

Oklahoma African-American History Plaza Themes

The design and various elements of the Oklahoma African American History Plaza should reflect the contributions and significant roles that African Americans have played in Oklahoma history. Rather than depicting specific individuals the plaza should incorporate themes such as the following:

- Early African-American history in Indian Territory including lifestyle during the removal period, post Civil War period and land allotment period and other Native American ties
- Oklahoma's African-American military history such as Black Civil War soldiers in Indian Territory, Light Horsemen, Buffalo Soldiers and Black U.S. Deputy lawmen in Indian Territory
- Oklahoma land runs and allotments leading to the founding and development of the historically all-black towns such as Langston and Boley and the unique role they played in Oklahoma history.
- Black economic prosperity and business development such as the wealth accumulated by African-American freedmen, The Great Negro Fairs of 1915 thru 1919, Black Wall Street in Tulsa, Deep Deuce in Oklahoma City
- Territorial and early statehood politics such as election and appointments of African-Americans to key state positions
- The adoption of "Jim Crow" laws in voting, education and public accommodations
- Educational advancements: including the formation of the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers (OANT), Langston University and other early private African-American colleges
- Racial hostilities and attitudes that resulted in expulsions, lynching and the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot
- Migration movements out of Oklahoma (Chief Sam, Marcus Garvey, Depression, Dust Bowl, etc).
- United States Supreme Court decisions overturning segregation in education, voting rights and housing discrimination patterns in Oklahoma
- The significant role that religion has played in the development of and sustaining the African-American community
- Desegregation and integration of public accommodations accomplished through the sit-in movement

- Early civil rights leaders in Oklahoma history
- The role that black lawyers played in challenging discrimination and protecting the right of African-Americans
- Prince Hall Masons, auxiliaries, benevolent and humanitarian organizations of Oklahoma