National African-American (Black) History Month: February 2018
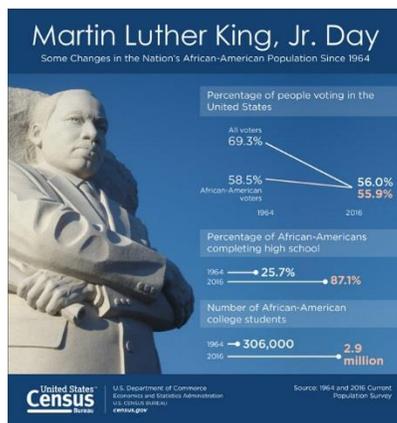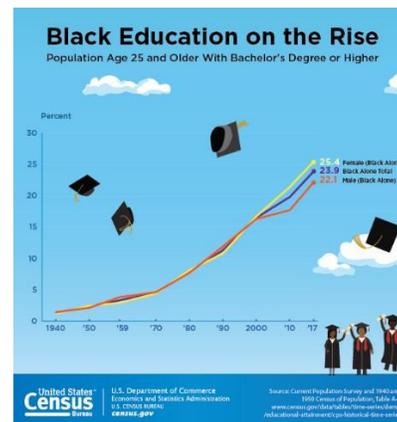

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To commemorate and celebrate the contributions to our nation made by people of African descent, American historian Carter G. Woodson established Black History Week. The first celebration occurred on Feb. 12, 1926. For many years, the second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthdays of abolitionist/editor Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the week was expanded to a month. Since then, U.S. presidents have proclaimed February as National African-American History Month.

The following facts are made possible by the invaluable responses to the U.S. Census Bureau's surveys. We appreciate the public's cooperation as we continuously measure America's people, places and economy.

Note: The reference to the black population in this publication is to single-race black people ("black alone") unless otherwise noted.

Did You Know?

46.8 million
The black population, either alone or in combination with one or more races, in the United States.
Source: 2016 Population Estimates

2.1 million
The number of black military veterans in the United States nationwide.
Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[29.0 %](#)
The percentage of the black population 16 and older working in management, business, science and arts occupations in 2016.
Source: [2016 American Community Survey](#) (Source includes more on occupations, commuting and industries.)

[87.1 %](#)
Percentage of African-Americans completing high school.
Source: [2016 Current Population Survey](#) (Source includes more on education, including advanced degrees and school enrollment.)

[113,643](#)
The number of black-owned employer firm businesses in the United States in 2015.
Source: [2015 Annual Survey of Entrepreneurs](#)

More on Population Size

- The projected black population.
- New York had the largest black population in 2016, among states.
- Cook County, Ill. (Chicago), had the largest black population in 2016, among counties.

Voting Rates

- [Voting rates in the 2016 presidential election](#)
- [Voting rates in the 2014 congressional election](#)

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

- Income
- Poverty status
- Health insurance coverage

More Stats

See a [detailed profile](#) on the black population from the 2016 American Community Survey. Statistics include:
- Families and children
- Marital status
- Grandparents living with grandchildren
- Jobs
- Labor force participation
- Occupation
- Commuting
- Housing

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