**Black History Month: Sample Speech**

**Introduction**

Hello, I’m [NAME], [ROLE] of Student Veterans of America [CHAPTER NAME]. It is my privilege to be here with you at the beginning of a month-long celebration and remembrance of Black-Americans, who have made significant contributions to America and have also been at the forefront of great revolutionary moments. We honor and celebrate all Black-Americans who came before us and those who are still with us.

**Black History Month**

For nearly one-hundred years we have celebrated the lives and achievements of prominent Black-Americans. Beginning in 1925 as Negro History Week, Carter G. Woodson championed the celebration of notable Black figures in American history. Decades later, that week would expand to a full month and its name changed to Black History Month.

Annually, Black History Month takes on a theme such as 2017’s The Crisis in Black Education, 2019’s Black Migrations, and 2022’s theme Black Health and Wellness.

This month, I ask you to highlight and celebrate the lives and achievements of Black-Americans in the fields of health and wellness.

Notable Black-Americans such as Charles R. Drew, a general surgeon, was pivotal in the field of blood transfusions and blood storage techniques. His expert knowledge help to set standards for hospitals donating blood during WWII and led to him taking on a position as the first director of the American Red Cross Blood Bank.

Women of color such as Mae C. Jemison who is a physician, engineer, and astronaut have broken through many barriers, both societal and atmospheric. Jemison who received her medical degree from Cornell University began working as a doctor in the Peace Corps and as a general practitioner before setting her sights on becoming the first Black Woman in space.

Remember, Black history month is more than highlighting the famous or well-known Black-Americans of history. It is a time to celebrate the little known and sometimes forgotten Black-American Heroes such as Henrietta Lacks.

Lacks was a Black-American woman whose cancer cells were used, unknowingly to her family, as the main source of cellular research. Her cells were unique in a way that made them “immortal,” meaning researchers could divide the cells for testing multiple times without dying, which enabled scientists around the world to perform significant research in cancer and AIDS. These “HeLa” cells named after Lacks led to important medical breakthroughs, most notably being the first human cells successfully cloned and countless other scientific ventures.

**In Summary**

This month’s theme of Black Health and Wellness serves as a starting point in which the public can focus their attention. Black-Americans have made significant contributions to the fields of health and wellness, which carry over to today’s modern science.

As Black History Month commences, I remind you all to celebrate and remember the achievements of Black-Americans, not only in the fields of health and wellness but in all aspects of human endeavor.

In closing, I’d like to leave you with this eloquently spoken quote from the distinguished Black author, James Baldwin.

“Know from whence you came. If you know whence you came, there are absolutely no limitations to where you can go.”