



WOODSON
CENTER

BLACK *History* and EXCELLENCE

Coloring Pages
with summaries



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Crispus Attucks (1723-1770)

On March 5, 1770, five men were shot dead by British soldiers on King Street in Boston. This event became known as the Boston Massacre, and helped kindle the fire of the American Revolution. The first man to fall in this event was Crispus Attucks, a sailor and escaped slave of mixed African and American Indian ancestry. Patriot activists held up Attucks as a martyr for the cause of liberty, and generations of Americans followed suit; almost a century later, abolitionists made Attucks into a symbol of Black civic identity. But who was he really?

Notes:

Crispus Attucks



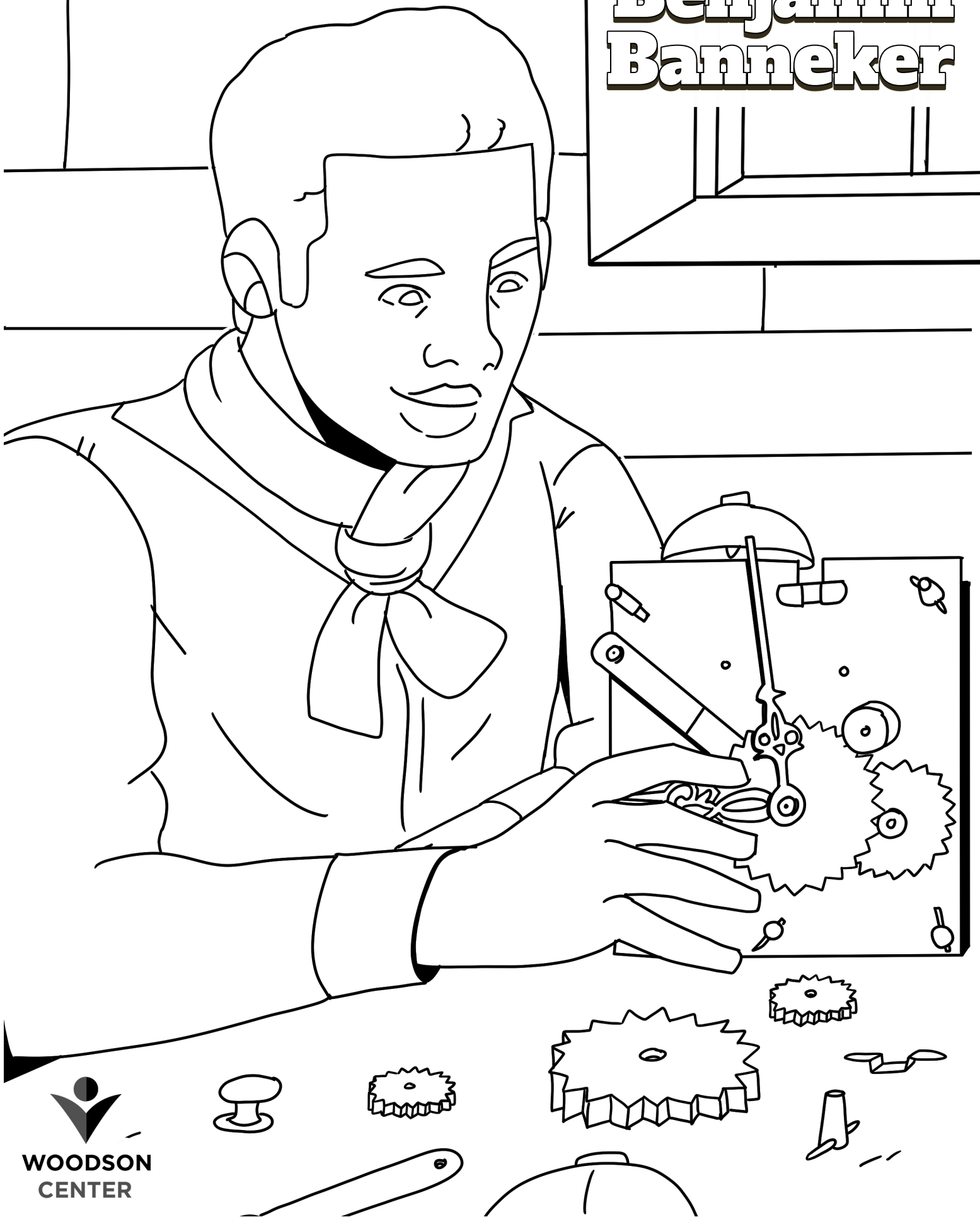
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Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806)

Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806) was a free Black landowner from Maryland who found notoriety as a largely self-taught surveyor, astronomer, and natural historian. A friend and neighbor of the Ellicotts, an influential family of abolitionist Quakers, Banneker became a national figure in the young republic through his popular series of almanacs, and is remembered for his scientific achievements, public opposition to slavery (including a famous exchange with Thomas Jefferson), and role in surveying the boundaries of the District of Columbia.

Notes:

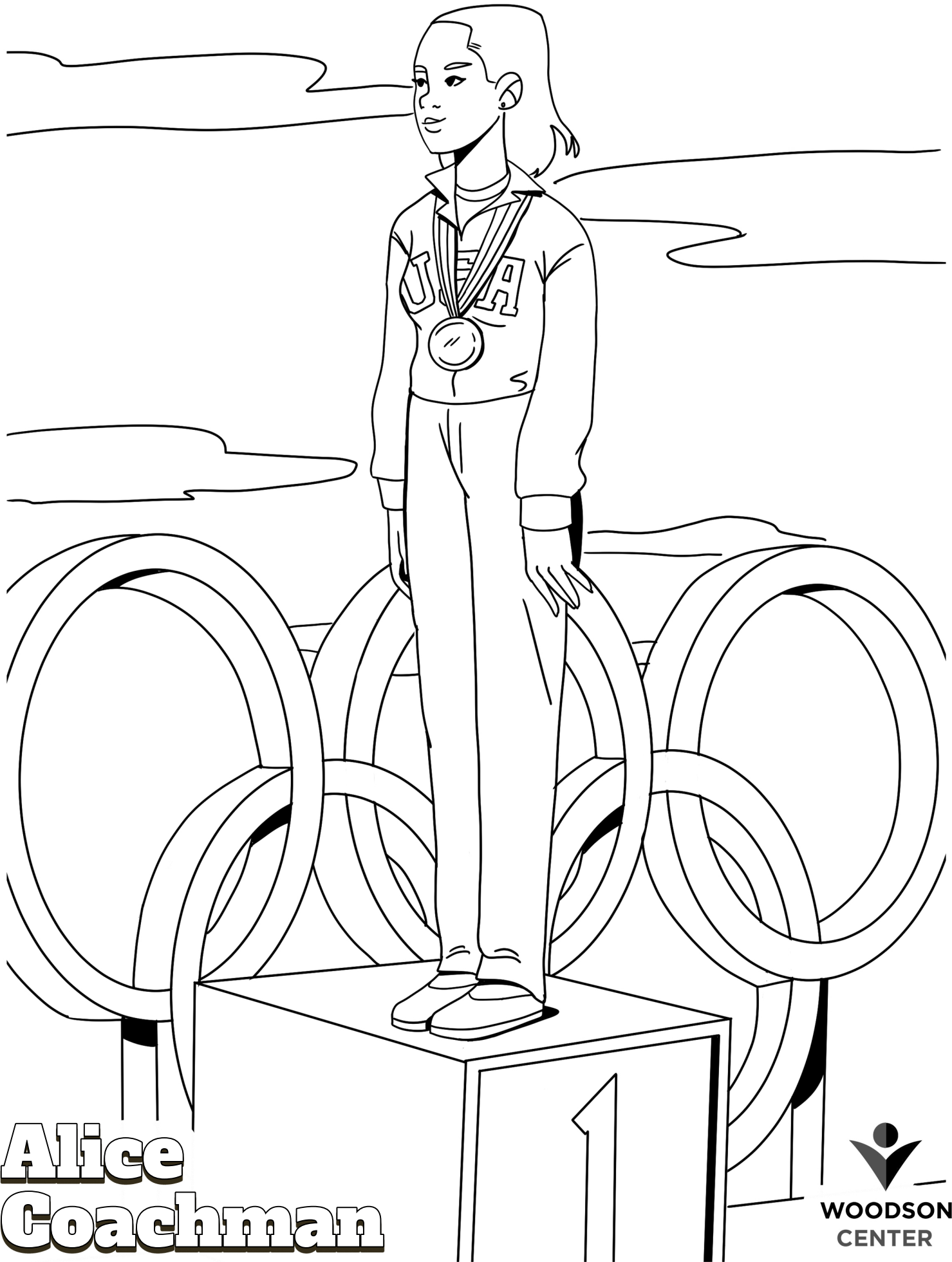
Benjamin Banneker



Alice Coachman (1923-2014)

Born into poverty in rural Georgia and raised under the shadows of Jim Crow segregation and the Great Depression, Alice Coachman fought through gender taboos and racial barriers to become a record-breaking track star. Then, in the 1948 London Olympics (the first to be held after WWII), she leapt to victory in the high jump and became the first Black woman in history to win Olympic gold. One of postwar America's most high-profile athletes and the first African American woman to be spokesperson for a national brand, Coachman's life and achievements were honored during the 1996 Atlanta Olympic games.

Notes:



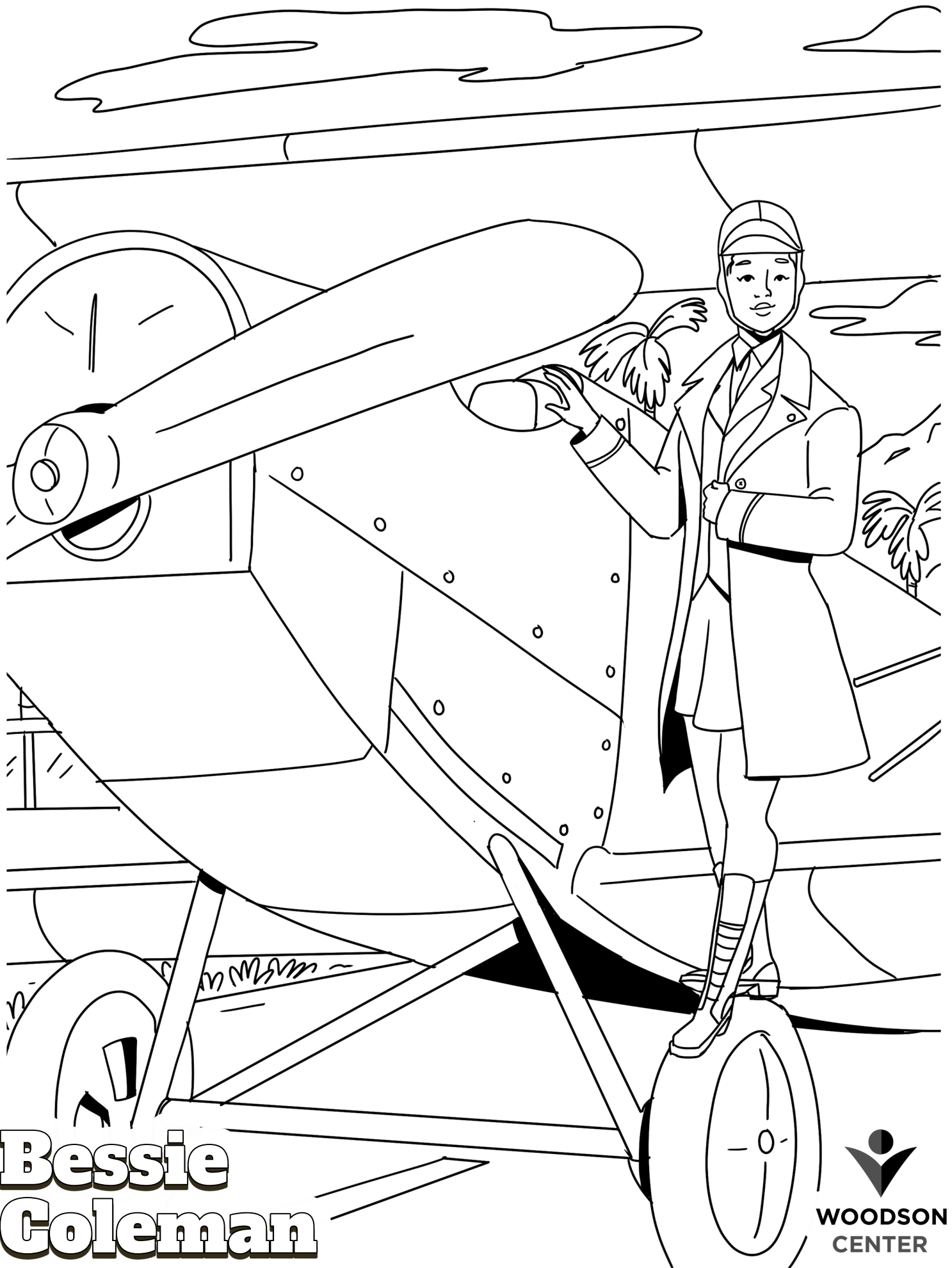
**Alice
Coachman**



Bessie Coleman (1892-1926)

Born to poor sharecroppers in Texas, Bessie Coleman (1892-1926) was the first African American woman aviator, earning an international aviation license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale. Throughout her career as a daredevil stunt pilot in thrilling airshows, she consistently defied expectations and broke through racial and gender barriers to dazzle audiences and inspire future generations of Black American pilots, aviators, and astronauts.

Notes:



**Bessie
Coleman**

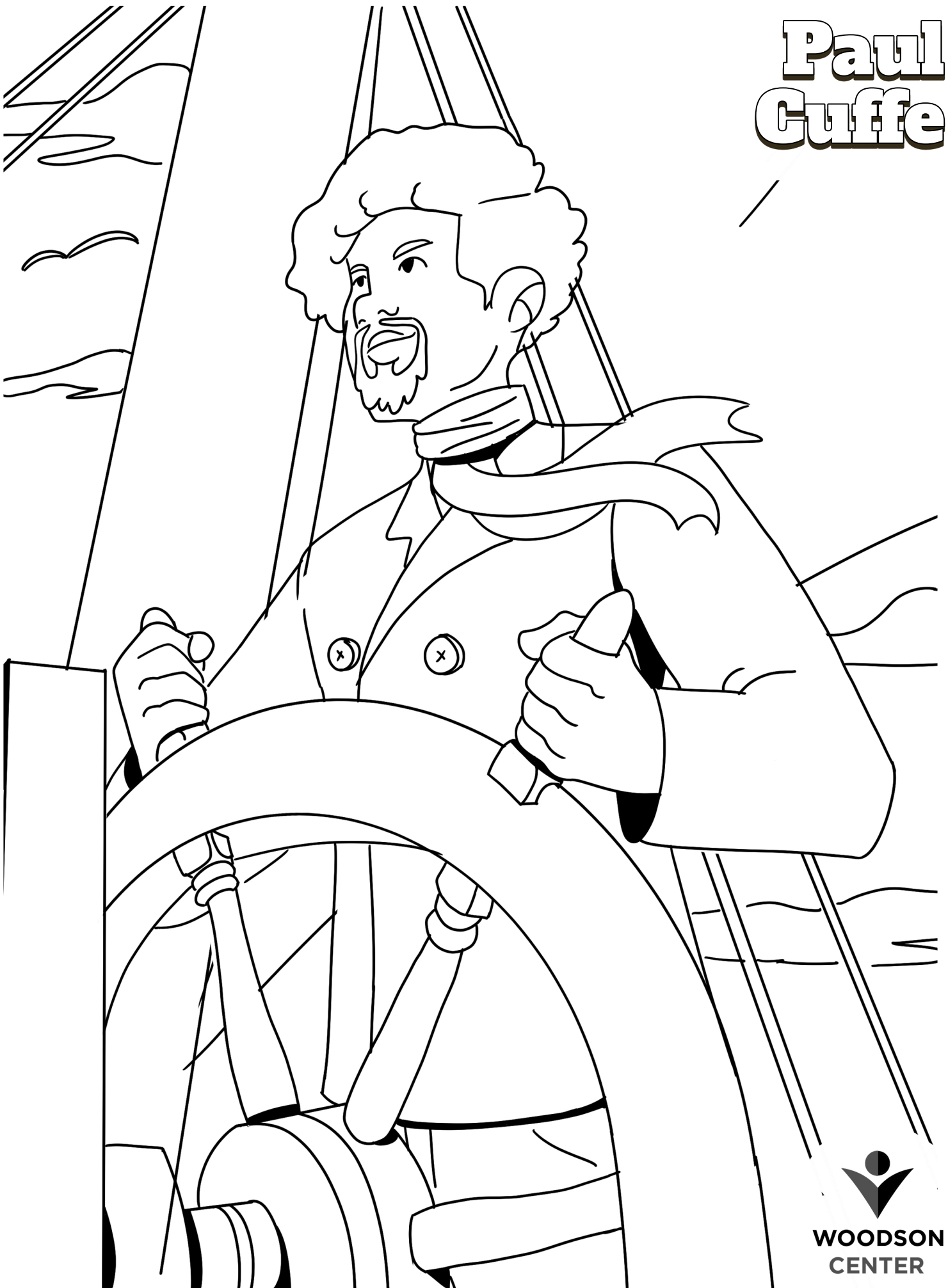


Paul Cuffe (1759-1817)

Paul Cuffe was a sea captain, entrepreneur, and philanthropist who lived through the birth and early life of the United States. As a young man, he helped smuggle goods past the British blockade during the Revolutionary War; by the early 1800s, he was perhaps the wealthiest Black man in the young republic, renowned and respected for his business sense and moral character and the first free man of color to visit The White House. An ardent abolitionist, Cuffe used his wealth to build one of the first integrated schools in America and to power his ambitious — and controversial — plans to build a new Black republic in West Africa.

Notes:

Paul Cuffe



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Mary Cardwell Dawson (1894-1962)

Mary Cardwell Dawson (1894-1962) was the first Black American opera impresario, the founder of the Cardwell Dawson School, the Cardwell Dawson Choir, and the trailblazing National Negro Opera Company. She lived in an era when civil rights activism and artistic ambition combined. Mary's leadership skills and passion for opera paved the way for hundreds of Black performers to launch or expand their musical careers. Her tireless work promoting the music of Black composers, insisting on racial equality for Black professional musicians and dancers, and bringing opera to Black audiences helped ensure that the world of opera could be open to people of all backgrounds.

Notes:



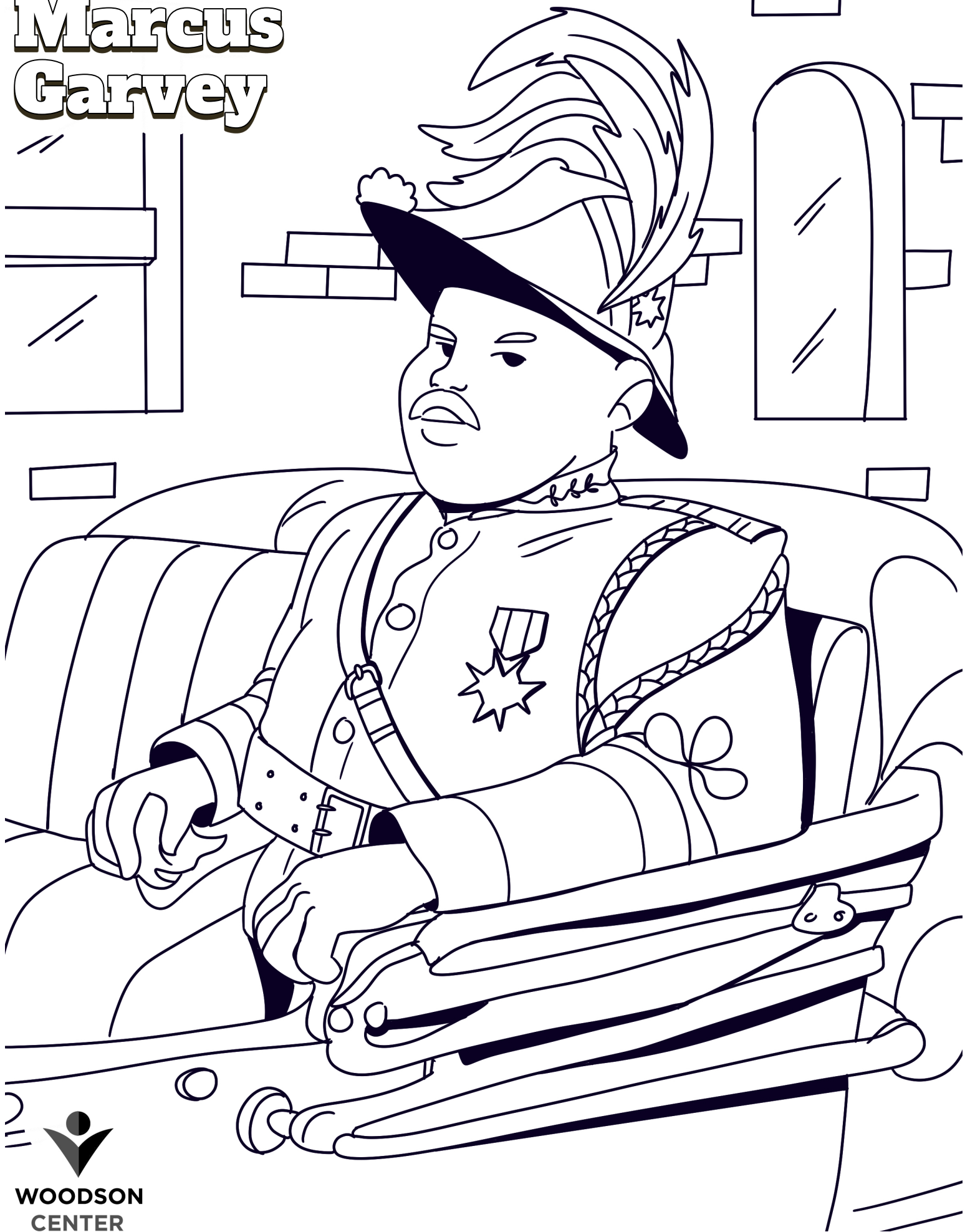
Mary Cardwell Dawson

Marcus Garvey (1887-1920)

Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) was one of the most brilliant, charismatic, and controversial Black leaders of the early 20th century, and a principal figure in the Pan-African movement. His rise to power was incredibly noteworthy— from his early life in Jamaica, where he founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (U.N.I.A.); through his migration to the United States and the rapid expansion of the U.N.I.A. from its headquarters in Harlem; up to the triumphant first international U.N.I.A. convention in 1920, which produced the influential “Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World.”

Notes:

Marcus Garvey



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The Golden Thirteen (1944)

During World War II, thousands of Black Americans joined the Navy, ready to serve their country. But deep-seated prejudice prevented Black sailors from rising in the ranks, and never in its history had the Navy commissioned Black officers. The Golden Thirteen were the men who broke that barrier and became the first class of African American officers in the United States Navy, overcoming skepticism and hostility at every turn. Their skill, resilience, and character propelled them to great success in postwar life, and paved the way for today's diverse armed forces.

Notes:



The Golden Thirteen



Katherine Johnson (1918-2020)

Who was NASA's "hidden figure," whose calculations helped send men to the moon? Katherine Johnson (1918-2020), the space program trailblazer who broke down racial and gender barriers in her remarkable 101 years of life. Born a math prodigy in segregated West Virginia, her father regularly drove Katherine 120 miles to the nearest school that would educate Black students past the 8th grade. Her extraordinary talents landed her a job as a "human computer" in the early days of NASA, where she would spend an illustrious 33-year career as a research mathematician. Johnson's work on the Mercury and Apollo projects, along with her many other research projects and technical papers, earned her the Medal of Freedom in 2015.

Notes:

Katherine Johnson

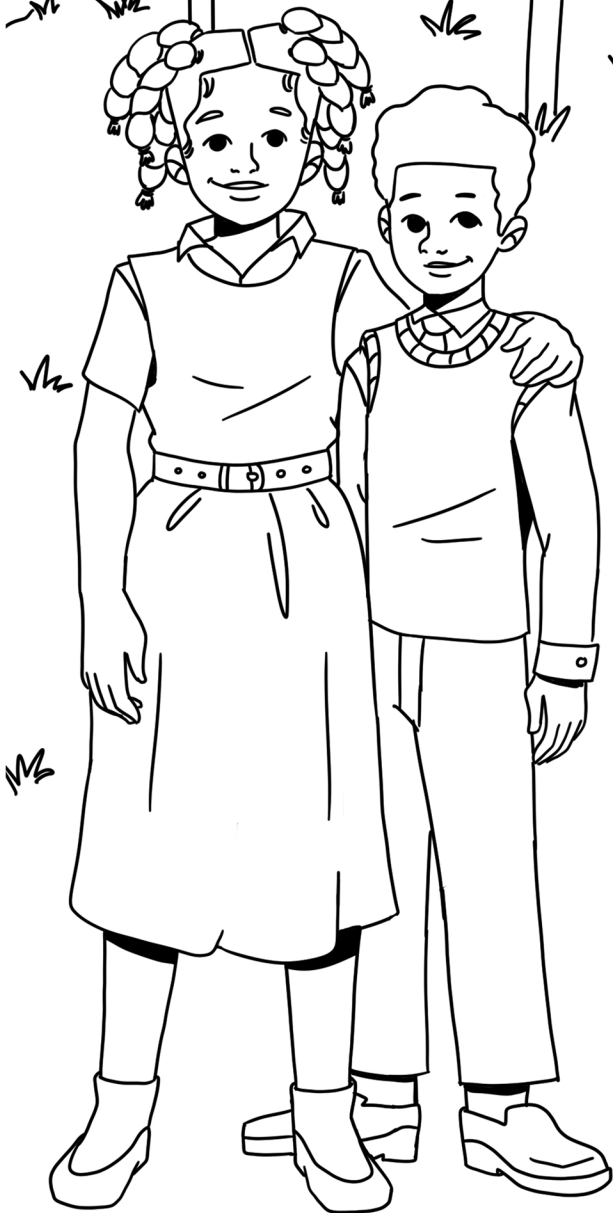
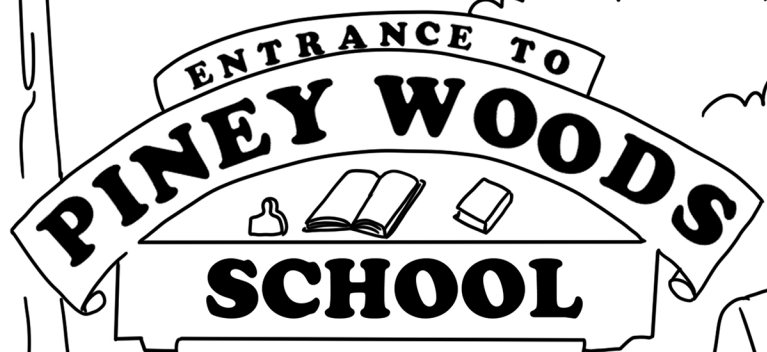


Laurence C. Jones (1882-1975)

Laurence Clifton Jones (1882 – 1975) was born into an affluent Midwestern Black family and graduated from the University of Iowa in 1907. The enterprising young scholar had opportunities to start a career in business, higher education, or even musical performance. Instead, he traveled to the Deep South and founded a school to educate the children and grandchildren of slaves in Mississippi. Community members, students, teachers, and supporters helped him build The Piney Woods School, where his inspiring vision led him to a life of service.

Notes:

Laurence C. Jones



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CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS: Glenn Loury (b. 1948)

African American economist Glenn Cartman Loury (b.1948) was one of America's most provocative thinkers on issues related to race, poverty, and social policy. A technical economist by training, Loury is usually identified as a Black conservative, though his worldview has undergone a series of transformations since he first emerged as an outspoken Reaganite in the 1980s.

Born and raised in a working-class neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago, Loury rose through the ranks of elite academia to become the first Black tenured professor of economics at Harvard in 1982, doing groundbreaking work on "social capital."

Notes:

Glenn Loury

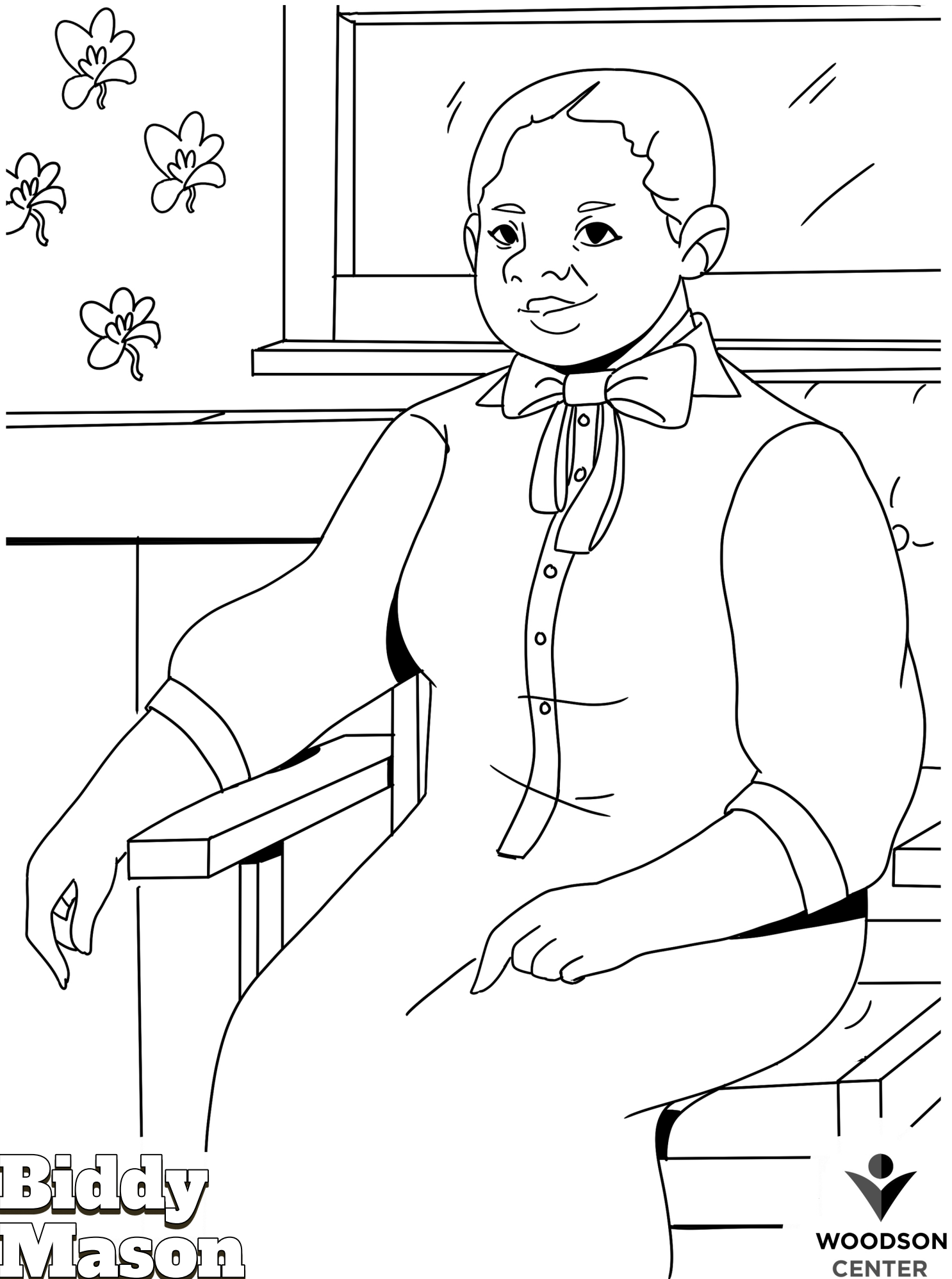


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Biddy Mason (1818-1891)

Biddy Mason was a woman born into slavery in the Deep South, walked to California as part of a pioneer caravan, fought for her freedom in court, and died a millionaire real-estate investor in Los Angeles. Through the highs and lows of Biddy's dramatic life, she demonstrated the virtues of courage and charity, both in securing freedom for herself and her family and, later, using her fortune to invest in her community and provide relief to poor Californians of all races and religions.

Notes:



**Biddy
Mason**



Charles Harrison Mason (1864-1961)

Charles Harrison Mason was the founder and bishop of Church of God in Christ (COGIC), one of the largest historically-Black Protestant denominations in the world. Bishop Mason's story reveals the vibrancy and transformative power of religious faith in Black American life. A public witness for peace and justice in his country and beyond, Bishop Mason was a pacifist who pursued racial justice and unity in both religious and civic spaces. The founding and rapid growth of COGIC throughout the nation and beyond demonstrates Mason's talents as a leader, his resistance to the religious status quo, and his steadfast desire to serve his God.

Notes:

C.H. Mason



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54th Massachusetts (1863-1865)

In January 1863, President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation went into effect, and the Union Army began recruiting Black Americans to fight the Civil War. Thousands answered the call. Soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts infantry regiment came from all over the country, dedicated to both the destruction of slavery and the advancement of racial equality nationwide. Their heroism transformed the conflict from a battle to preserve the Union to a grand struggle for freedom. The true story of these men was restored to public memory by the celebrated 1989 film *Glory*.

Notes:

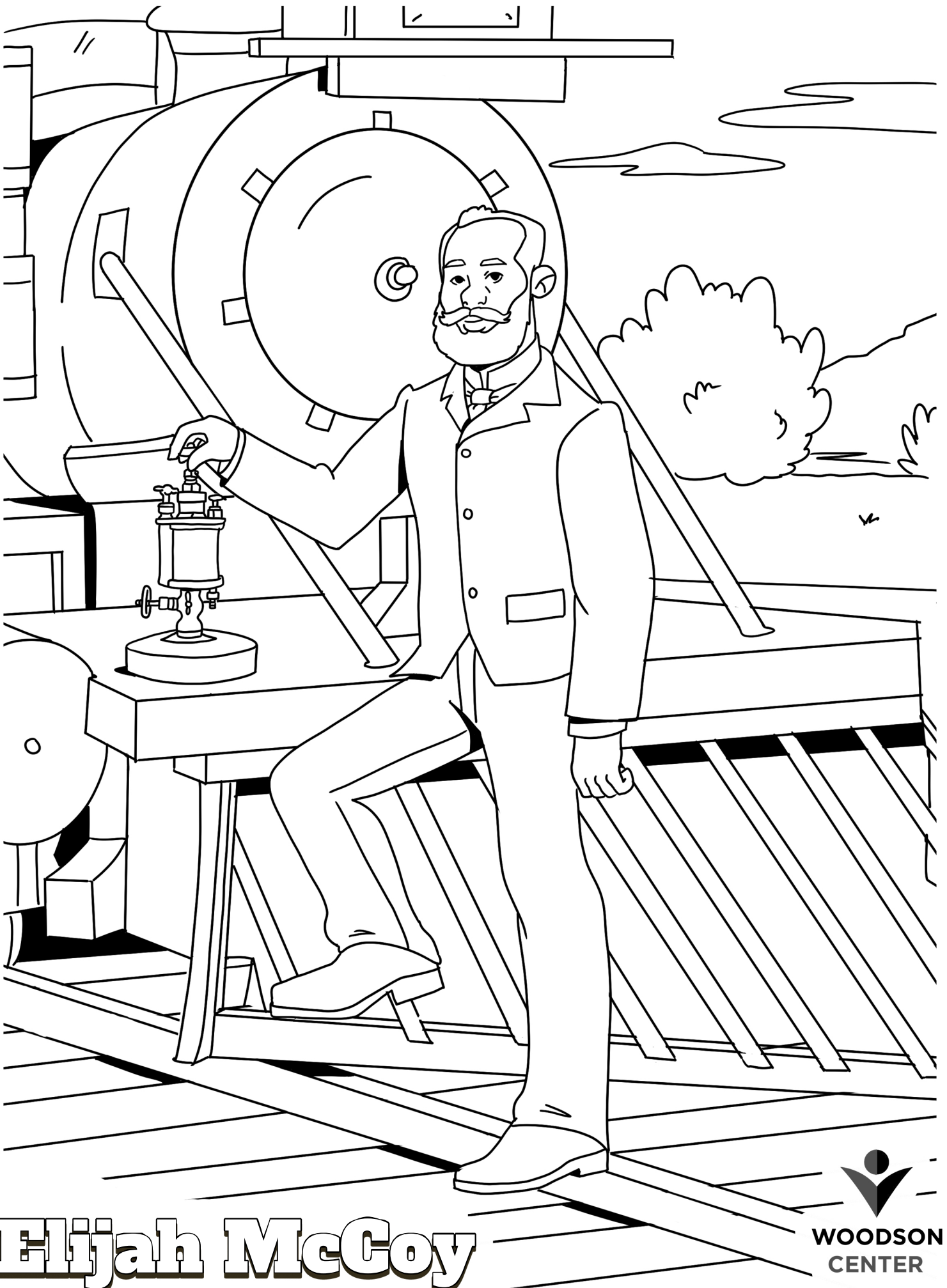
The 54th Mass



Elijah McCoy (1844-1929)

Elijah McCoy was a prolific inventor with an entrepreneurial spirit who held 57 patents, mostly on designs related to locomotives. Born in Canada and educated in Scotland, he spent most of his professional life in and around Detroit, Michigan, working in the railroad industry while also continuing to produce new inventions. The son of escaped slaves, McCoy overcame early discrimination to become an internationally respected authority in his field. By the time of his death, McCoy was widely celebrated by his contemporaries as a leader and model for Black America in the first generation after Emancipation.

Notes:



Elijah McCoy



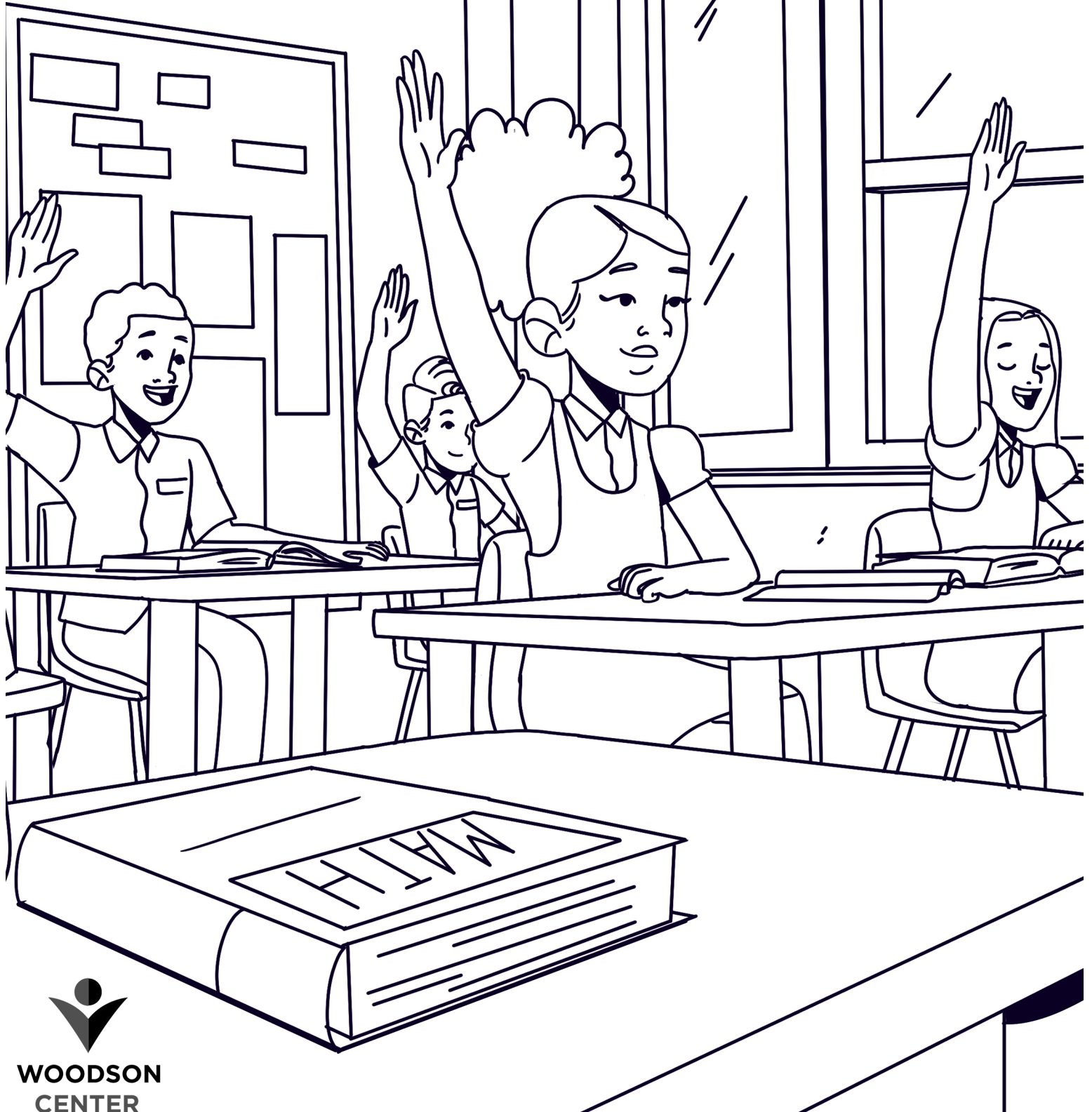
Covert, Michigan (1860-1910)

A century before the Civil Rights movement, this small town on Lake Michigan had racially integrated schools, churches, government, and civic organizations. Settled by Black and White pioneers in the mid-1800s, Covert Township worked across racial and ethnic lines at a time when doing so was widely rejected if not outright illegal. Against the backdrop of Reconstruction's overthrow in the South and worsening racial conflict in the North, this remarkable community was able to thrive.

When much of America was tearing itself apart and squandering the moral victories of the Civil War, this community nestled in the west Michigan wilderness came together — not as a utopian social experiment, but as ordinary people who relied on one another to solve the problems of ordinary life on the frontier, and whose legacy endures today in Covert and beyond. This little-known American story offers an example our country needs now more than ever.

Notes:

Covert Michigan

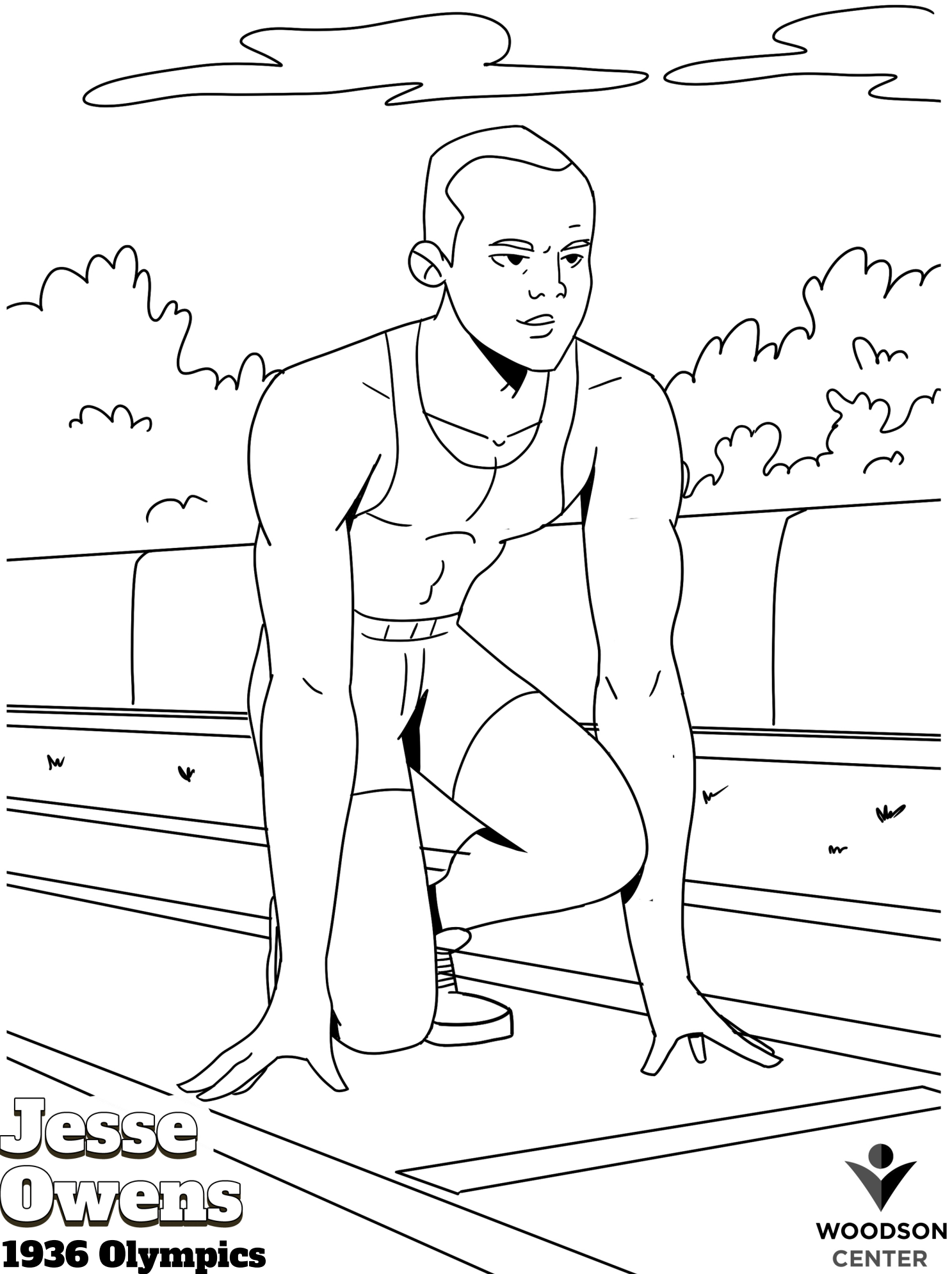


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Jesse Owens & The Berlin Olympics (1936)

On the eve of WWII, Black American athletes like Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe put the lie to Nazi ideas of racial superiority on Hitler's home turf. In the so-called "Nazi Olympics," athletes from nations that in only a few short years would be at war competed with honor—even as controversy brewed behind the scenes, including on the U.S.A. team. There is much to be gained from studying the athletic competitions, the achievements of American athletes, and the political controversies that loomed over the games, which resulted in two American Jewish athletes, Sam Stoller and Marty Glickman, being denied their chance to compete.

Notes:



**Jesse
Owens**
1936 Olympics

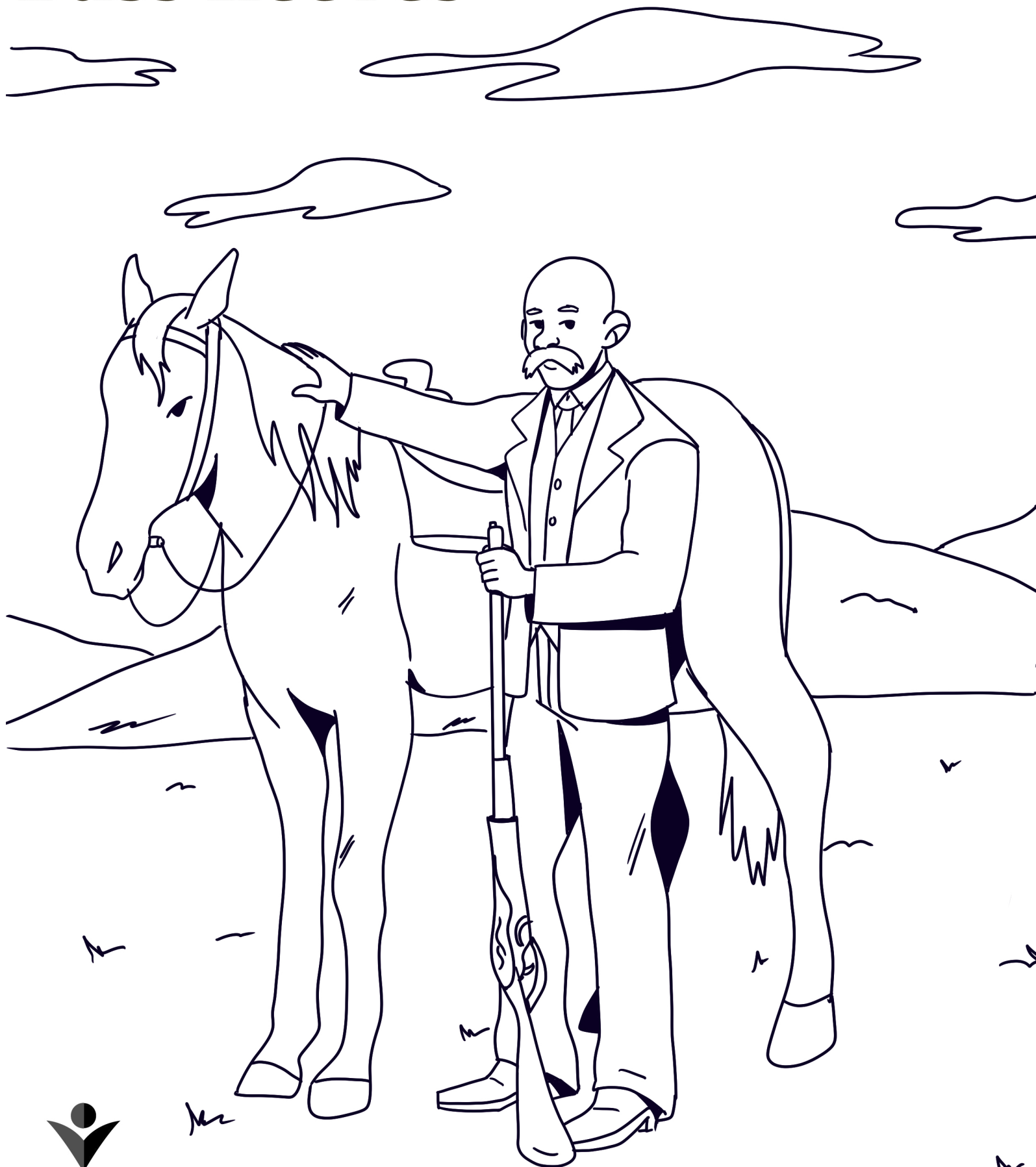


Bass Reeves (1838-1910)

Deputy U.S. Marshal Bass Reeves was a highly respected and wildly successful peace officer in Indian Territory for over thirty years, starting when he was first commissioned by federal Judge Isaac Parker in 1875. His life saw the enormous transformations that swept through the country during the Civil War, the days of the “wild west” in the federal territories, and the final settling of the frontier. The exploits of Deputy Marshal Reeves as he fought and captured hundreds of outlaws made him famous in his own time.

Notes:

Bass Reeves



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BUILDING CHARACTER: Resilience and Learned Optimism

The Woodson Center Principle of resilience challenges us to find strength in the face of adversity and draw wisdom from setbacks and failures. Rethinking the way we “frame” negative experiences and “talk to ourselves” about challenges we face makes the case for a rational, learned optimism that is genuinely empowering.

Notes:



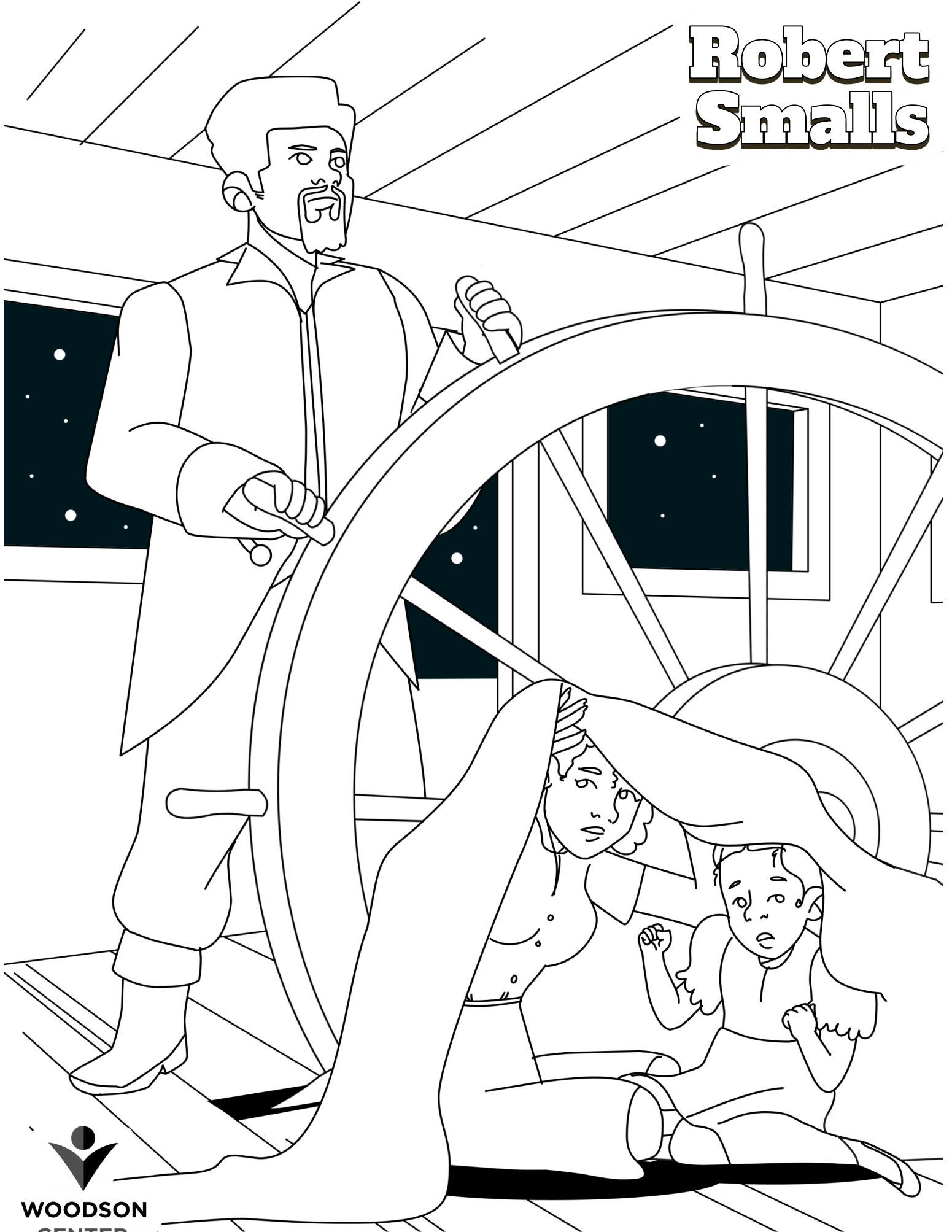
Learned Optimism

Robert Smalls (1839-1915)

He commandeered a Confederate gunship as he led his family to freedom. The courageous Robert Smalls (1839-1915) was the statesman and entrepreneur that exhibited integrity, conviction, and “radical grace” in his quest to rebuild South Carolina in the devastating aftermath of the Civil War.

Notes:

Robert Smalls



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CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS: Thomas Sowell (1930-present)

Economist, cultural historian, social theorist, and unwavering critic of misguided social policy and self-important intellectuals, Thomas Sowell is celebrated as one of America's greatest writers for his insistence on telling unpopular truths. He's the author of over 50 books, countless essays and articles, and 19 scholarly papers in economics. But his ideas have also been shaped by his own life story, one that took him from rural North Carolina to the streets of Harlem, from the Marine Corps to the halls of academe, and from Marxism to classical liberalism.

Notes:



**Thomas
Sowell**



Tulsa: Terror & Triumph (1921-2021)

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Oklahoma was a haven for Black Americans seeking freedom and economic opportunity. The Greenwood neighborhood of Tulsa, with its bustling business district known as the “Black Wall Street,” was the nation’s most affluent Black community, a central hub of entrepreneurship and activism. But by June 1, 1921, Greenwood lay in ruins, victim to a massive wave of violence and looting committed by a mob of their White neighbors, in what is now known as the Tulsa Race Massacre. Against all odds, the survivors fought to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, even as powerful forces tried to bury Greenwood forever. This incredible story of dignity in the face of devastation shows the depths of human cruelty — and the heights of human resilience.

Notes:



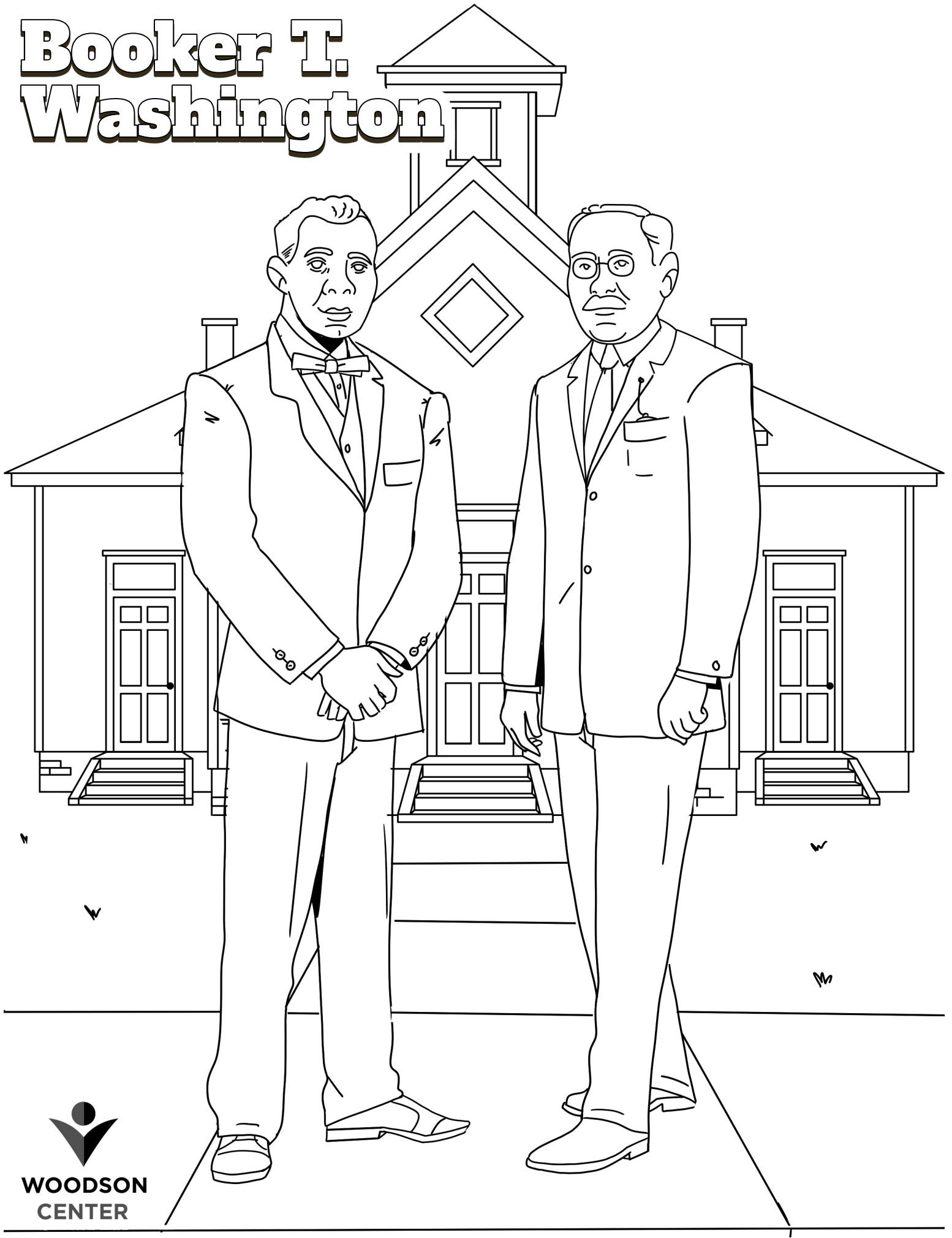
Tulsa: Terror & Triumph

Booker T. Washington and the Rosenwald Schools (1912-1932)

Having experienced the profound racial disparities in the rural South firsthand, writer and education reformer Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) dreamed of a school-building project for Black communities that could help begin to lift them out of poverty. Washington's collaboration with philanthropist Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932) transformed his hopeful dream into the reality of nearly 5,000 new schools. Built in large part by the communities they served, Rosenwald schools were a ray of hope in the face of poverty and racial discrimination.

Notes:

Booker T. Washington

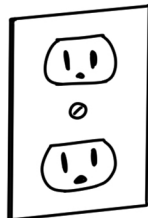


CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS: Walter E. Williams (1936-2020)

The popular economist Walter E. Williams was one of the most prominent libertarian commentators on issues of race, poverty, and prosperity, spreading his message through a weekly syndicated column, scholarly publications, and a variety of media appearances. Born and raised in the Philadelphia projects, Williams overcame personal and political barriers on his journey from blue-collar kid working odd jobs to a distinguished writer and professor. Prolific and provocative, Williams appealed to both specialists and lay people, and his great love was teaching economics. Throughout his life, a network of devoted friends, family, mentors, and colleagues made his success possible.

Notes:

Walter Williams



BUILDING CHARACTER: The Woodson Principles

Neighborhood empowerment advocate and civil rights movement veteran Robert L. Woodson has developed ten principles for personal growth and community development. He has used these principles throughout his decades of working with organizations that seek to transform low-income communities from within.

Notes:

The Woodson Principles

