



IN RECOGNITION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

First Lady Michelle Obama at the unveiling of the Sojourner Truth bronze bust at the US Capitol. AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta.,

President Barack and Mrs. Michelle Obama Welcome You to the White House

African Americans have played pivotal roles in American history. Their intellect, artistry, resilience and strength have been central to the American experience. This month we celebrate African Americans for their remarkable contributions to the character of our Nation. The works on display showcase African Americans who paved the way for a nation that is more equal and more just. This year, the national theme for Black History Month focuses on the legacy of African American women and their impact on the American landscape.



President Lyndon B. Johnson confers with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Cabinet Room, March 19, 1966. Dr. King was a clergyman, activist, and perhaps the most recognized leader of the civil rights movement. A recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, he was recognized around the world for his commitment to non-violence and equality. *Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum.*



Vocalist Marian Anderson with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt in Japan, 1953. In 1939, Ms. Anderson, a world-renowned vocalist performed on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial with the support of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. In 1955, Ms. Anderson broke the color barrier by becoming the first African-American to perform with the New York Metropolitan Opera. *Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library.*



President John F. Kennedy visits with athlete Wilma Rudolph in the Oval Office, 1961. Ms. Rudolph was a renowned athlete, widely recognized as one of the most talented track and field stars of her generation. During the 1960 Olympic Games, she became the first American woman to win three gold medals in the track and field competition. *National Archives and Records Administration*



Accompanied by President Richard M. Nixon on piano, entertainer Pearl Bailey sings during an East Room performance, 1974. Pearl Mae Bailey was an actress and singer and began her career appearing in vaudeville. She won a Tony Award for the title role in the all-black production of *Hello, Dolly!* in 1968. *National Archives and Records Administration.*



President Barack Obama presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom to poet Maya Angelou during an East Room ceremony, 2011. Dr. Maya Angelou is one of the most renowned and influential voices of our time. Hailed as a global renaissance woman, Dr. Angelou is a celebrated poet, memoirist, novelist, educator, dramatist, producer, actress, historian, filmmaker, and civil rights activist. *Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson.*



President Barack Obama meets with Ruby Bridges Hall. A central figure in the desegregation of public schools in New Orleans, six-year-old Bridges inspired the 1963 Norman Rockwell painting, *The Problem We All Live With*. The painting was lent to the White House by the Norman Rockwell Museum for the summer of 2011. *Official White House Photo by Pete Souza.*

Former Texas congresswoman Barbara Jordan receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President William J. Clinton during an East Room ceremony, 1994. Both as a state senator and as a U.S. Congresswoman, Jordan sponsored bills that championed the cause of poor and disadvantaged people. Ms. Jordan was the first African American to serve in the Texas House of Representatives. *William J. Clinton Presidential Library.*



Civil rights activist Rosa Parks receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President William J. Clinton in the Oval Office, 1996. Ms. Parks often is recognized as the "mother of the freedom movement" in America. Her refusal to surrender her seat to a white passenger on a Montgomery, Alabama bus on December 1, 1955, became an important symbol of the modern day civil rights movement. *William J. Clinton Presidential Library.*



Jazz vocalist Ella Fitzgerald with President and Mrs. Gerald R. Ford at a diplomatic reception, 1976. Ella Fitzgerald was a jazz and song vocalist. Over a recording career that lasted 59 years, she was the winner of 14 Grammy Awards and was also awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Ronald Reagan. *Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.*

President Barack Obama greets educator and social activist, Dr. Dorothy Height, during a West Wing meeting, 2010. Dr. Height, the former chair and president emerita of the National Council of Negro Women, worked in the 1960s alongside civil rights pioneers, including the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and U.S. Rep. John Lewis. *Official White House Photo by Pete Souza.*



In the Oval Office on January 18, 2010, President Barack Obama unveiled an 1864 printed copy of the Emancipation Proclamation signed by President Abraham Lincoln. This featured copy was used to raise money for a Civil War charity supporting wounded Federal troops. *Official White House Photo by Pete Souza.*



The First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation Before the Cabinet. While staying at the White House in 1864, artist Francis B. Carpenter painted a scene of President Lincoln introducing the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet in 1862. President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, freeing 3.1 million slaves in the areas of the South still in rebellion against the Union. *White House Collection.*

African American Artists in the White House Collection:

Henry O. Tanner – *Sands Dunes at Sunset, Atlantic City*, c. 1885 (Green Room)

Edward Bannister – *The Farm Landing*, 1882 (China Room)

Jacob Lawrence – *The Builders*, 1947 (Green Room)

Simmie Knox – portraits of President Bill Clinton, 2001 (Entrance Hall) and Hillary Rodham Clinton, 2003 (Ground Floor Corridor)