

STATE OF ARKANSAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: Dr. Maya Angelou, born Marguerite Annie Johnson on April 4, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri, moved to Stamps, Arkansas, at the age of three to live with her grandmother, Annie Henderson, and her Uncle Willie, until she relocated to her mother's home in California at the age of fourteen; and

WHEREAS: Those formative years in Stamps laid the foundation for her eventual acclaim as an author, poet, actor, educator, and activist, whose talents sprang from the great soul and fierce courage forged during the early years of her life; and

WHEREAS: Dr. Angelou called Arkansas home until her death in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, on May 28, 2014. Six weeks before her death, she had written a letter of regret to the Fayetteville Public Library when ill health prevented her from making an appearance there. In the letter, she stated, "I long to come to the State of Arkansas . . . I learned in Arkansas at a very young age from my grandmother who taught me, 'when you learn, teach, and when you get, give' . . . In Arkansas I also learned not to complain . . . In Arkansas, I learned to trust love, not the romance of it, but the heart of it. In Arkansas I learned to have respect for friendship, to honor it, to trust it, and to build it"; and

WHEREAS: Dr. Angelou's courageous honesty about childhood trauma has empowered others to vocalize and heal and, like Dr. Angelou, make their voices count; her multifaceted creativity has blessed and elevated artistic expression across the globe; her own towering example has inspired and motivated an army of phenomenal women; and her unflinching analysis of debilitating racism has helped pave the way for change, opportunity, and hope; and

WHEREAS: The City of Stamps, Arkansas, through its Mayor and City Council, has resolved that the area adjacent to Lake June be known as the Dr. Maya Angelou Memorial Park to "commemorate the memory, accomplishments, and future recognition of a former resident who, over the course of a lifetime, became known to people from all walks of life as a model for overcoming adversity while still seeking unity, for achieving fame in many fields of endeavor, and for being honored as one of the few Inaugural Poets in the Country"; and

WHEREAS: The Celebrate! Maya Project, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization was established in July 2014, after the death of literary icon and global history maker Maya Angelou and partnered with the city of Stamps, to sponsor a "A Day of Remembrance," the state's first official memorial to the literary giant. Since 2014 the Project has continued to promote the life and history of Dr. Angelou, with particular outreach to Arkansas communities and youth, including the awarding of academic and poetry awards to deserving students; and

WHEREAS: The Celebrate! Maya Project's official mission is "To help honor and promote the inclusive literacy, creativity and social consciousness of the life and work of artist and activist Dr. Maya Angelou," and whose membership includes a small, diverse group of artists, writers, educators, historians, nonprofit administrators, and others from around the state, all committed to helping preserve, and promote Arkansas's history and the history of

literary icon Maya Angelou by holding public forums, partnering with Arkansas schools, communities, and other nonprofit organizations;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ASA HUTCHINSON, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim April 4th 2017, as

MAYA ANGELOU DAY IN ARKANSAS

across the state, and I encourage my fellow citizens to join me in recognizing Dr. Maya Angelou's exemplary life and legacy during this commemoration of her roots in this great State.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 15th day of March, in the year of our Lord 2017.



Asa Hutchinson, Governor



Attest:



Mark Martin, Secretary Of State