

OTHER PROGRAMS

African American Civil Rights Network

The African American Civil Rights Network (AACRN) program authorizes the National Park Service (NPS) to identify and interpret sites that commemorate and honor the history of the modern civil rights movement (1939-1968). The AACRN encompasses all NPS units and programs related to the struggle for African American equality. It also includes places in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and other directly related sites with permission of the owner.



The Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery and Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia is the resting place for over 1,700 African American people. It was established in 1864 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2012. The Memorial has historically been a place of gathering for civil rights activists and also for remembrance of the sacred resting place of African American soldiers from the Civil War.

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

Background

Modeled after the National Underground Railroad to Freedom Network, the AACRN recognizes sites associated with African American civil rights from 1939 to 1968. This date range was identified because 1939 was the year Marian Anderson sang from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Congress passed the African American Civil Rights Network Act in December 2017 and it was signed into law in January 2018. The AACRN program offers an overview of the people, places, and events associated with the civil rights movement of the 20th Century. Sixty-one sites, facilities, and programs have been chosen for inclusion in the AACRN thus far, including: Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas; the 1908 Springfield Race Riot Archaeological Site in Illinois; the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in Kansas; and the Leona Tate Foundation for Change in Louisiana.

FY 2023 Appropriations Request

Please support \$5.900 million to administer and enhance the African American Civil Rights Network in the FY 2023 Interior Appropriations bill.

APPROPRIATIONS BILL: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

AGENCY: National Park Service

ACCOUNT: Operation of the National Park System

ACTIVITY: Park Cultural Resource Support Function, National Networks

Recent Funding History:

FY 2021 Enacted Funding:	\$0.375 million
FY 2022 Enacted Funding:	\$5.375 million
FY 2023 President's Budget Request:	\$5.384 million
FY 2023 NTHP Recommendation:	\$5.900 million

JUSTIFICATION: Increased funding would provide additional support for the National Park Service to enhance the administration and expansion of the African American Civil Rights Network.

African American Civil Rights Network: Highlighted Sites

Second Baptist Church, Los Angeles, CA

The congregation of the Second Baptist Church in Los Angeles first gathered in 1885 and developed strong early ties with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and various labor organizations. Local African American architect Paul R. Williams was hired to build the current church, which opened in 1926. Civil rights leaders such as W.E.B. DuBois and A. Philip Randolph spoke at the church and Martin Luther King, Jr. regularly preached there. The church has been a long-standing leader in the civil rights movement throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century.



Sandy Island School on Sandy Island, South Carolina served as a center for civil rights advancement in South Carolina through adult education, political and social activism, and African American community representation.

PHOTO COURTESY HALEY YARBOROUGH/SOUTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Racing to Change: Oregon's Civil Rights Years

This digital exhibit explores the civil rights movement in Oregon layering thematic and geographic elements. Visitors to the exhibit learn about the influx of African American workers to Oregon during the Great Migration in the 1940s to World War II shipyards and machinery facilities. Hostile white communities in Portland and other cities yielded severe redlining, the practice of specifically excluding African Americans from housing in certain neighborhoods.

Housing discrimination, voter suppression, and general unrest continued through the 1960s, which saw non-violent activism and efforts from the NAACP give way to local

chapters of the Black Panthers and the Black United Front. This virtual exhibit helps fill the gap in understanding of the Civil Rights Era, showing that the illegal discrimination of African Americans was not relegated to the southern states, but took place anywhere African Americans lived.

Sandy Island School, Sandy Island, SC

The Sandy Island School holds a significant place in African American history through the way it provided childhood and adult education and voter registration and engagement. The school has served as an anchor for the island community since its establishment in the 1930s. The school transformed education

for Sandy Islanders as it regulated a nine-month school term for children. Additionally, adults sought literacy and arithmetic education at the school. Predatory literacy tests in the Jim Crow South barred many African American adults from exercising their right to vote, but concerted efforts by teachers at the Sandy Island School and community leaders yielded a highly engaged electorate. Efforts like these to educate adults so they could pass literacy tests became a foundational component of the Civil Rights movement.

The Sandy Island School was added to the AACRN in September 2021 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.