



Maggie Lena Walker, born in Richmond, Virginia in 1864, achieved groundbreaking success as the first African American woman to charter a bank in the U.S. As president of St. Luke Penny Savings Bank, founded in 1903, Walker provided essential financial services like savings accounts and loans to the African American community. Her leadership not only promoted economic independence but also set a transformative example for future generations in black banking. She was also an advocate for civil rights and women's empowerment, intertwining her financial ventures with broader social reform efforts. Through her leadership, St. Luke Penny Savings Bank survived the Great Depression, a testament to her savvy management and the resilience of the institution she built. Walker's legacy

is not just in banking but in her profound impact on the economic development of African Americans in the early 20th century.

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In 1952, Norman McGhee Sr. founded McGhee & Co., marking a historic milestone as the first Black-owned brokerage firm in the U.S., and he became the first African American licensed stock dealer in the Midwest. Operating out of Cleveland, Ohio, McGhee's firm was dedicated to enabling the Black community to build wealth and achieve economic advancement through stock investment. His efforts not only opened financial doors that had long been closed to African Americans but also provided a model for financial empowerment and inclusion. McGhee was deeply involved in civil rights advocacy. He leveraged his wealth and influence to support various causes and was an active member of the NAACP, contributing to its mission

as the nation's oldest civil rights organization. His commitment to economic and social justice underscored the dual impact of his work, enriching both the financial and civil rights landscapes of his time. Through McGhee & Co., he laid a foundation for future generations, showing that financial markets could be a pathway to greater equality and community upliftment.

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Arthur George Gaston was a pioneering African American entrepreneur who founded the Booker T. Washington Insurance Company in 1923 with an initial investment of \$500. His ventures grew into a multi-faceted business empire valued at an estimated \$30 million, encompassing various sectors including insurance, banking, and real estate. Among his most notable enterprises was the Gaston Motel in Birmingham, Alabama, which became a significant venue in the civil rights movement, providing first-class accommodations to Black travelers and serving as a meeting place for leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. Gaston's businesses not only broke economic barriers but also provided crucial infrastructure to support the civil rights movement in the segregated South. His legacy

includes not just his entrepreneurial success but also his significant contributions to social change and economic empowerment for African Americans.



Greenwood Digital Bank is a Black-founded and Black-led mobile financial platform, drawing inspiration from the early 20th-century Greenwood District in Tulsa, Oklahoma—once a hub of African American wealth and entrepreneurship known as "Black Wall Street." Recognizing that the traditional financial system often falls short in supporting the Black community, Greenwood was established to address this gap by empowering its community with tools to build, sustain, and grow wealth. Today, Greenwood not only offers digital banking solutions but also focuses on financial literacy and reinvesting in community businesses to foster a brighter future.

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Marsha Barnes is a recognized financial educator and the founder of The Finance Bar, a pioneering mobile and virtual financial education platform. Launched in 2014, The Finance Bar is dedicated to increasing financial literacy by making learning about personal finance accessible, engaging, and practical. Barnes' innovative approach involves a custom-renovated bus that serves as a mobile classroom, traveling to different communities to provide hands-on financial education. The Finance Bar also offers virtual coaching and resources, emphasizing practical steps individuals can take to manage their finances more effectively. Marsha Barnes' work is driven by her commitment to bridge the gap in financial education and to equip people with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions for a secure future.

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