

FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY

Blacks on US Currency

ON APRIL 20, 2016, US Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew announced that Harriet Tubman will be featured on the front of a redesigned \$20 note set to debut in 2020. Tubman will be the first Black person and first woman to appear on the front of US paper money. Lew's announcement also revealed that Sojourner Truth will appear on the back of a new \$10 note along with fellow suffragists Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Alice Paul. Additionally, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Marian Anderson and Eleanor Roosevelt will be featured on the back of the redesigned \$5 note.

Lew's announcement launched a national discussion on the role of imagery on currency. The practical role of artistic currency design is counterfeit prevention, but it also carries a deeper meaning. To be featured on currency is among the nation's highest honors. Both the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and the US Mint embrace the mission to convey American values and principles through currency.

Previous issues of paper money have focused on themes such as industry

and freedom, while the next set will be designed around the theme of democracy. The US Mint also considers American coinage to be "exquisite encapsulations of America's ideals" and takes pride in its numismatic designs that are meant to depict American history and culture.

The Treasury's latest redesign will acknowledge for the first time on paper money the contributions of Black and women's rights activists in advancing American democracy. There is a longer tradition of honoring such leaders through the creation of commemorative coins, medals and medallions.

Positive representation of free Black people on commemorative currency is one of the earliest forms of public recognition of Black excellence, contribution and value. Enshrined in law, commemorative currency represents indelible milestones in the centuries-long struggle of Black people to achieve equality and justice. Commemorative legislation and currency help to accurately document the Black experience in the United States.

The anti-slavery tokens, commemorative

coins, concept coins, bronze medals, Presidential bronze medals and gold medallions featured in the Museum's new exhibit, "For the Love of Money: Blacks on US Currency," celebrate Black icons, seminal historic events and institutions which have shaped Black history and significantly influenced American history. They represent a Black history timeline that spans from the arrival of Africans at Jamestown, VA, and participation of Black Patriots in the Revolutionary War, to over a century of Black historical achievement from Post-Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Era and the election and re-election of the first Black President.

"For the Love of Money" honors barrier-breaking Black athletes, entertainers, civil rights leaders, military leaders and politicians, and it features the historic contributions of several prominent Black women.

The following images represent a selection of objects from this exhibit, which will be on loan to the Museum of American Finance from the Museum of UnCut Funk through January 2018. \$



Am I Not a Woman and a Sister 1838 Anti-Slavery Token

Manufacturer: In 1837, the American Anti-Slavery Society commissioned Gibbs, Gardner and Company of Belleville, NJ, to produce anti-slavery tokens.

American copper hard times tokens were privately minted and used by merchants to make change during a recessionary period in the United States. The design of the US anti-slavery hard times token was inspired by British ceramic medallions produced by abolitionist Josiah Wedgwood. These anti-slavery medallions made their way to the United States as a gift from Wedgwood to Benjamin Franklin, then president of the Society for the Abolition of Slavery. This imagery was also used on British anti-slavery tokens.

Most American anti-slavery tokens differed from their British counterparts in featuring a chained African female slave. Female imagery may have been selected due to the involvement of women in the abolitionist movement and the similarities to their fight for women's rights.



George Washington Carver/Booker T. Washington 1951 Silver Half Dollar

Designer: Isaac Scott Hathaway. Hathaway was the first Black artist whose work was produced by the US Mint.

Born into slavery, George Washington Carver became a famous agricultural scientist and inventor. He identified many alternative uses for peanuts, sweet potatoes and soybeans, and he helped Black farmers transition from growing cotton to alternative crops.

Booker T. Washington was a former slave who became a famous author, educator and orator. Washington served as an advisor to Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. He founded the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, now known as Tuskegee University. He believed economic self-reliance was the best way for Black people to eventually achieve equality.



Marian Anderson 1978 Bronze Medal

Designer: Frank Gasparro

Marian Anderson was a renowned contralto and one of the most celebrated singers of the 20th century, who was invited to sing at the White House, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and at the Metropolitan Opera, in each case a first for a Black person. The 1939 Lincoln Memorial performance was facilitated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and the NAACP after the Daughters of the American Revolution denied her an opportunity to sing at Constitution Hall because she was a Black woman.



Joe Louis 1982 Bronze Medal

Designers: Michael Iacocca (obverse); David Redmond, a high school student and design contest winner, and Edgar Steever (reverse)

Joe Louis, the "Brown Bomber," was the second Black world heavyweight boxing champion, holding the title from 1937 to 1949, and is considered to be one of the greatest heavyweights of all time. His 1938 defeat of the German boxer Max Schmeling not only avenged his only loss to that point, but delivered a stinging defeat of Hitler's myth of Aryan supremacy. Louis was also instrumental in integrating the sport of golf, breaking the color barrier in 1952 by competing in the inaugural San Diego Open, a PGA tour event, through a sponsors exemption.



Jesse Owens 1988 Bronze Medal

Designer: T. James Ferrell

Jesse Owens was the first American track and field athlete to win four gold medals in a single Olympiad, at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. His historic performance disproved Hitler's myth of Aryan supremacy. Known as the "Buckeye Bullet," Owens became the first Black male captain of an Ohio State University varsity team. He set three world records and tied in a fourth at a championship meet within 45 minutes.



Jackie Robinson 1997 \$5 Gold Coin

Designers: William Cousins (obverse) and Jim Peed (reverse)

Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball when he was recruited to play second base for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. He not only integrated American baseball, but he used his notoriety to fight for equal rights for Black people. In 1962, Robinson was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.



Rosa Parks 1999 Bronze Medal

Designers: Al Maletsky (obverse) and John Mercanti (reverse)

Rosa Parks was a civil rights icon whose refusal to give up her seat to a white person and move to the back of the bus fueled the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the fight against Jim Crow segregation and the national Civil Rights Movement. Parks was a life-long activist who fought for justice and against racism and discrimination. Her contributions are also celebrated by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Silver Dollar coin.



Brown v. Board of Education 2004 Bronze Medal

Designers: Charles L. Vickers (obverse) and Donna Weaver (reverse)

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, was a US Supreme Court ruling that overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* as unconstitutional, as its separate but equal doctrine denied Black students the equal protection under the law and due process of law guaranteed by the 14th Amendment. This was a consolidated ruling of five cases from the states of Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, Delaware and the District of Columbia that were appealed to the US Supreme Court. These cases were brought by the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and argued in state courts by Thurgood Marshall. The ruling was a unanimous decision written by Chief Justice Earl Warren.



Dr. Dorothy Height 2004 Bronze Medal

Designers: Donna Weaver (obverse) and John Mercanti (reverse)

The National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) national headquarters building is named after Dorothy I. Height, who led the NCNW as president for 40 years. In this capacity, Height became one of the most important civil rights leaders in the country. As the only female member of the Council for United Civil Rights leadership, she worked alongside the "Big Six" civil rights leaders and was one of the organizers of the March on Washington.



Little Rock Central High School Desegregation 2007 Silver Dollar

Designers: Richard Masters and Charles Vickers (obverse); Don Everhart (reverse)

In 1957, nine Black students desegregated Little Rock Central High School, under the protection of federal troops ordered by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, marking a significant event in the struggle for civil rights. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. attended the graduation ceremony of the first Black student to graduate from Little Rock Central High School, Ernest Green.



Tuskegee Airmen 2007 Bronze Medal

Designers: Phebe Hemphill (obverse) and Don Everhart (reverse)

The Tuskegee Airmen, comprising nearly 1,000 Black aviators trained at Moton Field at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, formed the 332nd Fighter Group and 477th Bombardment Group, which were segregated units of the US Army Air Corps during World War II. Tuskegee Airmen completed approximately 1,500 missions, destroying more than 260 enemy aircraft and numerous enemy installations. The success of the Airmen, particularly as bomber escorts, paved the way in 1948 for President Harry Truman to declare through Executive Order 9981 "that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin." This action led to the desegregation of all branches of the military.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King 2013 Bronze Medal

Designers: Don Everhart (obverse) and Donna Weaver (reverse)

The legislation for this medal states, "Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his widow Coretta Scott King, as the first family of the Civil Rights Movement, have distinguished records of public service to the American people and the international community. . . Dr. King preached a doctrine of nonviolent civil disobedience to combat segregation, discrimination and racial injustice. . . While raising four children, Mrs. King devoted herself to working alongside her husband for nonviolent social change and full civil rights for African Americans."



President Barack Obama 2017 First Term Presidential Bronze Medal

Designers: Richard Masters and Phebe Hemphill (obverse); Don Everhart (reverse)

On his last day in office, President Barack Obama, the first Black President of the United States, was awarded two Presidential bronze medals to represent each term he served. Presidential medals are presented to honor past Presidents, a custom that has been extended by law to each outgoing President. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew remarked during a presentation ceremony in the Oval Office, "His historic presidency has improved the lives of millions of Americans, and the medals presented today are just one way that his legacy will be honored."