



News Release
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**Special Exhibition “*Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow*” Opens Friday,
May 27 at the National WWI Museum and Memorial**

The exhibition highlights the central role of African Americans in advocating for their rights following the end of the Civil War to the end of World War I.

Select exhibition images/captions available on [Dropbox](#).

KANSAS CITY, MO. – When slavery ended in 1865, a period of Reconstruction began. By 1868, all persons born in the United States were citizens and equal before the law, but efforts to create an interracial democracy were contested from the start. [Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow](#), a new exhibition coming soon to the National WWI Museum and Memorial, follows the end of the Civil War to the end of World War I, highlighting the central role played by African Americans in advocating for their rights.

Beginning on Friday, May 27, 2022, through Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022, *Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow* will be on display in the Museum and Memorial’s Wylie Gallery. On loan from the New-York Historical Society, the exhibition’s World War I focus has been enhanced by items from the Museum and Memorial’s collection.

“This is an important exhibition to come to the Museum and Memorial, one that highlights the transformative decades in American history leading up to WWI, and their continued relevance today,” said National WWI Museum and Memorial President and CEO Dr. Matthew Naylor. “As an Institution, one of our priorities is to ensure that the stories of minority groups who served in WWI are not lost but are preserved and shared. *Black Citizenship* shines a light on those who served valiantly but came home to a country that didn’t treat them as equal. Their stories deserve honor, gratitude and reflection.”

When the United States entered the war in 1917, African Americans made up only 10 percent of the population, but a total of 13 percent of the segregated United States armed services. Though the American military reflected the diversity of its population, the majority of African American soldiers – nearly 80 percent – were organized into supply, construction or other non-combatant units. However, two predominately African American combat divisions, including the 93rd Division, 369th Infantry

Regiment – later known as the Harlem Hellfighters – proved the battlefield capabilities of African American troops.

Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow is presented at the Museum and Memorial by Bank of America. Karen Daniel, Kansas City business and civic leader, serves as the Honorary Chair. Lead support for the exhibition provided by National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor. Major support provided by the Ford Foundation and Crystal McCrary and Raymond J. McGuire.

The exhibition, on loan from the [New-York Historical Society](#), is curated by Dr. Marci Reaven, New-York Historical's vice president of history exhibitions, and Lily Wong, associate curator. It was developed in collaboration with New-York Historical Trustee Dr. Henry Louis Gates Jr., and Reconstruction-era scholars Dr. Eric Foner, Dr. Michele Mitchell and other distinguished historians.

Admission to *Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow* is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors and military and \$6 for youth. When combined with a general admission ticket, admission to the exhibition is only an additional \$3. A variety of engaging programs will support the exhibition. Stay tuned to theworldwar.org for more information.

Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in these programs do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

About the National WWI Museum and Memorial

The National WWI Museum and Memorial is America's leading institution dedicated to remembering, interpreting and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. The Museum and Memorial holds the most comprehensive collection of World War I objects and documents in the world and is the second-oldest public museum dedicated to preserving the objects, history and experiences of the war. The Museum and Memorial takes visitors of all ages on an epic journey through a transformative period and shares deeply personal stories of courage, honor, patriotism and sacrifice. Designated by Congress as America's official World War I Museum and Memorial and located in downtown Kansas City, Mo., the National WWI Museum and Memorial inspires thought, dialogue and learning to make the experiences of the Great War era meaningful and relevant for present and future generations. To learn more, visit theworldwar.org.

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