



Smithsonian  
*Anacostia Community Museum*

# MEN OF CHANGE

Taking it to the Streets.

Smithsonian Exhibit to Be Installed Outdoors in Ward 7's Deanwood Community  
Dates: February 1, 2021 through May 31, 2021

January 20, 2021

As COVID-19 continues to severely impact museum visitation, the Anacostia Community Museum has quickly and creatively reimagined their upcoming exhibition, *Men of Change*. Formerly slated for display inside the museum, the exhibition has been redesigned for installation outdoors in Ward 7's Deanwood neighborhood. *Men of Change*, which features the vibrant stories of more than two dozen African American male leaders, will create a stunning visual presence of Black male positivity along ordinary pedestrian walkways at a time when optimism and inspiration is needed.

## FAQ

### 1. What is the exhibit about?

*Men of Change* boldly tells the narrative of our nation through the stories of revolutionary, iconic African American Men – both famous and not-so-famous.

Through stunning photography and powerful quotes, it presents the iconic stories of significant African American men—including Muhammad Ali, James Baldwin, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Ryan Coogler, W.E.B. Dubois and Carter G. Woodson as well as others less known—and the cultural story they illuminate. The exhibition examines how each, in their own way and from a variety of disciplines, used inspiration from those before them to take charge of their own identity and not be held back by stereotypes and societal barriers of their times.

For more information, see the website for the original indoor exhibit:

<https://menofchange.si.edu/>

### 2. Who designed the exhibit?

The Smithsonian designed the exhibit as a traveling installation that is rented and hosted by museums across the country. The Anacostia Community Museum was scheduled to be one of those hosts.

### 3. How were the men in the exhibit chosen?

The men were chosen by an advisory committee with more than one dozen scholars from the arts, academia, business, and music. To help them decide, they used a sort of rubric of character traits:

1. Confident, Ambitious, and Fearless
2. Determined, Persevering, Tenacious, and Resilient
3. Responsible, and having Integrity
4. Sacrificing
5. Savvy and Intuitive

**4. When and where will the exhibit be installed?**

A company called Capital Exhibit Services will be installing the exhibit starting **on Wednesday January 27** on the property of Ron Brown High School and Deanwood Recreation Center. (Approximately 3 days). The official opening date is February 1. The same company will de-install the exhibit during the first week of June. (See Men of Change Map for exact location of displays)

**5. Why did you choose Deanwood?**

There were several reasons why this outdoor site in Deanwood was chosen, but the biggest draw was Ron Brown High School – a school for African American boys that embodies the same ideals expressed in the exhibition. We also loved Deanwood’s history as one of the oldest Black neighborhoods in DC and wanted to shine a light on culture of strength and resilience in that community. This particular block is very walkable and has easy access to the Deanwood metro station. Lastly, we have a strong partner in the DC Department of Parks and Recreation, whose staff pointed us to Deanwood to begin with.

**6. Are you working with the Deanwood Community?**

We have been working with the Deanwood community since our plans began in October and November. We have partnered the Deanwood Recreation Center (DC DPR) and Ron Brown High School to host this exhibit on their properties. We have also worked closely with the Deanwood Citizens Association to make sure our plans meet with the community’s approval.

Other ways that we are collaborating with Deanwood:

- Deanwood community members and Ron Brown students will be featured in the forthcoming audio tour “Men of Change: Walk with Us” (Available Feb 12)
- Deanwood Community Development Organization is organizing an effort to nominate and choose seven local Deanwood Men of Change. These men and their stories will be displayed as a portion of the exhibit. (Display installed in March)
- Long-time Deanwood resident, Alicia Rucker, recently led an online workshop as a part of our #TakeTimeThursday series.
- We have organized several virtual programs for Ron Brown students so that they can have a more in-depth learning experience with the content of the exhibit.

**7. What happens if there is damage to the exhibit? Who should I report that to?**

If there is damage to the exhibit please report this to Andrea Jones, Associate Director of Education at the Anacostia Community Museum ([JonesA4@si.edu](mailto:JonesA4@si.edu)). The museum assumes responsibility for repairing damages and solving problems related to the exhibit structures.

Facilities staff from the Deanwood Recreation Center and Ron Brown High School, as well as Ron Brown students, will be assisting the museum in monitoring the exhibit structures for any problems.

**8. Will any programming or tours occur AT the exhibit?**

Due to COVID restrictions, ACM will not offer tours of the exhibit.

The museum will be hosting only one gathering at the exhibit: a socially distanced “Media Open House” on Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> for a few local journalists and social media influencers.

COVID-19 protocols, as recommended by the CDC, will be observed.

We are in talks with Union Market to host a drive-in movie night that will feature projections of various aspects of the exhibit. All other museum programming will be virtual (See <https://anacostia.si.edu>).

**9. What virtual programming will occur?**

ACM will host only ONE virtual program for the public.

On Saturday February 6 at 1pm, ACM will host a free panel discussion with several men featured in the exhibit. Panelists will share how they wield power through creativity and resistance to make an impact in their respective fields and communities.

Rob Gore, physician and founder of Kings Against Violence Initiative

Jonathan Jackson, architect and founding partner at We Should Do it All and designer of Men of Change

Tariku Shiferaw, artist and creator of series entitled "One of These Black Boys"

Moderated by: Omar Jimenz, CNN correspondent

Registration information coming soon on our website: [anacostia.si.edu](http://anacostia.si.edu)

**10. Is the Deanwood exhibit the only way to experience Men of Change?**

No. Another way that this exhibit will live outside the boundaries of our museum is through the use of pop-up projections on public buildings. These will highlight the uplifting stories and stunning visuals in the exhibit. These projections will illuminate the landscape in DC's Ward 8.

The Men of Change website, designed for the indoor installation, contains most of the exhibit content. ([MenofChange.si.edu](http://MenofChange.si.edu))

**11. Why only focus on men? Won't this kind of show alienate women and LGBTQ individuals?**

This exhibition is but one part of the equally powerful multi-part story of African American resilience in this country. Through the stories these Black individuals who self-identify as men, we can see the character traits of ALL Black people who have become role models for our times.

These are people who are: confident, fearless, determined, intuitive, and who have the highest levels of integrity. They have sacrificed for others and stood for truth in the face of lies.

Queer men featured in the exhibit include: Paul Robeson, James Baldwin, Bayard Rustin, Alvin Ailey, Kehinde Wiley and others.

**12. How can my church, civic group, non-profit, school, etc. use this exhibit as a catalyst for learning and discussion?**

Here are a few ideas:

- Create an internal awards program to honor your own organization's Men of Change
- High school teachers can explore and use the "Men of Change" digital collection of artifacts featured on the Smithsonian Learning Lab website. ([LearningLab.si.edu](http://LearningLab.si.edu))
- Create a virtual walking tour and group discussion of the exhibit
- Organize book club or film discussions related to the exhibit.

We are thrilled to be able to bring this exhibit outdoors to a vibrant, local community like Deanwood. Please feel free to reach out with questions or ideas.

Be well,  
Andrea Jones  
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Anacostia Community Museum  
[JonesA4@si.edu](mailto:JonesA4@si.edu)