



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

**CITY OF CHICAGO**

**RAHM EMANUEL**  
MAYOR

**PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago have long been home to compassionate, innovative, and tenacious women, and one such resident – Mary T. Washington Wylie – was a testament to this fact; and

WHEREAS, Mary T. Washington Wylie was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi in 1906 to Daisy and William Morrison, she then moved to Chicago where she was raised by relatives after the death of her mother; and

WHEREAS, she found her passion for accounting as a student at Wendell Phillips High School where she excelled at math, and she honed these skills by working as a bookkeeper at Chicago's Douglas National Bank on afternoons and weekends; and

WHEREAS, after graduating high-school, Mary went on to work at Binga State Bank, one of the city's prominent black-owned businesses, where she worked under Arthur J. Wilson as an assistant to the cashier, then as a teller and bookkeeper; and

WHEREAS, Mary opened her accounting firm, Mary T. Washington and Co. in 1939 while studying for her degree, and she received her bachelor's degree in 1941 from Northwestern University's College of Business. After a two-year apprenticeship with Wilson, Mary become the first African- American female CPA in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Mary T. Washington and Co.'s clients consisted of small black-owned businesses and non-profit groups as well as large black-owned firms such as Fuller Products and Seaway National Bank. The firm also became a place of mentorship, growth, and learning for young black men and women looking for apprenticeships and jobs in accounting; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, along with Hiram Pittman and Lester McKeever, Mary founded Washington, Pittman & McKeever, LLC, the firm has become one of the largest black CPA firms in the country; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois CPA Society in collaboration with the CPA Endowment Fund of Illinois established the Mary T. Washington Wylie Opportunity Fund in tribute to her indelible legacy. This prestigious Internship Preparation Program provides African American and other racial/ethnic minority college students access to training, resources, and mentors in the accounting profession; and

WHEREAS, during her life, Mary T. Washington helped to inspire and mentor many young African-American CPA's and paved the way for generations to come; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RAHM EMANUEL, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO, do hereby proclaim September 30, 2018 to be MARY T. WASHINGTON WYLIE DAY IN CHICAGO in honor of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mary T. Washington Wylie becoming the first female African-American CPA in the country and urge all Chicagoans to recognize the indelible contributions made by this incredible woman.

Dated this 1st day of September, 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rahm Emanuel".

Mayor