

# Proclamation

WHEREAS, in late August 1619, enslaved Africans arrived in present-day Virginia and thus began a system of chattel slavery that would last for more than 250 years in the United States; and

WHEREAS, slavery's reach extended to Chapel Hill and North Carolina and involved hundreds of years of uncompensated work performed by African Americans; and

WHEREAS, even after the ratification of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments, segregation and the systemic discrimination legally sanctioned under Jim Crow, prevented African Americans in their attempts to fully participate in the Town's and in the State's economic, political and social life; and

WHEREAS, in the face of such discrimination, African Americans were resilient, overcame adversity, and nevertheless, shaped the Town of Chapel Hill and North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, racism continues to limit the progress of African Americans and other racial minorities; and

WHEREAS, the African American experience over the past 400 years is an American experience and should never be forgotten; and

WHEREAS, this anniversary coincides with the 200<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the founding of the Town of Chapel Hill; and

WHEREAS, the Town has undertaken efforts in recent years, including the work of its Historic Civil Rights Task Force, to recognize the critical leadership and contributions of African Americans to the Town; and

WHEREAS, much more work remains in the efforts of recognition and education of the residents of Chapel Hill on the contributions of African Americans to the Town; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Chapel Hill have a responsibility in 2019 and beyond to understand how the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow persist and to consistently and critically examine our institutions for what we can do to end racism; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town of Chapel Hill hereby proclaims August 1, 2019 through July 31, 2020 as a year of remembrance to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first Africans to English North America; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Town of Chapel Hill continues its commitment to work towards ending racism, healing our society and ensuring justice through exploring its history and embracing efforts to win freedom and equality.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THE  
TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL ON THIS THE ELEVENTH  
DAY OF SEPTEMBER IN THE YEAR TWO  
THOUSAND NINETEEN.



*Pam Hemm*