



Proclamation

By the Governor of Alabama

WHEREAS, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964, marked a defining moment in American history by prohibiting discrimination based on race, sex, religion and national origin, as well as ending racial segregation in schools, workplaces and public facilities; and

WHEREAS, on September 7, 1965, 14 courageous African American students – Brenda Joyce Baker, Cynthia Baker, Pamela Denise Baker, Anthony Odell Cannon, Carol Lisa Jackson, Judia Mae Parker, Raymond Parker, Dora Dunn, Dorothy Nix, Steven Walker, Caroline Watley, Jennifer Rebecca Williams, Jonathan Williams and Tony Williams – became the first to integrate the Jacksonville Elementary Laboratory School and Jacksonville Laboratory School, now known respectively as Kitty Stone Elementary School and Jacksonville High School; and

WHEREAS, these students, known today as the Jacksonville Trailblazers, integrated the Jacksonville City Schools voluntarily through Freedom of Choice forms signed by their parents, doing so before federally mandated integration and in the face of significant social resistance; and

WHEREAS, these brave young men and women endured discrimination, long walks to and from school in all weather, as well as the hardships of a deeply divided time, demonstrating strength, faith and determination that transformed their community and advanced civil rights across Alabama and the nation; and

WHEREAS, on October 6, 2024, the first African American historical marker in Jacksonville was unveiled and dedicated at the Jacksonville Public Library to commemorate the 14 Trailblazers and their pivotal role in the desegregation of Jacksonville schools, symbolizing their enduring contribution to equality, education and civic progress; and

WHEREAS, this 60th anniversary serves as a reminder of the power of courage and conviction to overcome adversity and inspire future generations toward justice, inclusion and unity:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, do hereby proclaim December 6, 2025, as

Trailblazers Day

in the state of Alabama, in honor of the Jacksonville Trailblazers and their historic role in advancing civil rights.



Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the Office of the Governor at the State Capitol in the City of Montgomery on the 4th day of December 2025.

Kay Ivey
Kay Ivey, Governor