

## African American Currency Consideration

Written by Westside ID346

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When future generations view the true history of civilization, it will show contributions by African Americans that have no equal. African Americans, some named and some nameless and faceless, enabled America to become what she has become. As such, let us cite some examples:

\* Crispus Attucks (1723-1770), from whose blood American freedom was born and, accordingly, the first American to die in the Revolutionary War during the Boston Massacre. Mr. Attucks gave his life as many of his fellow blacks still toiled under the whip of slavery, both figuratively and literally.

\* Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806), watch maker, astronomer, publisher and In 1791, participated as a technical assistant in the first survey of the Federal District, which is now Washington, D.C. In 1980, the US Postal Service issued a postage stamp in his honor.

\* The Buffalo Soldiers (1866-1898), helped to defeat the Indians of the west, opening up these lands to American settlers and others while constantly under duress from the very government they represented.

\* Dr. George Washington Carver (1865-1943), an humble scientist, took a lowly peanut and gave the world over three hundred unheard of products, oftentimes being ridiculed as insane for attempting such endeavors.

\* Mary McCloud Bethune (1875-1955), armed with little more than her determination, built a college for African American women. Starting with a small house in 1904, the school would grow and eventually become Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida, helping to educate generations of young blacks.

\* Harriet Tubman (1819-1913), a former slave, who coordinated the exodus of hundreds of slaves to freedom along the underground railroad.

\* Dr. Charles Drew, surgeon (1904-1950), developed a system for storing of blood plasma (blood bank) which revolutionized the medical profession. Dr. Drew also established the American Red Cross blood bank and organized a blood bank in London during World War II.

\* Dorie Miller (1919-1943), was the first American hero of WWII and the first African-American to be awarded the Navy Cross. A cook aboard battleship Arizona, Miller manned a machine gun during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He had received no prior gunnery training, yet destroyed several Japanese aircraft.

\* Dr. Martin Luther King (1929-1968), saved America from years of bloody civil strife through his philosophy of non violence during the Civil Rights revolution, as well as becoming America's youngest professor of the Ph.D. at the time. He is also credited as one of the 20th Century's greatest theologians.

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We could go on and on with names, but in the political, economic, religious, intellectual, social and artistic realm of America, African Americans have often dominated without peer.

But the question is, has the African American been extended appropriate recognition for his stellar contributions to American life and society? The answer, undeniably, is "No."

It is past time for America to recognize the genius of the numerous African Americans who have given so much, yet, accorded so little in return. For, the genius of African Americans still marches onward. America is still the receptionist of the many intellectual benefits extended its way by African Americans.

How should America begin to recognize this historically neglected group?

I would recommend that the United States government begin by including, at least, one African American from our many notables on the face of our money. Other nationalities of men and women, animals and landmarks have already been included.

So, why are we, yet to present the world with some African American greats on our paper or metal money?

In doing so, America could then shout to the world that it officially recognizes and appreciates the many contributions by African Americans, and not only America, but to the advancement of civilization as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,  
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