undeniable.

Our programs have always be organized by a rotating team of black collective members and attempt to inform, educate, entertain and inspire.

Here is a brief overview of past programs:

**2015 BHM – Black Collective Art exhibit** – Each Saturday we curated a different exhibit of historically significant art and artifacts owned by Collective members. The art collections were phenomenal!

**2016 BHM – “Inspirations”/Member Story Telling** – Collective members wrote and presented incredible stories of triumph highlighting African-American heroes in their life and personal life victories. We laughed, we cried, we celebrated!

**2017 BHM – “Telling Our Story”** – There was a debut of the Black Collective documentary movie that aggregated all of the stories presented in 2016.

**2018 BHM – “Finding a Way”, Strategy Planning** – We came together as a body and developed objectives and strategies for the Black Collective and each of its subcommittees. This was actually a prelude to this the Collectives 2020 Way-Forward Committee planning activities.

**2019 BHM – Keynote Speakers & Discussion Panels** – We decided to shine a spotlight on African American leadership and expertise from within our local community. We had speakers and panelist for each of the Collectives four primary focus areas – political, education, social justice and economic development.

**2020 BHM – “Our Contributions and Impacts through Music”** - Before the pandemic hit we presented the life sustaining role music has played for black people throughout history. Programming covered the great achievements and influences we have had in gospel, blues & jazz, R&B and Rap/Hip Hop/Spoken Word, and more.

**2021 BHM – “The History and Achievement of Blacks in Cinema”** – We continued our recognition and celebration of black people in the arts. This year we educated and refreshed members on both little known and renowned films, stage productions, actors, producers and studio owners while reaching back to the silent film era.

**2022 BHM - “The History & Influence of Black Dancers”** – We completed our focus on black people in the arts with a focus on dance. We highlighted trendsetters, creative dance styles and origins of dance. In many cases dance was used to camouflage expressions of social and political protest. Like music and cinema, the levels of achievement are amplified by the discriminatory and oppressive arenas afforded black people; their talents however, could not be suppressed forever.