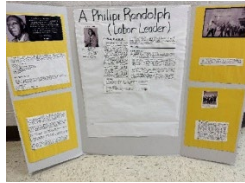


## Celebrating Black History Month at Hilltop

Children at the Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center celebrated Black History Month in a wide variety of ways.

According to our Youth Services Coordinator, Teresa Allen, the older students concentrated on researching Black men and women of the labor movement from 1800.



“The project was researching different important members of the Labor Movement and then making a 3-panel poster displaying what they learned about the person they researched. We then set up the posters in the Gym for everybody to see. Some of the people we researched were A. Phillip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, Christian Smalls, and Velma

Hopkins.”

Meanwhile, our preschoolers took a different track. Curriculum Coordinator, Dashaba Fielder says some students dressed as their heroes.



“We had children dressed as Bessie Coleman, Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, and Ruby Bridges and they each were able to correctly recite a ‘little known black history fact’ on each of their persons. They enjoyed our *Black On The Job Exhibit* and (Hilltop Executive Director) Dr. Michele came dressed as Ruby Bridges as she read, *The story of Ruby Bridges.*”

Back in February, we learned about the new Hilltop Food Pantry. Center Deputy Director, Brandon Furrowh tells us the pantry is popular.

“In the month of February, nine families sought out goods from the center’s food pantry. Totaling 45 people, these nine families ranged from family sizes of as little as 2 members and as large as 8 members within the household. Popular items such as peanut butter, Kraft macaroni and cheese, tuna, spaghetti and spaghetti sauce are flying off the shelves.”

At some point soon, Brandon says “Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center staff will solicit donations... with an understanding that many families will be negatively impacted by nation-wide cuts to programs that assist with food for under-employed families.”

Center Executive Director, Michelle Willilams, updates us on the impact of possible Federal funding cuts to local non-profits.

“In the wake of last month’s directive by the federal Office of Management and Budget to freeze funding and the ensuing court challenges to block implementation, nonprofit organizations have struggled to gain clarity and stability regarding the situation. *While Hilltop has not been directly affected* (emphasis added), some nearby nonprofits are discussing the

potential impact which includes layoffs, no longer providing meals to seniors and scrapping prospective partnerships with state agencies on infant early childhood mental health consultations. We will continue to watch for programs that affect the agency and the children and families such as Head Start, Medicaid and Social Security.”

*Eric F. Mease*

*Member, Board of Directors*

*Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center*