



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pennsylvania Department of General Services, PHMC Kick-Off Black History Month, Unveil Trailblazer's Exhibit in East Wing of Capitol

Harrisburg, PA – Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS) Secretary Curt Topper and Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) Director of External Affairs Howard Pollman were joined today by state Senator Art Haywood to kick-off Black History Month in the Capitol with the unveiling of the PHMC exhibit, "Trailblazers: Notable African Americans in Pennsylvania History," which made its return to the Capitol after a 7-year hiatus.

"It is often said that we really ought to be celebrating African-American contributions to our history and culture year-round," Topper noted. "I agree with that idea too. But this year I am especially grateful for the start of February. Our progress on the path of American ideals requires essential reminders and examples for us all to follow, examples like those we are about to unveil in this exhibit – *Trailblazers: Notable African Americans in Pennsylvania History*."

The State Museum of Pennsylvania presented *Trailblazers: Notable African Americans in Pennsylvania History*, a new photography exhibit focusing on the accomplishments of African Americans and their contributions to the Commonwealth in 2005. The exhibit highlights significant African Americans and presents a good opportunity to introduce visitors to the diversity of the state's history. The African Americans featured in the exhibit are closely associated with Pennsylvania and entered into jobs, activities and businesses where no African American had gone before. It depicts stories of real-life people from Pennsylvania and tells those who view the exhibit about the many accomplishments and contributions of these outstanding citizens.

"PHMC is thrilled that this exhibit, designed to commemorate and inspire, has found a new home in The State Capitol, where it will be seen by thousands of visitors and perhaps inspire them to do great things and become trailblazers in their own right," said Howard Pollman, PHMC's Director of External Affairs on behalf of the agency.

The exhibit features 23 portraits and an information panel. Through the work of DGS, PHMC, Senator Haywood and Representative Harris, the Trailblazer exhibit will be a permanent exhibit in the East Wing Rotunda of the Main Capitol Building in Harrisburg with eight portraits being displayed annually on a rotating basis.

The 8 portraits that will be displayed for 2017 are:

- Marian Anderson (1897-1993) Classical Music & Opera Singer
- Billy Eckstine (1914-1993) Jazz Musician
- Virginia Florence (1903-1991) Librarian

- Josh Gibson (1911-1985) Negro League Baseball Player, Baseball Hall of Famer
- Charles 'Teenie' Harris (1908-1998) Photojournalist
- Dr. Rev. Leroy Patrick (1915-2006) Minister and Civil Rights Activist
- Robert Purvis (1810-1898) Abolitionist and Civil Rights Leader
- C. Delores Tucker (1927-2005) Politician Civil Rights Activist

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