

WHEREAS, in the 2008-2009 school year, less than 47% of African American males in the Alachua County School District completed high school, compared to a significantly improved rate in 2024 of 85.6%; and in September 2010, the Florida State Organization (FSO) of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., hosted a Think Tank session to address the high school dropout rate of African American young men; and

WHEREAS, in December 2010, Project Manhood 2015 and Beyond was launched in Alachua County middle schools, evolving into the Manhood Youth Development Foundation, Incorporated in April 2016; and

WHEREAS, this Foundation's objectives include fostering productive citizenship, promoting non-violence, enhancing self-esteem, encouraging respect, exposing young men to employment opportunities and educating them about the judicial system. The Manhood Youth Development Foundation, Inc. has mentored hundreds of students across Alachua County, achieving a 100% graduation rate with full parental participation; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation spearheaded its first civil rights road trip in 2022, visiting pivotal historical sites, including the National Civil Rights Museum, Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge, and the Equal Justice Initiative Museum; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2025, continuing to set an example through service projects such as assisting veterans, providing care packages to disadvantaged citizens, distributing educational materials, participating in national movements like Wreaths Across America, conducting holiday activities with veterans at the Malcolm Randell Veterans Hospital and serving as panelist members on the City of Gainesville's Gun Violence Prevention Summit.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Harvey L. Ward, Jr., by the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Gainesville, do hereby proclaim February 6, 2025 as

Manhood Youth Development Foundation Incorporated Day

in the City of Gainesville and invite all our neighbors to join me in recognizing this foundation for its invaluable contributions to mentoring youth and fostering positive change in our community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the official seal of the City of Gainesville, Florida, this 28th day of January 2025.



Harvey L, Ward Jr., Mayor