

# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER

CHRIS HOLLINS, CITY CONTROLLER



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## CITY CONTROLLER CHRIS HOLLINS TO HOST BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION AT CITY HALL HONORING THE LEGACY AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLACK HOUSTONIANS

**HOUSTON, TX** – Houston City Controller Chris Hollins will host the Office of the City Controller’s annual Black History Month Celebration on Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 10:00 AM at City Hall. The event will recognize the enduring legacy, leadership, and cultural contributions of Black Houstonians who continue to shape the city and inspire future generations.

This year’s program also carries special historical significance as communities across the nation commemorate the 100-year anniversary of organized Black History Month observances, honoring a century of preserving, celebrating, and advancing Black history and achievement.

“Houstonians benefit every day from the vision, creativity, resilience, and leadership of our Black community,” said Controller Chris Hollins. “As we mark 100 years of Black History Month celebrations, we’re reminded that Black history is not only something we reflect on — it is something we continue to build. The honorees we will celebrate embody generational excellence, community transformation, and the powerful reminder that representation matters.”

The program will be emceed by recently retired, award-winning journalist and longtime ABC13 anchor Melanie Lawson, and will honor:

- **Yolanda Adams**, internationally acclaimed gospel artist, Houston native, and cultural icon whose global career has inspired generations through music, faith, and community leadership. Adams will receive a *Community Legend Award*.
- **Dr. Reginald DesRoches**, President of Rice University – the institution’s first Black president and first immigrant president – whose leadership in higher education continues to expand access, innovation, and academic excellence. DesRoches will receive a *Community Trailblazer Award*.
- **Houston Texans Head Coach DeMeco Ryans and Jamila Ryans**, founders of the Ryans Family Foundation, whose work focuses on transforming families and communities across generations through mentorship, empowerment, and youth development. They will receive a *Community Champion Award*.

- **United Airlines pilots Jamil and Jalal Paul**, Houston-based aviation professionals who serve as role models for young people pursuing careers in aviation and STEM fields. The Paul brothers will receive *Community Hero Awards*.

The program will also feature a posthumous tribute honoring the life and legacy of **The Honorable Sylvester Turner**, recognizing his decades of public service, transformative leadership, and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of Houston residents. Turner will be recognized with a *Legacy Award*.

Attendees will enjoy live performances from artists representing **Texas Southern University** and a special performance by Houston violinist **Michael Prince**.

The Black History Month Celebration is free and open to invited guests and community partners. Those interested in attending or seeking additional information may [RSVP here](#).

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**ABOUT CITY OF HOUSTON CONTROLLER'S OFFICE:** Established in 1903, the City of Houston Controller's Office is the cornerstone of financial oversight and accountability for America's fourth-largest city. With a mission to uphold Houston's fiscal integrity and protect residents' tax dollars, the office oversees a broad spectrum of the City's financial operations, including its budget, investments, and debts. Committed to transparency and fiscal responsibility, the Controller's Office is key to maintaining the economic vitality of Houston, contributing to its status as a thriving metropolis for its diverse community.

**ABOUT CONTROLLER CHRIS HOLLINS:** Chris Hollins, serving as Houston's City Controller since January 2024, brings a dynamic approach to City governance and financial management. With a rich background in legal practice and management consulting, coupled with innovative leadership as Harris County Clerk, Hollins is dedicated to enhancing the city's fiscal practices and community engagement. Educated at Morehouse College, Yale Law School, and Harvard Business School, Hollins's commitment to accountability and service excellence drives his mission to build a financially resilient Houston. Residing in the Third Ward with his family, his work is deeply informed by his strong community ties.