

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, the 1960s in the United States was an era marked by the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, countercultural movements, assassinations of significant leaders, and protests to fight for social reform and equal rights, and it was also a time of peace and love; and

WHEREAS, defined as the act of sitting in seats or on the floor as a means of organized protest, sit-ins during the 1960s were inspired by the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his policies of non-violence, and they were peaceful protests to enact change, and they began in Greensboro, North Carolina to change the segregation policies of the F. W. Woolworth Company, specifically regarding their lunch counter refusal of service to African American patrons; and

WHEREAS, Tampa, Florida is proud of its rich history, its progress and success, and it played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement, which much of it can be attributed to approximately 40 students from **George S. Middleton** and **Howard W. Blake High Schools** who joined together in the sit-in protest on February 29, 1960, by sitting at the segregated lunch counter at F.W. Woolworth Company department store in downtown Tampa to peacefully protest segregation; and

WHEREAS, the students joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) Florida State President Reverend A. Leon Lowry and its Youth Council President Clarence Fort in the three-day sit-in, and it resulted in the late Mayor Julian Lane and his Biracial Commission member Cody Fowler, and others in successfully guiding Tampa through a time of change, and it helped lead the way for equality and progress in Tampa and throughout the southern states, and the **Woolworth Sit-In** Historical Marker is located at the intersection of East Polk Street and North Franklin Street, the site of the F.W. Woolworth building in downtown Tampa as a testament to the power of peaceful protest and grassroots activism; and

WHEREAS, to commemorate the **65th Anniversary of the Woolworth Sit-In**, the Honorable Arthenia Joyner, participant in the sit-in as a student, the Honorable Jim Davis, grandson of Cody Fowler, Shirley Lowry, widow of Reverend A. Leon Lowry, and Julian Lane III, grandson of Mayor Julian Lane, will join Karla Hartley, Producing Artistic Director of Stageworks Theatre in bringing to the Straz Center for the Performing Arts the production of **When the Righteous Triumph**, written by Tampa playwright Mark E. Leib, on March 6-9, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim March 1, 2025, as

“WOOLWORTH SIT-IN ANNIVERSARY DAY”

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to join me in paying tribute to those who bravely, through peaceful activism, paved the way for equality in our nation and in our own community, and to attend the “When the Righteous Triumph” production in honor of those who have paved the way.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 1st day of March 2025.



Jane Castor

Mayor