



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
16th Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office**

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Black History Month makes history

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Soldiers from 181st Brigade Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, celebrated Black History Month with skits, singing, a saxophone and speeches at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex here Feb. 25.

The Washington and California Guardsmen said that it is important to recognize the struggles and accomplishments of Black Americans.

“I think it’s very important to be culturally aware, so that we’re all engaged in diversity and knowledgeable about our fellow Soldiers,” said Sgt. 1st Class Brandy Kurtze, senior human resources non-commissioned officer and equal opportunity leader, 181st BSB.

Kurtze, who organized the event, said that cultural events in the military improve unit cohesiveness.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin T. Price, the guest speaker at the event, said African Americans have made history.

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“Black History Month is time in the U.S. where people of color are recognized for their great contributions and their great sacrifices,” Price said. “Crispus Attucks, a fugitive slave serving as an American patriot, was the first American to lose his life for independence.”

Price went on to name many other African Americans that made history, including George Washington Carver, famous agriculturalist and inventor of peanut butter; W.E.B. Du Bois, author and civil-rights activist who wrote “The Souls of Black Folks”; and Booker T. Washington, famous educator who ran the Tuskegee Institute, and who did much to improve education and establish schools for minorities.

Price challenged the African American Soldiers and leaders in the audience at the Black History Month observance.

“My challenge to all African Americans here tonight is this: we may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated,” Price said. “You might even encounter some defeats that help you to know who you are. Take on adversity; every defeat, every heartbreak, and every loss contains its own seed, its own lesson in life.”

Price said African Americans have made history again now that an African American, President Barack Obama, became the 44th president of the United States Jan. 20, 2009.

“President Obama empowered us all by believing in himself and giving all African Americans hope, determination, courage and most of the ability to achieve,” Price said. “We have made history.”



Spc. Chad Henson, property clerk specialist, brigade property book office, 16th Sustainment Brigade, plays soprano saxophone for the Black History Month observance at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Feb. 25. The 22-year-old from Little Rock, Ark., said it was important for Soldiers to recognize the contributions of African Americans.



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin T. Price, brigade ammunition officer, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and the guest speaker at a Black History Month observance at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, tells the audience of Soldiers and leaders that African Americans have made history, during his speech at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex Feb. 25. "Black History Month is time in the U.S. where people of color are recognized for their great contributions and their great sacrifices," Price said. "Crispus Attucks, a fugitive slave serving as an American patriot, was the first American to lose his life for independence." (Photos by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)