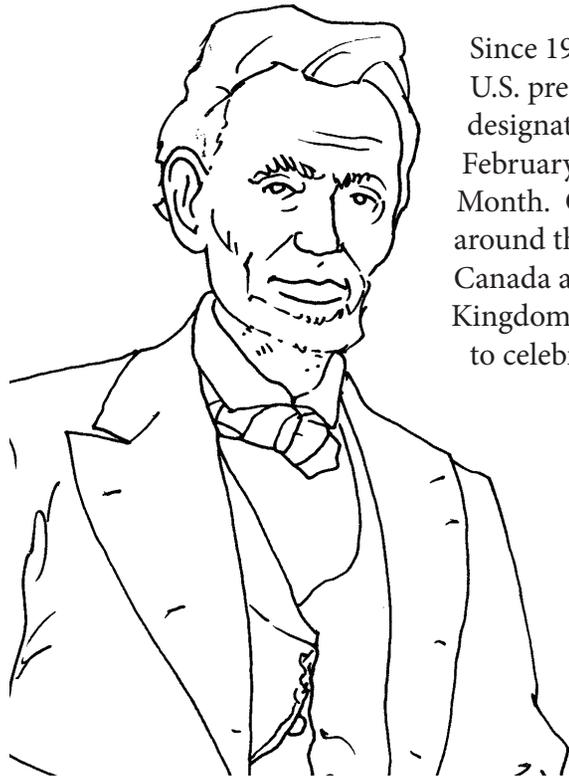


# Did You Know?

The month of February was chosen to correspond with the birthdays of **Frederick Douglass** and **Abraham Lincoln**.



Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history.



**CULTURAL  
AWARENESS**

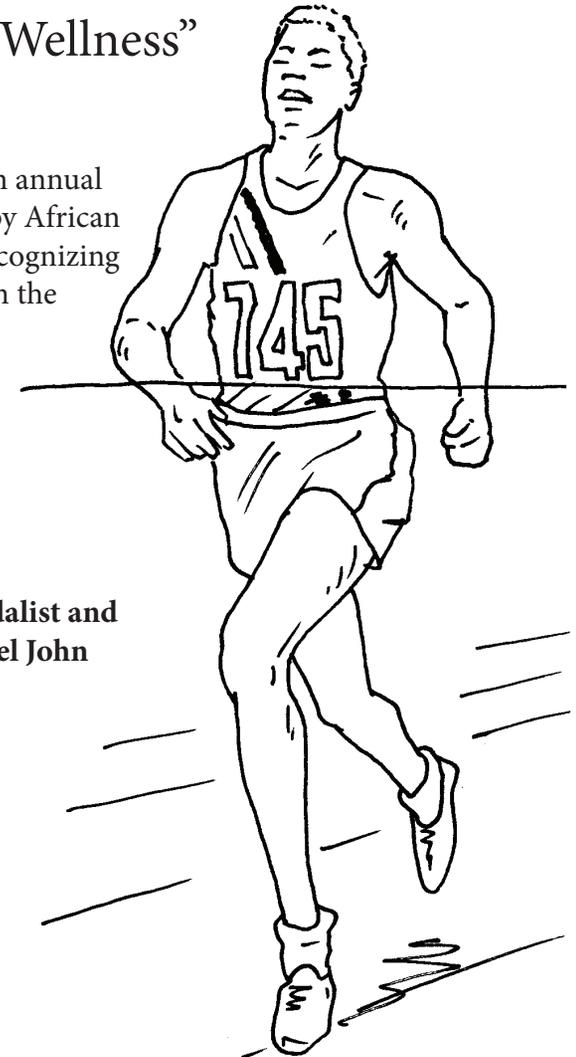
# OBSERVANCE

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

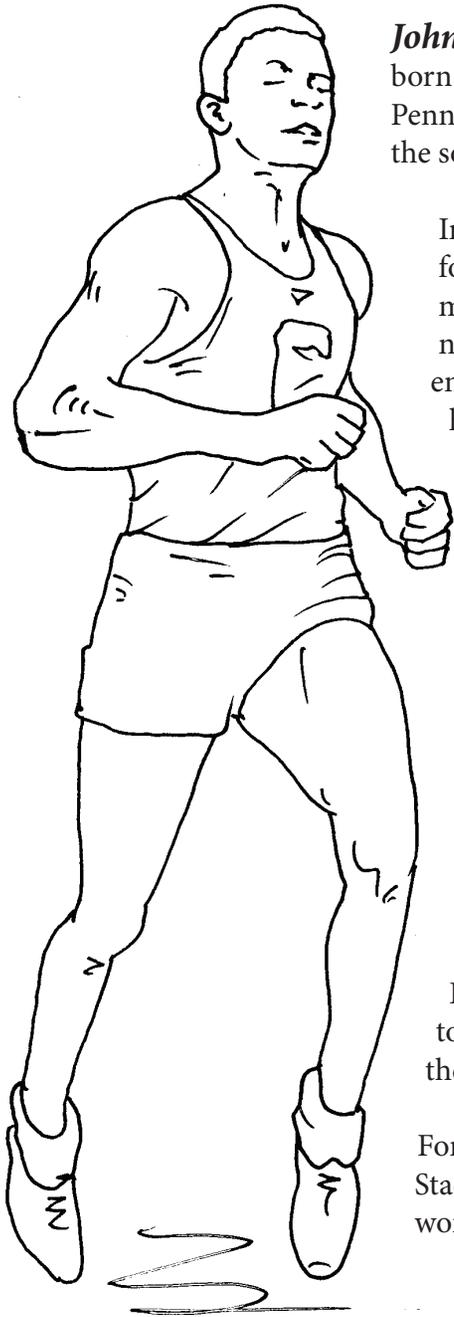
FEBRUARY

“Black Health and Wellness”

**Black History Month** is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans. It is a time for recognizing their immeasurable impact on the history of the United States.



**1936 Olympic Gold Medalist and Army Lieutenant Colonel John Youie Woodruff**



**John Youie Woodruff** was born July 5, 1915, in Connellsville, Pennsylvania. His father, Silas, was the son of Virginia slaves.

In high school, he made the football team, but his mother made him quit because it left him no time for chores. Track practice ended earlier, so his mother gave her blessing.

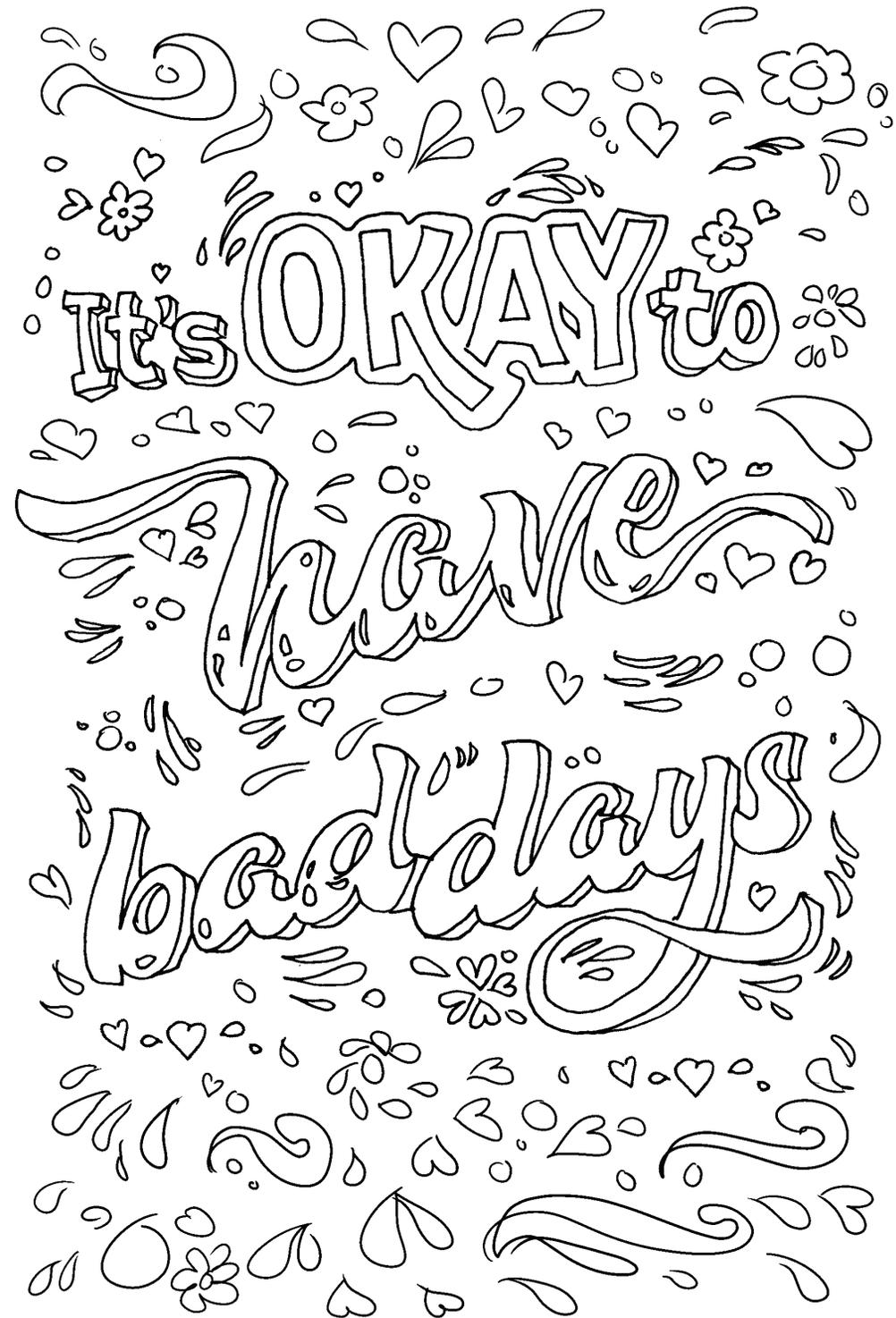
By the time he graduated from Connellsville High he had set new track records at the school, county, district, and state levels.

In 1935, he set a national high school track record in the mile.

He received a track scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh.

Black students were not allowed to live on campus, so he stayed at the Centre Avenue YMCA.

For money, he cleaned up at Pitt Stadium after football games and worked on campus grounds.





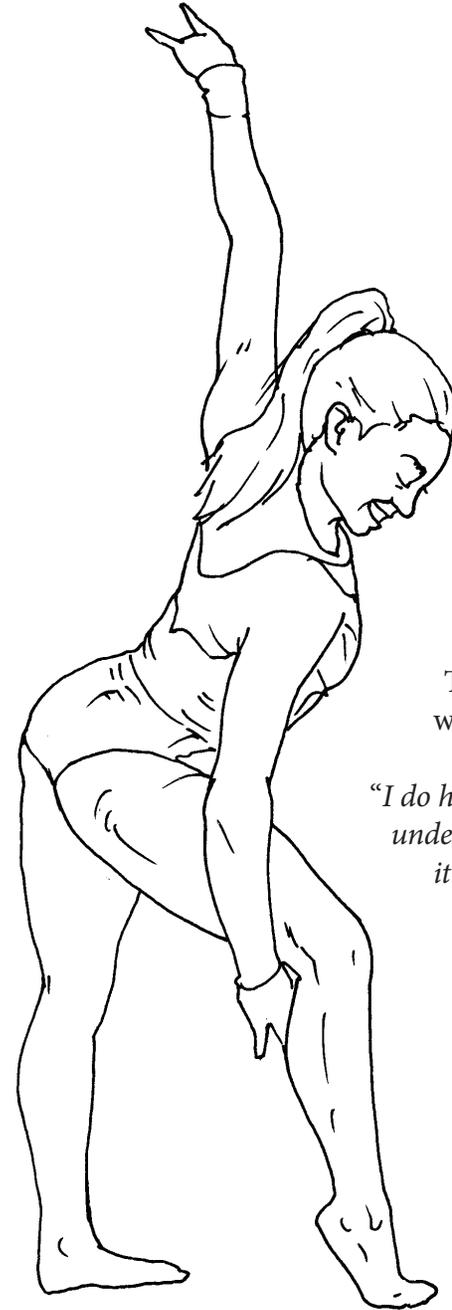
**Woodruff** was one of eighteen Black athletes representing the United States in the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

He remembers about his race: *“Phil Edwards, the Canadian doctor, set the pace, and it was very slow. On the first lap, I was on the inside, and I was trapped. I knew that the rules of running said if I tried to break out of a trap and fouled someone, I would be disqualified. At that point, I didn’t think I could win, but I had to do something.”*

*“I didn’t panic,”* he said. *“I just figured if I had only one opportunity to win, this was it. I’ve heard people say that I slowed down or almost stopped. I didn’t almost stop. I stopped, and everyone else ran around me.”*

With a stride of almost 10 feet, he took the lead, lost it on the backstretch, regained it on the final turn, and won the gold medal.

He was the first Black athlete to win a gold medal at the Berlin Games. It was the first time in 24 years that a U.S. runner placed first in the 800-meters.



**Simone Biles**, one of the most accomplished Olympic gymnasts, shared some of her mental health challenges during the 2021 Tokyo Olympics. She chose to withdraw from the games.

*“I do hope that people can relate and understand; it’s OK to not be OK, and it’s OK to talk about it,”* she wrote in **Time** magazine. *“There are people that can help, and there is usually light at the end of any tunnel.”*

# Take Action! Create a "Me Tree."

## Steps:

1. Trace your hand on a piece of paper leaving the fingertips open to draw longer branches.
2. Draw your branches from your fingertips leaving room for lots of leaves.
3. Draw as many leaves as you want (make sure to make them large enough to write things or draw inside!).
4. Draw some soil on the bottom of your page leaving room between the bottom of your paper and the top of the soil for writing or drawing!

Each part of the tree represents a different area of your life. Doodle, draw, or write in each of the prompts below.

### Soil: "I am supported by..."

Think about the people in your life that love and support you.

### Tree trunk and branches: "I am grateful for..."

Beginning at the bottom of the tree and working your way up through the branches, reflect on the places, things or experiences for which you are grateful (e.g., my family, friends, doctors that help me feel better when sick, school where I meet my friends, the outdoors where I can exercise and see new things, etc.).

### Leaves: "I love..."

Lastly, list the many things that make you – YOU! They could be adjectives (funny, smart, kind, helpful, good friend, etc.) or your favorite hobbies (playing soccer, painting, dancing with grandpa, learning math, etc.).

