

FEBRUARY IS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

2021 Theme: The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity

The theme was selected by the [Association for the Study of African American Life and History \(ASALH\)](#)

Black History Month also known as African American History Month is observed in February to recognize the history and achievements of African Americans. In 1926, Dr. Carter G. Woodson known as the Father of Black History initiated the annual February observance of Negro History Week to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. In 1976, the celebration was expanded to Black History Month by President Gerald Ford. Since then, Presidential Messages and Proclamations have been issued to recognize February as Black History Month.

OAR EMPLOYEE IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

Michelle C. Howard, Administrative Officer,
Air Resources Laboratory (ARL)



Michelle Chawlk Howard is a native of Hampton, Virginia. She attended Virginia Commonwealth University and earned a B.S. in Business Administration. After graduating, she relocated to Maryland and began her career as a Budget Analyst Intern with the Department of Defense (DoD), Army Research Laboratory (ARL). During this internship, she earned a M.A. in Business Administration from Bowie State University.

Over the course of several years, she worked for the Navy Computer and Telecommunications Command (NCTC), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Department of Homeland Security. Michelle was hired by the OAR Budget Execution Division in 2005, as a Budget Execution Team Lead and subsequently promoted to Supervisor.

Michelle participated in the Leadership Effectiveness and Advancement Program (LEAP) Class of 2011-2012. Additionally, she volunteered as a mentor in the 2014 Seas Skies Chapter of the Federally Employed Women (FEW) organization. She received the "Order of Sherman's Lagoon" award in 2016 for her forward-thinking approach to ensure sound financial management practices across OAR.

In 2019, Michelle was selected as the Administrative Officer for the Air Resources Laboratory (ARL). This career move has afforded her the opportunity to acquire additional knowledge regarding Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion.

Michelle's outside activities include event planning and quality family time. She is a member of the Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.