

The Federal Court Family Celebrates Black History Month with

An Enduring Vision: 100 Years of Black History in the Southern District of Indiana, and Beyond

Friday, February 20, 2026, at 2:00 PM

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana is pleased to announce its 27th annual Black History Month event. This year's hour-long program, *An Enduring Vision: 100 Years of Black History in the Southern District of Indiana, and Beyond*, will be held in **courtroom 202 at the Birch Bayh Federal Building and United States Courthouse on Friday, February 20, 2026, at 2:00 PM**. A virtual option is available for those who cannot attend in person. One hour of Continuing Legal Education credit is pending approval.

This year's Black History Month Program is a true celebration. In recognition of the Third Branch of government's commitment to the ongoing journey toward justice, Judge Tanya Walton Pratt will discuss the roots of Black History Month and examine key legal decisions and legislative acts that have fundamentally advanced civil rights for all Americans. She will also showcase groundbreaking Black lawyers and judges in celebration of their courage and commitment to the rule of law, and how this history impacts us today.

Judge Pratt will be joined by James H. Robinson, Jr., who will look back at the pioneers, trailblazers, and incredible celebrations that have been featured in the Southern District of Indiana's preceding 26 years of Black History Month programs.

A musical selection, including *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, will be presented by the Reverend Jason Powell. Rev. Powell, M.Div., is an ordained minister, musician, singer, worship leader, songwriter and spiritual teacher with a passionate vision for ministry. He serves spiritual seekers by manifesting heavenly music and teaching divine truth, in an inclusive way.

President Barack Obama nominated the Honorable Tanya Walton Pratt on January 20, 2010. She was confirmed by the Senate and received her commission on June 15, 2010, making her the first Black federal judge in Indiana history. From 2008 until her appointment to the bench of the District Court, Judge Pratt served as a judge in the Marion Superior Court, Probate Division. She was elected Marion Superior Court Judge in November 1996, and she served as Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, Criminal Division, from 1997 to 2008. She also served as Master Commissioner for the Marion Superior Court from 1993 to 1996. Prior to her election as a Marion Superior Court Judge, she was active in private practice as a partner with the law firm of Walton & Pratt

James Robinson, Jr., has served as the Training Specialist for Indiana Southern Bankruptcy Court for the past eighteen years. He is also the contracting officer for his court and has maintained his role as the Employee Dispute Resolution Coordinator for nearly a decade. On the national level, James served as faculty for the Federal Court Leadership Development program from 2019-2024 and has facilitated new court trainer workshops. James currently chairs the INS Black History Month Program Committee and is also a member of both the Hispanic Heritage Month and INS Diversity committees. He is a U.S. Army veteran.

As in past years, the 2026 program is co-sponsored by the United States District Court, United States Bankruptcy Court, United States Probation Office, United States Attorney's Office, Federal Community Defenders, and the United States Marshals Service for the Southern District of Indiana.

The event is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is required. Please register at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/BHM2026> to reserve a space and indicate whether you will attend in person or virtually. Those attending virtually will receive a link to join the program via Zoom.