

You Oughta Know

Louisiana Series: Volume 01

ROSENWALD SCHOOLS



"A good education should not
be a privilege, but a
basic human right."

-Julius Rosenwald

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INTRODUCTION



Booker T.
Washington
(Library of Congress)



Julius
Rosenwald
(Library of Congress)



Robert R. Taylor
(Tuskegee University)

Booker T. Washington, Robert R. Taylor, and Julius Rosenwald all played significant roles in the development and implementation of the Rosenwald Schools program, which aimed to provide educational opportunities for African American children in the Southern United States during the early 20th century.



— FIRST DAY OF ISSUE —

Booker T. Washington was a prominent African American educator, author, and leader during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was born into slavery but became a leading figure in the Post-Reconstruction Era. Washington believed in the importance of vocational training and economic self-sufficiency for African Americans to uplift themselves and gain acceptance in society. He founded the Tuskegee Institute, a historically black college in Alabama, and became an influential advocate for African American education.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

JULIUS ROSENWALD



Mechanical-drawing students at Tuskegee Institute, shown with instructor Robert R. Taylor (far right), ca. 1897. (Southern Letter 14)

ROBERT R. TAYLOR

Robert R. Taylor was the first professionally trained African American architect in the United States. He studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and became the head of the architecture department at Tuskegee Institute. Taylor worked closely with Booker T. Washington and played a **crucial role** in the design and construction of the Rosenwald Schools.

Julius Rosenwald was a Jewish-American businessman and philanthropist who became the president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, a major retail company in the early 20th century. Rosenwald was deeply committed to addressing social and educational inequalities faced by African Americans. He met Booker T. Washington in 1911 and was inspired by Washington's vision for African American education.



Julius Rosenwald with students from a Rosenwald school.

(Fisk University, Franklin Library, Special Collections)

ROSENWALD SCHOOLS PROGRAM

In 1912, Julius Rosenwald contributed a substantial amount of money to Washington's Tuskegee Institute, which was used to construct six rural schools for African American children in Alabama. This initial collaboration between Washington and Rosenwald laid the foundation for a broader initiative, the Rosenwald Schools program.



Rosenwald School in Chehaw, AL, one of the first six Rosenwald Schools to be built, completed in 1914. (Deutsch, You Need a Schoolhouse)



Loachapoka School in Alabama, the first Rosenwald School, completed in May 1913. (Hoffschwelle, The Rosenwald Schools of the American South)

As the Rosenwald Schools program expanded, Booker T. Washington, Robert R. Taylor, and Julius Rosenwald worked together to develop and implement its strategies. Washington served as an advisor and provided guidance on the educational needs and challenges faced by African American communities. Taylor, with his architectural expertise, designed school buildings that were functional, cost-effective, and well-suited to the rural areas they served.

Rosenwald established the **Julius Rosenwald Fund** in 1917 to support the **construction of Rosenwald Schools**. This fund provided **matching grants** to **African American communities** and **white philanthropists** who contributed funds for the **construction of schools**. The collaboration between Washington, Taylor, and Rosenwald **ensured the successful implementation of the program**.



Students and teachers at the Noble Hill School in Cassville, Ga., in 1925.

([Noble Hill School](#))



21 Pee Dee Cal
Pee Dee Rosenwald School, Marion County, South Carolina, c. 1935.

([South Carolina Department of Archives and History](#))

Under the **Rosenwald Schools program**, approximately **5,000 schools** were built across 15 Southern states. These schools **provided education and hope** to **countless African American children** who would otherwise have had **limited access** to educational opportunities. The program also emphasized community involvement, with **local African American communities** contributing **labor and resources** to the **construction of the schools**.

([Special Collections, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.](#))



Students of varying ages sit in a classroom at a Rosenwald school in Chesterfield County.

JULIUS ROSENWALD FUND



INTERVIEW

The Rosenwald School Project at NCPTT

The project is a collaborative effort between the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training - National Park Service, and the local communities in which the schools reside. Currently, the project is focusing on Rosenwald Schools in Louisiana but would like to expand the project's scope in the future.

Mt. Nebo Elementary School

This school was located in Prichard's Addition / Atkin Quarters of Monroe, Louisiana. This 4-teacher type of Rosenwald School opened in 1919 and served grades 1 through 4, however one of the first students recalls attending Mt. Nebo until 8th grade. Until its closing and demolition in 1969, principals included Mr. V.C. Beckwick, Ms. Smith, Ms. Carroll, Ms. Hopson, and teaching principal Ms. Georgiana Knox Williams.

Unnamed students of Mt. Nebo.
(Mt. Nebo Playground Committee)



11 Mt. Nebo Elementary School.
(Mt. Nebo Playground Committee)

The Digital Recording Team from the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) with the National Park Service (NPS), is using laser scanning, 360 photogrammetry, photography, and videography to record the remaining Rosenwald Schools and their stories.

Mt. Olive Rosenwald School

This school is a 4-teacher type Rosenwald School located in Summerfield, Louisiana. The school was built in 1920-21. The Rosenwald School program was created by Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald in the early 20th century to build and staff high quality schools for African American children in the southern United States during segregation.



John Richardson conducting 360 photogrammetry at Mt. Olive.
(NCPTT)



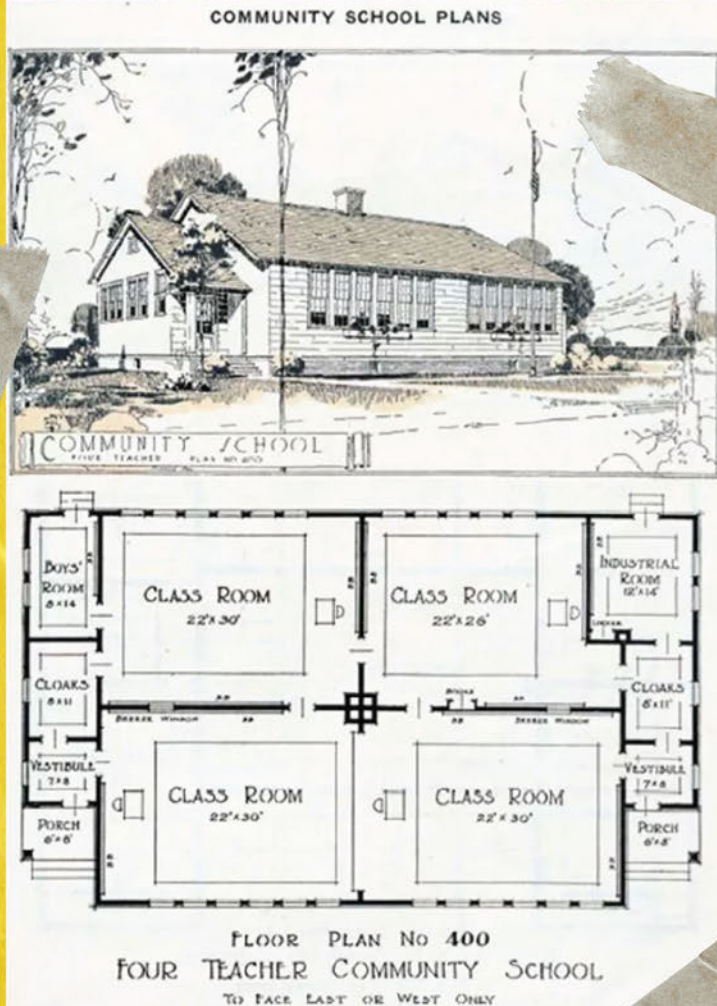
MODEL FLYTHROUGH



Modern day Mt. Olive School.
(NCPTT)

Booker T. Washington, Robert R. Taylor, and Julius Rosenwald's collective efforts in establishing and supporting the Rosenwald Schools program left a lasting impact on African American education in the early 20th century. Their collaboration showcased the power of partnerships between influential leaders, philanthropists, and educators in addressing educational disparities and fostering progress within African American communities.

Community School Plans, Bulletin
No. 3, the Julius Rosenwald Fund. 1924.



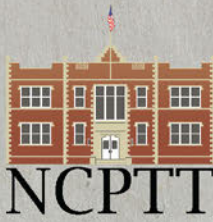
(State Archives of North Carolina)

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ROSENWALD SCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA
StoryMap



www.nps.gov/ncptt

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In Collaboration with.....

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