

RESOLUTION NUMBER R- 296586

ADOPTED ON JUN 03 2002

WHEREAS, in 1889, San Diego's Fire Department was first organized and black firefighters were first hired in 1919; and

WHEREAS, for many years black firefighters were assigned to only one station in the City of San Diego, Station 19, and had no opportunity for advancement or promotion; and

WHEREAS, in 1951, under the leadership of Chief George E. Courser, San Diego became the first large city in the United States to integrate its Fire Department and all of the black firefighters from Station 19 were sent to other stations throughout the city; and

WHEREAS, Joel Bowdan, Warren Jones, Ben Holman, and Charles Robinson were the pioneers at Station 19, who helped make integration possible and their efforts helped change San Diego and the entire country; and

WHEREAS, these four men, The Men of Station 19, made many sacrifices to help create opportunities for black firefighters today; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, Robert Osby, founded Brothers United to bring more black men to the Fire Department and to help those already in the Fire Department to achieve promotions; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, Osby became San Diego's second African American Fire Chief and now 35 percent of the Fire Department is comprised of people of color and women; and

WHEREAS, today Station 19 serves as the headquarters for Brothers United; NOW,
THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the City of San Diego, that this Council, for and on behalf of the people of San Diego, does hereby commend the black firefighters of Station 19 for their contributions to the City of San Diego.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that June 3, 2002 be and is hereby proclaimed "**THE MEN OF STATION 19 DAY**" in the City of San Diego.

APPROVED: CASEY GWINN, City Attorney

By Stuart H. Swett
Stuart H. Swett
Senior Deputy City Attorney

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