

Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African-American Memory

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To progress as a society, it is important to reflect on the lessons that our country has already learned. Black History Month is a wonderful occasion to reflect on our past, specifically, the contributions made to our country by dedicated African-Americans. Thankfully, many of the accomplishments made by African-Americans in education, music, and the military are honored at historical sites so that future generations can learn from past example.

For students, it is especially important to be thankful for the modern educational system, and a good way to do that is to honor the nine brave African-American students who challenged society to end segregated education. On September 23, 1957, nine African-American teenagers were assigned to the all-white Little Rock High School in Little Rock, Arkansas (*"Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site"*). Little Rock High School was, thus, the site of the first implementation of the U.S. Supreme Court's historic Brown v. Board of Education, making segregated education unlawful and also was a crucial part of the civil rights movement (*"The 1957 Desegregation Crisis at Central High School"*). For this reason, students should be thankful to the nine brave students who changed the world by standing up for their civil rights upon their entry to the desegregated school. The Little Rock High School remains a national historic site that allows students to learn about the life-changing event that happened there.

Another significant contribution to society made by many African-Americans is the development of jazz music, as music is a vital way off adding beauty to society. Several famous African-American musicians such as Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington contributed to the development of jazz (*"History of Jazz"*). One of the best places to experience jazz music is the New Orleans National Park for Jazz, which holds several jazz festivals each year (*"Experience Jazz Music Where It All Began"*). This National Park for Jazz, thus, promotes the importance of jazz by allowing individuals to enjoy great jazz music.

Finally, African-Americans played a vital role in all of the military battles fought by our country. African-Americans valiantly fought for their country even when they remained slaves and did not enjoy personal freedom. For example, African-Americans fought for our nation as early as the Revolutionary War. The Bunker Hill Monument in Massachusetts is a monument to honor all those who died in the first major battle of the American Revolution, including African-American soldiers (*"Bunker Hill Monument"*). African-Americans also fought in the Civil War, and the African-American Civil War Memorial in Washington D.C. pays tribute to the 200,000 African-American soldiers who served in the Civil War (*"African-American Civil War Memorial"*). African-Americans continued to bravely fight in all other wars fought by the United States.

In conclusion, African-Americans made many contributions to society, including in education, music, and the military, which have shaped our nation for the better. It is important that we honor these contributions through important national historic sites such as Little Rock High School, the National Jazz Festival, and the various military sites and monuments. By honoring these dedicated African-Americans this month, hopefully, future generations can learn from the past example of these heroes.

Works Cited

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