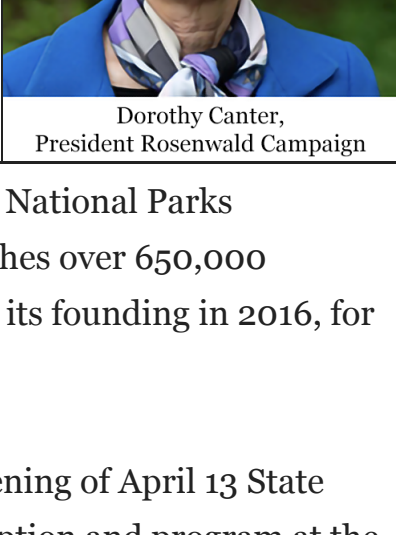




The Campaign to Create the Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park

President's Message

The Campaign expects to continue making significant progress this year toward its goal of creating the Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Park. We will soon release a short introductory video on the Campaign that contains interviews with four Board members and two graduates of Rosenwald Schools. It will be available for museum exhibitions and other events, on our website and, ultimately, at the visitor center of the new National Park.



Dorothy Canter, President Rosenwald Campaign

An article on the Campaign will appear in the summer 2023 issue of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) magazine *National Parks*, which reaches over 650,000 supporters. NPCA has been a staunch supporter of the Campaign since its founding in 2016, for which we are extremely grateful.

Three events will take place in Tennessee on April 13 and 14. On the evening of April 13 State Legislator and Campaign Board member Greg Vital is sponsoring a reception and program at the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville. It will include a tour of the ongoing exhibition of Campaign Advisory Council member Andrew Feiler's photographs on Rosenwald Schools. Several Campaign Board and Advisory Council members will visit the Julius Rosenwald Fund archives at Fisk University on the morning of April 14. Advisory Council member Sharon Davies is particularly interested in viewing the records for the Centenary Rosenwald School in South Carolina, which her father attended. In the afternoon several Board members will visit the Cairo Rosenwald School in nearby Sumner County, which is one of the 16 Rosenwald Schools identified in the legislation directing the National Park Service (NPS) to perform a special resource study of sites associated with Rosenwald and the Schools.

In early March I met in Chicago with members of the Friends of Sears Sunken Garden, a new nonprofit working to restore the garden, which is directly across the street from the Sears Administration Building where Julius Rosenwald had his executive offices. The visit included a walking tour of a number of former Sears properties that comprised the very large merchandising facility. The purpose of the tour was to assess several sites as possible candidates for the ultimate visitor center for the planned National Park.

This newsletter includes an article on the Campaign's growing collection of memorabilia. Special thanks go to Board member Katherine Stevenson, who has identified and acquired for the Campaign a number of key artifacts including the stereopticon and set of 50 slides from circa 1907 on the recently opened Sears merchandising facility. She continues her sleuthing, currently searching for first editions of books written by Rosenwald Fund fellows. The Campaign also appreciates the donation by long term supporter Susan Bales of the signed first edition of the book *Black Odyssey* by Fund fellow Roi Ottley. We would appreciate leads on further first edition books by notable Fund fellows that could be acquired, as well as other memorabilia.

Campaign Board members continue to give virtual and in person presentations on Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools. They also participate in programs at Rosenwald Schools sponsored by multiple organizations. And we look forward to attending later this year the dedications of several Rosenwald Schools nearing completion of their restoration activities.

NPS staff are hard at work on the special resource study. The Campaign looks forward to its completion, as it will be an important milestone towards the creation of the National Historical Park.

Please contact me at dorothycenter@rosenwaldpark.org if you would be interested in a presentation by a Campaign representative or a joint event, or would like to coordinate with us in another way.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our important work. Wishing you and yours an enjoyable holiday season.

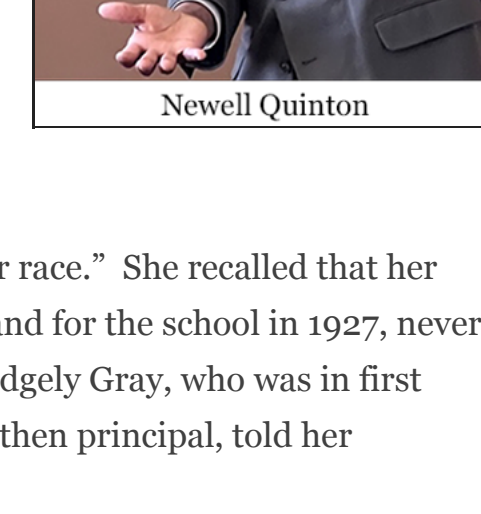
Dorothy Canter

The Legacy of the Rosenwald Schools: Commemorating Black History Month

On a sunny Friday morning in late February, the Ridgeley Rosenwald School in Prince George's County, Maryland, was the venue for an inspiring Black History Month event -- "The Legacy of the Rosenwald Schools."

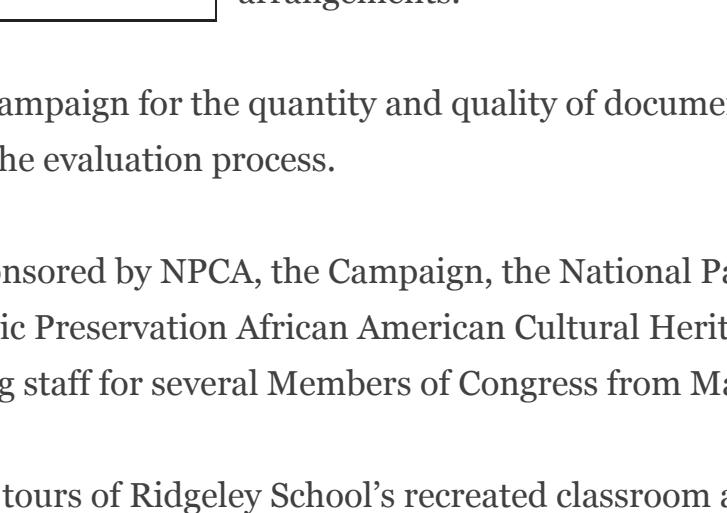
Author and Rosenwald Park Campaign Board member Stephanie Deutsch introduced the program by discussing the unlikely partnership between Black educator Booker T. Washington and Sears, Roebuck & Company president Julius Rosenwald. That relationship - between a man born enslaved and a son of German Jewish immigrants - led to the building of schoolhouses in almost 5,000 rural Southern communities between 1913 and 1932, during the years of Jim Crow segregation. She highlighted similarities between the two men that made them effective collaborators - their shared belief that access to education was an essential aspect of democracy, their willingness to listen to and learn from each other, their respect for the men and women of Southern communities willing to sacrifice to create for their children the facilities their states were providing only inadequately, if at all.

Next the attendees heard from alumni of two Rosenwald Schools each of which was recommended by the State of Maryland for inclusion in the eventual National Park - Newell Quinton who, along with his seven siblings, attended the distinctive two-story San Domingo School in Wicomico County on the Eastern Shore, and La Verne Gray who went to the Ridgeley School. Both speakers stressed the bond that existed among parents, teachers and students and how it made the schools a warm and caring environment. Teachers were deeply invested in their students, committed to making them successful. Newell recalled that at his school each student had to recite the Gettysburg Address before they could complete the 8th grade.



Newell Quinton

La Verne remembered being urged to "go out and be a credit to our race." She recalled that her grandmother, Mary Eliza Ridgely, who had donated two acres of land for the school in 1927, never talked about what she had done. However, her mother, Mildred Ridgely Gray, who was in first grade when the school opened and later returned as a teacher and then principal, told her daughter never to forget the important story.

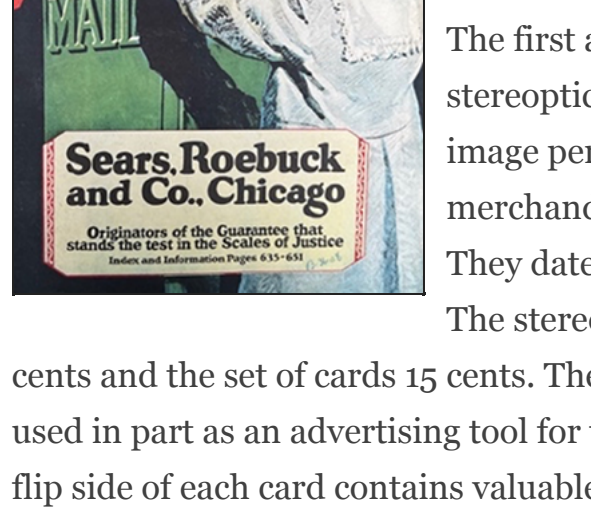


Stephanie Deutsch, La Verne Gray, Bob Stanton

Former director of the National Park Service (NPS) and Campaign Vice-President Robert Stanton was eloquent in discussing the extraordinary thirst for education and opportunity that existed in the Black community of Mosier Valley in Northeast Texas where he grew up. He recalled that when he was in the third grade his parents were part of a group that protested in Federal court the condition of the elementary school he attended, a protest that resulted in a new building that was made possible through the support of the NAACP. However, until well after the Supreme Court decision in Brown v Board of Education, the schools remained segregated, separate but never anything close to equal. For his 9th-12th grades, Stanton was bussed 30 miles each day to a segregated school in Ft. Worth passing by a number of White schools which were located closer to his home.

Alan Spears, Director of Cultural Resources at the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), then moderated a lively panel discussion among the four presenters.

At the conclusion of the program Carrie Miller of the National Park Service (NPS) reported that the Special Resource Study of the sites associated with the Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools started in April 2022. In July the NPS held a period of public engagement during which it received nearly 2,000 comments. Currently the NPS is conducting field research - four week-long trips to visit sites identified for possible inclusion in the planned multi-site National Park. NPS staff are gathering detailed information about the widely scattered and disparate sites and considering various possible ownership and management arrangements.



Alan Spears

Ms. Miller thanked the Campaign for the quantity and quality of documentation that it has submitted in support of the evaluation process.

The event was jointly sponsored by NPCA, the Campaign, the National Park Trust and the National Trust for Historic Preservation African American Cultural Heritage Fund. Over 40 people attended including staff for several Members of Congress from Maryland.

The morning ended with tours of Ridgeley School's recreated classroom and animated conversation over boxed lunches.

The effects of the visionary school building program created by Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald in cooperation with men and women like Mary Eliza Ridgely more than a century ago are still being felt today as we continue to strive towards a more perfect union.

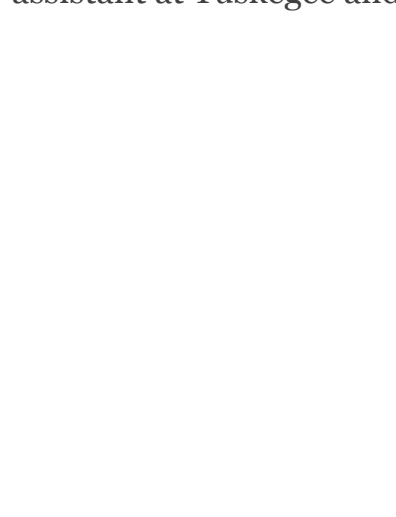
Amassing A Vibrant Collection for the National Historical Park

With the aim of contributing artifacts to the visitor center of the ultimate Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park, the Campaign has begun assembling memorabilia that will help tell this remarkable story.

We received in 2022 four notable artifacts relating to Sears, Roebuck & Co. from the company's archives as it was closing its headquarters complex in Illinois: a large oil portrait of Rosenwald by the artist John Doctoroff, the desk from Rosenwald's executive office, a strongbox from his office with "J. Rosenwald" imprinted on it, and four Sears Roebuck catalogs dating from 1911 to 1922.

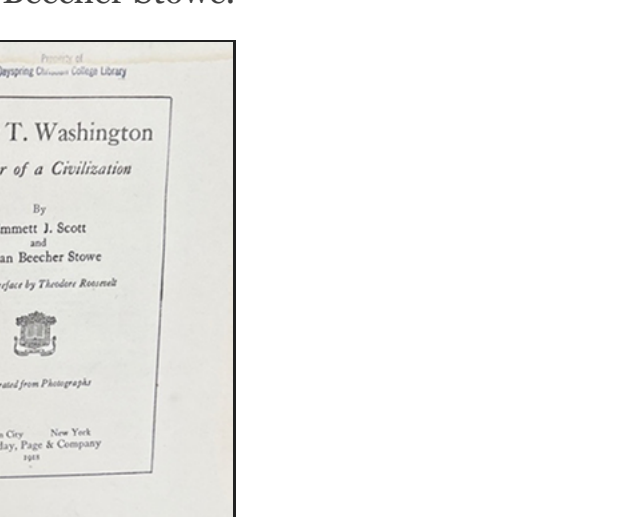


Each catalog contains well over 1,000 pages filled with drawings of the myriads of products that made "Sears" a household name for generations and the catalogs widely revered as the "wish book." The covers of two of the catalogs highlight Sears's commitment to "satisfaction guaranteed or your money back."

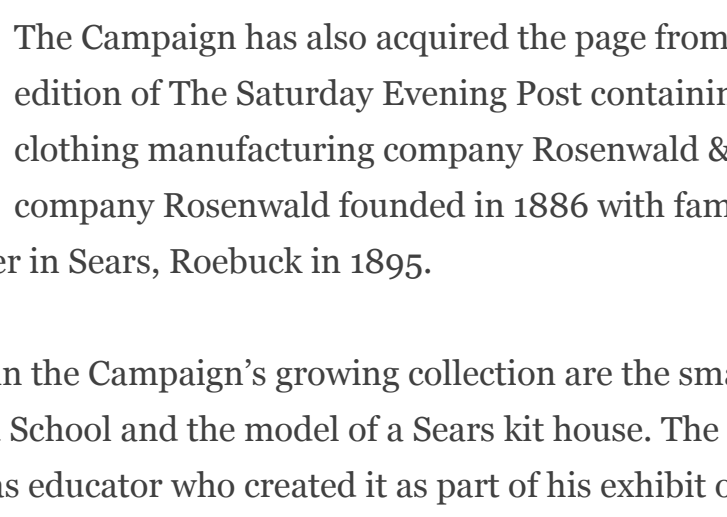


Sears Roebuck and Co. Chicago

The first artifact acquired by the Campaign in 2020 was a stereopticon and a set of 50 cards, each with two photos of the same image pertaining to the brand new and enormous Sears, Roebuck merchandising complex. They date from about 1907. The stereopticon cost 35 cents and the set of cards 15 cents. The two items were used in part as an advertising tool for the company. The flip side of each card contains valuable historical information.

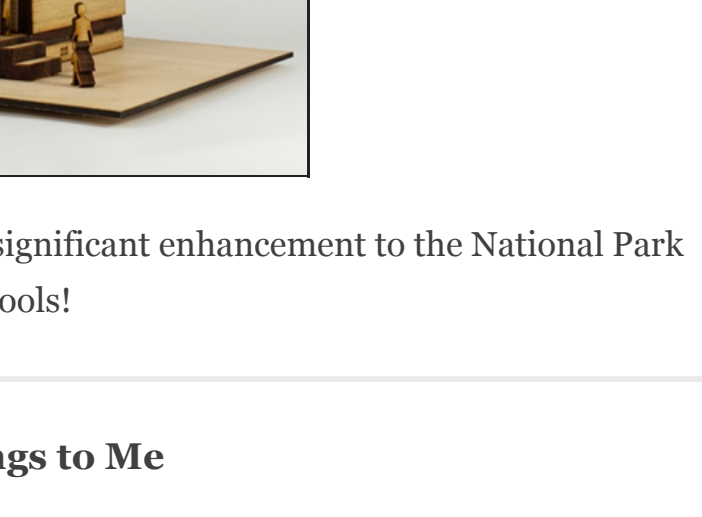


Julius Rosenwald is not well remembered today but his death on January 6, 1932, was front page news in three newspapers - the New York Times, the Chicago Daily Tribune, and the New Orleans Times Picayune. Rosenwald was widely admired as president of Sears, Roebuck & Company, the nation's preeminent retailer, and as a generous and innovative philanthropist. The Campaign has acquired original copies of all three of these newspapers.

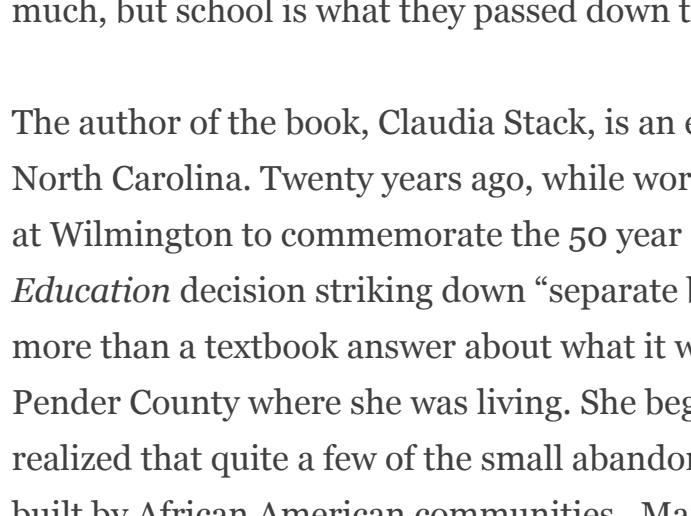


In addition, the Campaign has acquired a copy of the December 30, 1921, issue of The New York Times, that reported on its front page the \$20 million personal loan Rosenwald made to Sears, Roebuck when the company appeared on the brink of bankruptcy during a serious recession. It was a measure of the man that he put his own fortune at risk to help save the company.

The Campaign has also purchased a number of vintage postcards of the Sears complex and the processes conducted within it. One interesting card depicts the annual field meet for Sears' employees held on an athletic field that was one block wide by a half mile long and bordered the merchandising plant. More than 20,000 people attended the annual events. Another features the Sears Sunken Garden across from the Administration Building built for the enjoyment of the employees.



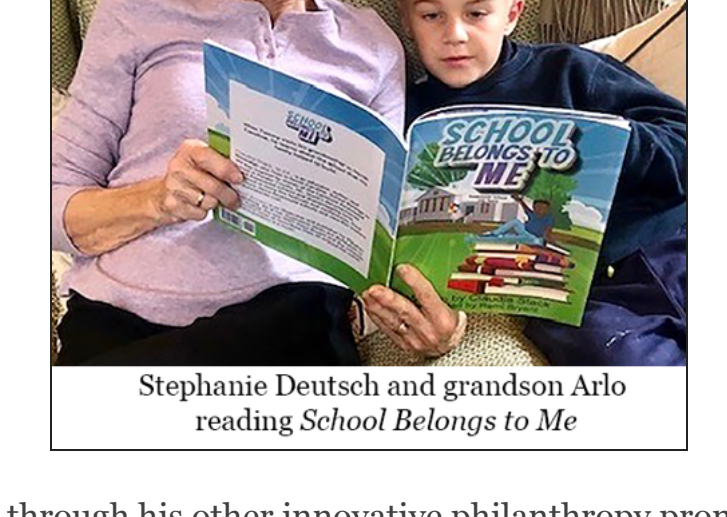
In 2021 the Campaign started collecting books relevant to Julius Rosenwald. To date we have purchased five books that were part of small library sets sent to rural schools in the South from 1928 to 1948 as part of the Rosenwald Fund's library services program. At first the library sets were only for African American elementary schools. Later library sets for African American secondary schools were added, and then both categories of books were also made available to schools for White children.



Books from the Rosenwald Fund library collection

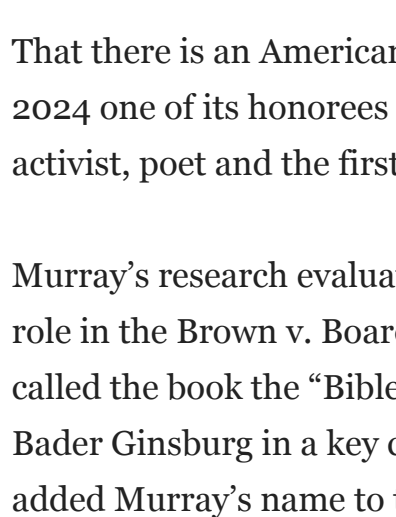
Four of the books in the collection were for elementary students, while the fifth, *Golden Slippers* a book of poetry edited by Rosenwald Fund fellow Arna Bontemps, was for junior and high school students.

We also obtained a first edition of *Booker T. Washington: Builder of a Civilization* by Emmet J. Scott and Lyman Beecher Stowe, with a preface by Theodore Roosevelt. Published in 1918, three years after Washington's death, the book contains a bookplate, "Compliments of Julius Rosenwald, Chicago." Scott was Washington's key assistant at Tuskegee and Stowe the grandson of Harriet Beecher Stowe.



Booker T. Washington: Builder of a Civilization

This year the Campaign has acquired signed first editions of two books written by Rosenwald Fund fellows. A 1938 Fund fellowship in creative writing helped develop Arna Bontemps while he was writing *Drums at Dusk*. The journalist and writer Roi Ottley authored *Black Odyssey: The Story of the Negro in America*. He received a fellowship in journalism in 1943. Largely forgotten today, Ottley was among the most famous African American journalists of the mid-20th century. Sound familiar??

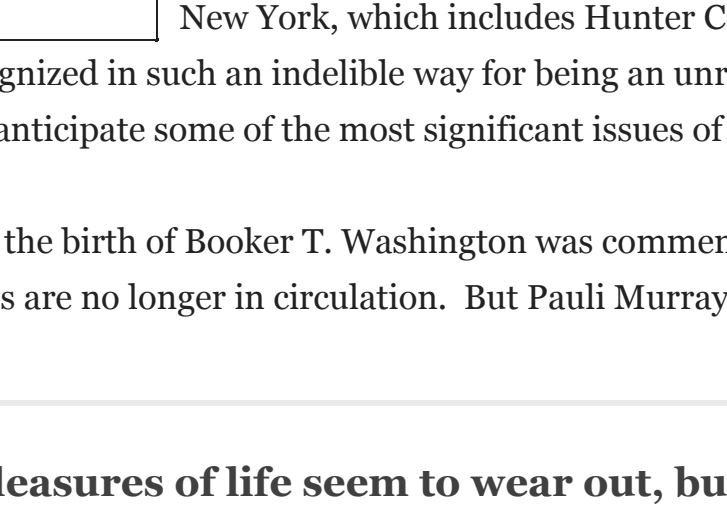


Black Odyssey book cover

The Campaign plans to add more books by notable Rosenwald Fund fellows to its collection over time.

The Campaign has also acquired the page from the April 24, 1909, edition of The Saturday Evening Post containing an ad for a men's clothing manufacturing company Rosenwald & Weil. This was the company Rosenwald founded in 1886 with family members and headed before becoming a partner in Sears, Roebuck in 1895.

The most unusual items in the Campaign's growing collection are the small laser-printed model of the one-teacher Rosenwald School and the model of a Sears kit house. The first was donated by Mark Wittig, the Arkansas educator who created it as part of his exhibit on significant developments in the history of education in America. The kit house was donated by an architect who was downsizing.



This is an exciting start to what will, someday, be a significant enhancement to the National Park honoring Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools!

School Belongs to Me

The 2021 children's book *School Belongs to Me* is charming and colorful and tells a significant story. It's about a young boy going with his grandmother and other members of his family to visit the Canetuck Rosenwald School near Wilmington, North Carolina. The story about Tommy is made up, but the experiences Grandma and Aunt Lee talk about - walking to school, gathering firewood for the stove, having spelling bees and plays and learning to love learning - those activities are true. When Tommy shows Grandma and Aunt Lee the medal he won at school for reading 100 books, Aunt Lee says, "Your great grandparents would be proud. They didn't have much, but school is what they passed down to you."



Stephanie Deutsch and grandson Arlo reading School Belongs to Me

Through the Schools and through his other innovative philanthropy promoting education at all levels, Julius Rosenwald invested in people. *School Belongs to Me* is another example of how that investment is still paying dividends.

NOTE: Canetuck School is one of five Rosenwald Schools that were recommended in 2017 by North Carolina for possible inclusion in the Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park. A Campaign representative visited the school in May 2019.

Did You Know?

That there is an American Women Quarters Program sponsored by the U.S. Mint? And that in 2024 one of its honorees will be renowned Rosenwald Fellow Pauli Murray? Murray was a lawyer, activist, poet and the first Black woman to be ordained as an Episcopal priest.

Murray's research evaluating state segregation laws throughout the nation played an important role in the Brown v. Board of Education lawsuit before the Supreme Court. She inspired Ruth Bader Ginsburg in a key case before the Supreme Court on sex-based discrimination. Ginsburg added Murray's name to the brief, even though she did not work on the case.

Pauli Murray

A graduate of Hunter College and valedictorian of her law school class at Howard University, Murray was refused admission to the Harvard University Law School for its Master of Law program, not because she was Black, but because she was a woman. She received a Rosenwald Fund fellowship in law in 1944, which she used to help support obtaining a Master of Law degree at the University of California at Berkeley. Eventually she received a Doctorate of Law from Yale University, the first Black woman to do so.

Felix V. Matos Rodriguez, Chancellor of the City University of New York, which includes Hunter College, expressed delight that Murray "will be recognized in such an indelible way for being an unrelenting advocate and showing the foresight to anticipate some of the most significant issues of our time."

In 1956 the centennial of the birth of Booker T. Washington was commemorated with a half dollar coin. Those 50 cent pieces are no longer in circulation. But Pauli Murray quarters soon will be!

"All the other pleasures of life seem to wear out, but the pleasure of helping others in distress never does." - Julius Rosenwald

We need your support to create the Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park.

For questions and suggestions, please write to info@rosenwaldpark.org.

Stephanie Deutsch, editor

April 4, 2023