In 1910, Julius Rosenwald, the Jewish mail-order magnate from Chicago, joined forces with the Young Men’s Christian Association to provide YMCA branches for African-Americans. Rosenwald offered to contribute $25,000 to every community in the United States that raised $75,000 toward the erection of an African-American YMCA. Rosenwald’s offer triggered nationwide fund-raising campaigns and resulted in the construction of twenty-four YMCA buildings.¹

The alliance between Rosenwald, the YMCA, and African-Americans seems rather peculiar at first glance. Why would a Jew support the establishment of Christian facilities for African-Americans? David Levering Lewis, who examined the collaboration between African-Americans and Jews during the 1910s and 1920s, has suggested that some of the wealthy Jews who aided African-Americans had ulterior motives. According to Lewis, they reasoned that their assistance to the African-American struggle for racial advancement would spare Jews “some of the necessity of directly rebutting anti-Semitic stereotypes,” for white America would perforce conclude that if “blacks could make good citizens . . . all other groups [including Jews] could make better ones.”² Yet Lewis’s highly interpretive study offers no evidence to support this contention.

Julius Rosenwald certainly never said that his support of African-American causes was stimulated by a desire to refute anti-Semitic stereotypes. On the contrary, Rosenwald claimed that he was motivated by sympathy for the victims of discrimination. Having experienced the indignity of anti-Semitism, he felt compassion for those who suffered from racism.

However, Rosenwald’s YMCA activities were not only the result of compassion. The peculiar alliance between the Jew from Chicago and
African-American Christians seems to have been forged at least in part by a shared set of values. Despite anti-Semitism and racism, Rosenwald and African-Americans in the YMCA believed in the promise of the American Dream. They embraced the concept of rugged individualism as a means of achieving success. They resented charity, claiming that it undermined personal initiative and deprived the individual of a sense of pride and achievement. Thus, while Rosenwald shared neither race nor religion with African-Americans in the YMCA, he did share with them a belief in personal improvement and self-help.

Rosenwald's conviction that the American Dream could indeed become reality was rooted in his personal experiences. Born on August 12, 1862, the second son of German Jewish immigrants, Rosenwald grew up in Springfield, Illinois, where his parents operated a small retail store. In 1879, without completing high school, he entered the clothing business as an apprentice to his uncles in New York City. Within five years he had saved enough money to open a clothing store in New York. After this successful venture Rosenwald moved to Chicago to manufacture garments, and in 1895 he bought $35,000 worth of shares in the stock of one of his customers, the Sears Roebuck Company. The following year Rosenwald became vice-president of the company and launched a brilliant advertising campaign which firmly established Sears in the mail-order business. By 1909 Rosenwald was president of Sears, and the company was recording annual sales of more than $50,000,000.

As president of Sears, Rosenwald "accumulated a fortune, making more money than he could use." This caused him much concern. Rosenwald was particularly worried about the effect of his wealth on his family. He was afraid that it would become "a millstone about the neck" of his five children. As a self-made man who believed that work was a "privilege," Rosenwald feared that a large inheritance would deprive his children "of the joy of honest, conscientious labor." However, he was not only concerned about the effects of his wealth on his family. He was also embarrassed about the size of his fortune. As he remarked to a friend: "I really feel ashamed to have so much money."

Rosenwald tried to cope with his "Burden of Wealth" by adopting Andrew Carnegie's philosophy of civic stewardship. Rosenwald was
concerned that the massive urbanization, industrialization, and immigration of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had produced social conditions which were weakening America's democracy. The wealthy, Rosenwald claimed, had an obligation to use their fortunes to seek out and heal "the sore spots of civilization" in order to guarantee that America remained the land of equal opportunity. Accordingly, he argued that the "generation which has contributed to the making of a millionaire should be the one to profit by his generosity." Based on this conviction, Rosenwald supported social improvement and educational activities in Chicago and throughout the nation, and eventually gave away $63,000,000. Nearly half of this money went to African-Americans.

Rosenwald's concern for the plight of African-Americans was aroused by Dr. Paul J. Sachs, a former business partner of Goldman, Sachs and Company, who had taken an interest in the Urban League and tried to enlist Rosenwald's support. In 1910, Sachs presented Rosenwald with a biography of William H. Baldwin, Jr., founder of the Urban League, and a copy of Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*. These two books influenced Rosenwald more than anything he had ever read.

Washington's rise from slavery to the presidency of Tuskegee Institute was a career Rosenwald admired. He and Washington were both self-made men who valued hard work and personal initiative. Moreover, they shared a belief in the civic responsibility of the "better types of citizens" for the less fortunate ones. In addition, Rosenwald was particularly impressed with Baldwin's contention that the fate of African-Americans was inseparably linked to the progress of the nation at large. As Rosenwald explained:

I am interested in the Negro people because I am also interested in the white people. Negroes are one-tenth of our population. If we promote better citizenship among the Negroes not only are they improved, but our entire citizenship is benefitted.

Rosenwald's interest in African-Americans was also influenced by his Jewish heritage, which had made him sensitive to prejudice and discrimination.
Chauffeur and auto mechanics classes were popular features of the Rosenwald YMCAs—Wabash Avenue Branch, Chicago, opened in 1913
(Courtesy YMCA of the USA Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries)
I also belong to a race that suffers and has suffered for centuries. . . . You would also probably be surprised to know that there are . . . clubs in the city of Chicago, representing what you might call the best type of citizenship . . . that would not admit a Jew. 99

But despite these handicaps, Rosenwald believed that America offered Jews and African-Americans unparalleled opportunities if they behaved "properly" and displayed "proper citizenship." 19

Rosenwald's philanthropic efforts on behalf of African-Americans began with his support of the YMCA in 1910. 21 He later recalled how startled he was when first approached by a Christian raising money for missionary work in Africa.

I, a Jew, had no real interest in securing converts for Christianity. . . . However, I could not help but think why on earth do people want to spend their time and money on Africans, eight thousand miles away when we have millions of that race who are our citizens, who are anxious to learn, and I have no doubt would be glad to take advantage of any missionary work which might be available . . . and that the time and money would, to my mind, bring far greater results . . . to our own citizens, both black and white. 39

Rosenwald decided to support the YMCA because its institutions provided African-Americans with opportunities for self-help and personal improvement and not with charity. By supporting black YMCAs, he would be assisting African-Americans, for whom he felt compassion, without compromising his belief in rugged individualism. 33

In the spring of 1910, when officials of the white YMCA in Chicago asked Rosenwald for a donation to its building fund, he responded: "I won't give a cent to this $350,000 fund unless you will include in it the building of a Colored Men's Y.M.C.A." 34 Rosenwald then offered to contribute $25,000 provided that the fund include a building for Chicago's African-American population. 35 The Chicago YMCA accepted his conditions.

In December 1910, the Chicago YMCA asked Dr. Jesse E. Moorland, one of the highest-ranking black YMCA officials, to assist in conducting a fund-raising campaign for an African-American branch. 36 Moorland had joined the International Council of the YMCA in 1898 as one of two African-American secretaries responsible for the organization of African-American branches in cities. In June 1907,
Jesse E. Moorland (1863–1940) was the highest-ranking African-American YMCA official in charge of city branches

( Courtesy YMCA of the USA Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries)
Moorland had investigated the possibility of obtaining equipment and support for a black YMCA in Chicago.\textsuperscript{27} He had conducted a survey of Chicago’s African-American populace and found that without the backing of “some interested friends,” they would be unable to raise the necessary funds for a YMCA building. However, they would be able to support a branch and “make it self-sustaining.” Thus, he urged the construction of a black YMCA.\textsuperscript{28} Despite this, efforts to raise funds for this purpose did not begin until Rosenwald promised his assistance in 1910.

After Moorland’s arrival in Chicago in December of that year, Rosenwald invited him to lunch at his office.\textsuperscript{29} During this meeting on December 16, 1910, Rosenwald asked about YMCA work among African-Americans throughout the country. Moorland explained that the YMCA assisted local groups in forming associations and raising funds but did not give financial aid. Thus, black YMCAs were largely dependent on the support of local African-American citizens, who were often unable to raise sufficient funds by themselves. As a result black YMCAs remained ill-equipped and provided minimal services.\textsuperscript{30}

By 1910, some forty black YMCA groups existed in American cities. However, none owned modern buildings designed and built for YMCA use. Instead they usually functioned in rented premises, often former saloons or old buildings turned into YMCA facilities.\textsuperscript{31} Perhaps Rosenwald’s interest was quickened when Moorland informed him that John D. Rockefeller, Sr., had contributed $25,000 toward the construction of a black YMCA in Washington, D.C., and that George Foster Peabody had endowed an African-American branch for his hometown, Columbus, Georgia.\textsuperscript{32}

During the lunch Rosenwald offered to contribute $25,000 to every community in the country that raised $75,000 toward the erection of an African-American YMCA over the next five years. The only condition was that he would give the $25,000 only after $50,000 raised locally was “actually expended for land and building.”\textsuperscript{33}

Rosenwald’s offer reflected his acceptance of Booker T. Washington’s accommodationist philosophy. Instead of challenging the YMCA’s Jim Crow policy, Rosenwald tried to assist African-Americans to secure equal but separate facilities. This, he believed, would provide “a needy and worthy group of our citizens” with “a fair
chance” to earn the respect of whites. Like Washington, Rosenwald hoped to achieve his goal by fostering cooperation between “the best men of both races” as well as by racial self-help.

Rosenwald was convinced that America’s racial problems resulted from a lack of knowledge and understanding between the races. Ignorance, he believed, could only be overcome gradually as cooperation between African-Americans and whites eventually helped to reduce prejudice. The matching-funds offer was designed to induce the races to cooperate by requiring communities to raise two-thirds of the necessary funds locally.

Moreover, Rosenwald’s conditional offer was intended to inspire African-Americans to take an active and responsible part in the fund-raising campaigns. Rosenwald, like other philanthropists, endorsed the “ideology of rugged individualism” and rejected “mere” charity. His philanthropy was designed to provide African-Americans with “an opportunity, not to be worked for but to be worked with.”

Moorland shared Rosenwald’s belief that charity undermined personal initiative and deprived individuals of the sense of pride and achievement that could only be gained through hard work. Thus he objected to George Foster Peabody’s endowment of the YMCA in Columbus, Georgia, claiming it had a “weakening and benumbing influence.” Instead, he welcomed Rosenwald’s stimulating challenge, explaining:

> Very little would be accomplished by working for men or by handing them a ready-made program. This might do very well for children and feeble-minded persons but lasting and effective results could be gotten by working with people.

Two weeks after the lunch, Rosenwald confirmed his matching-funds offer in a letter to the Chicago YMCA. On January 1, 1911, he announced it at a public meeting of African-Americans who had gathered at Chicago’s Odd Fellows Hall to launch a fund-raising campaign for a black YMCA. In response to Rosenwald’s offer, Norman W. Harris, a prominent Chicago banker, and Cyrus H. McCormick, the president of International Harvester, each contributed $25,000 to the black building fund. Inspired by these contributions, James H. Tilghman, a retired African-American messenger for the Chesapeake Telephone Company, donated his life’s saving of
$1,000. Tilghman, who had arrived in Chicago in 1881 "without friends and hardly a dollar," expressed his hope that a black YMCA would provide travelers and newcomers to the city with "a desirable place where a young man can feel homelike and happy." After the press publicized his offer, Rosenwald received enthusiastic responses from all over the country. President William Howard Taft, for example, claimed that "nothing could be more useful to the race and to the country." The Chicago Defender, an African-American newspaper, likened Rosenwald's offer to the Emancipation Proclamation, comparing him to John Brown, Charles Summer, and Abraham Lincoln; the Southern Workman, the journal of the Hampton Institute, claimed that both "races will be blessed by [Rosenwald's offer], for, after all, humanity is a unit"; Booker T. Washington called it "one of the wisest and best-paying philanthropic investments"; and George Foster Peabody assured Rosenwald that "no future investments will prove more profitable than those made to further Negro Y.M.C.A. work." Despite the widespread acclaim, however, Rosenwald's offer also met with criticism, due to its implicit acceptance of the YMCA's Jim Crow policy. W. E. B. Du Bois, the editor of the Crisis, for instance, praised Rosenwald's generosity but condemned the YMCA, charging that "it is an unchristian and unjust and dangerous procedure which segregates colored people in the Y.M.C.A." And he cautioned: "We may be glad of the colored Y.M.C.A. movement on the one hand, on the other hand we must never for a single moment fail to recognize the injustice which has made it an unfortunate necessity." Similarly, the Broad Ax, another Chicago African-American newspaper, spoke favorably of Rosenwald's offer but asked:

Why not offer $25,000 to every city in the U.S. which will open its Y.M.C.A door to their brother in black? ... We have no faith in any Y.M.C.A. which will not admit a respectable, intelligent young man of color, and we don't believe that God, in his goodness, approves of such devilish prejudice, under the guise of a Christian fraternity.

Nevertheless many African-Americans greeted Rosenwald's offer enthusiastically. They were willing to accept segregated facilities rather than forgo the practical benefits they believed a YMCA would offer. Moreover, a growing number of white Americans began to
support African-American fund-raising efforts, convinced that the YMCA's "wholesome" influence would benefit the community at large. The Kansas City Journal, for example, asked: "Would it not be effective economy to build a negro Y.M.C.A. rather than to make a larger appropriation for the police force and the maintenance of the courts and penal institutions?"

The allocation of Rosenwald funds was supervised by white officials of the Chicago YMCA, while Moorland served as executive officer in the field. Moorland visited communities which considered applying for Rosenwald aid in order to survey the economic situation of African-Americans and the state of race relations. When he was convinced that a community was able to maintain a YMCA building as well as to raise sufficient funds for construction, he sent a positive recommendation to the Chicago YMCA. He then organized and supervised the local fund-raising campaign among African-Americans. For a period of ten to fourteen days, teams of local YMCA supporters collected subscriptions or pledges that were to be paid after the successful completion of the campaign.

During the five-year term of the offer, seven cities conducted successful fund-raising campaigns. Black YMCA branches were built in Washington, Chicago, Indianapolis, Philadelphia, Kansas City, Cincinnati, and St. Louis with the help of Rosenwald's $25,000 gifts. When the offer expired at the end of 1915, Rosenwald granted extensions to six other cities. Over the next five years, successful campaigns for "Rosenwald YMCAs" were conducted in Brooklyn, Baltimore, Columbus, Harlem, Atlanta, and Pittsburgh.

Rosenwald was pleased with the thirteen black YMCAs his matching-funds policy had helped to create, and in 1920 he considered renewing his offer. First, however, he asked the YMCA to survey and evaluate the progress of the existing branches. Rosenwald was particularly interested in the services rendered to African-Americans and the degree of interracial cooperation his offer had stimulated.

The YMCA asked a white official, William J. Parker, and Moorland to conduct independent studies of the Rosenwald YMCAs. After interviewing the African-American secretaries of the Rosenwald YMCAs, Moorland reported that the branches served not only their members but also the community at large. The black YMCAs had
become community centers providing a meeting place for a variety of African-American groups, from choirs to local chapters of the NAACP. Moreover, "the building movement has taught many men how to promote secular business enterprises in the matter of establishing banks, building apartment houses, as well as churches and, in some cases, schools, putting their affairs on a better financial basis." Though his overall appraisal of the Rosenwald YMCAs was quite favorable, Moorland took a dim view of the fact that the Chicago YMCA, alone among the thirteen branches financed by Rosenthal, did not have an African-American chairman.

Parker's study of the Rosenwald YMCAs was based solely on interviews with white YMCA officials in the thirteen cities. He found that the black branches had a "surprisingly larger" membership, "fairly competent" secretaries, and the support of "the leading colored professional and business men." In the fields of religion, social events, housing, and recreation, Parker reported satisfactory progress. However, he pointed out, neither the physical nor the educational programs compared favorably with work done in white YMCAs.

In his report, Parker noted that many African-Americans had failed to pay the amounts they had pledged during the fund-raising campaigns. He explained, however, that they had "pledged in good faith but overestimated their ability to pay," and in addition they did not generally have the means to support their branches beyond the payment of membership fees. Thus, local white YMCAs continued to support the black branches financially through "appropriations from their general funds."

Concerning interracial cooperation, Parker stated that relations between white and black YMCA officials seemed "to be very intimate and cordial" but admitted that their contacts were "limited to official occasions." Regarding salaries Parker found that African-American secretaries were generally paid less than their white counterparts. Only one-third of the branches paid African-Americans the same salary as whites, while the remainder paid them about 25 percent less than whites. Despite these shortcomings, Parker urged Rosenwald to reopen his "original offer for a reasonable period."

Although both Moorland and Parker suggested a renewal of Rosenwald's offer, each proposed different conditions. Parker recom-
mended a continuation of the 1910 offer with new conditions requiring standard-sized buildings equipped with swimming pool, dormitories, cafeteria, as well as physical, recreational, and educational rooms. This reflected Parker's desire to provide African-American communities with YMCA buildings that were equal to their white counterparts.

Moorland, on the other hand, argued that the matching-funds policy worked to the disadvantage of African-Americans who lived in the rural South, the majority of the African-American populace at that time. In the South virtually no recreational facilities for African-Americans existed, and white southerners were usually unwilling to make significant contributions to the fund-raising campaigns. Some cities, such as Nashville, Jacksonville, and New Orleans, had tried to match Rosenwald's offer, but failed because of the lack of white support. Of the first thirteen Rosenwald YMCAs, only three—those in Atlanta, Baltimore, and Washington—were in the South, where some 90 percent of America's black population lived. As Moorland noted:

> The conditions in the South are so different to what they are in Chicago and the North, that there is no comparison. It would be almost a phenomenon if we discovered a white man in the South would give $25,000.00 to a colored building.

Moorland urged Rosenwald to support YMCAs where they were needed and not just where the local population was willing and able to finance them. He proposed an offer that would allow for smaller and less well equipped buildings, thereby enabling poorer communities, particularly those in the South, to qualify for Rosenwald aid.

However, Moorland's efforts to convince Rosenwald to change the conditions of his offer were unsuccessful. Rosenwald's philanthropy was based on the ideology of self-help, and from this standpoint, those who could not raise their share were not worthy of receiving his share. Thus, Rosenwald's renewal offer was much closer to Parker's. On July 6, 1920, Rosenwald announced a two-year renewal of his offer, asking local communities to raise $125,000 in order to qualify for a $25,000 donation. There were several conditions. Branches built with Rosenwald's support would have to include the following features: "(1) separate quarters for men and boys; (2) standard Gymnasi-
um; (3) swimming pool; (4) class and club rooms; (5) Restaurant, and
(6) not fewer than fifty (50) dormitory rooms.\textsuperscript{67}

The increase in the required matching funds and the high cost of
building materials following World War I made the new offer futile.\textsuperscript{68}
In the next two years no American city was able to raise sufficient
funds. However, Rosenwald granted extensions to eleven cities.\textsuperscript{69}
Between 1924 and 1933 eleven more black YMCA branches were built
in northern and western cities: Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, Buffalo,
Dayton, Montclair, New Jersey, Toledo, Dallas, Youngstown, Orange,
New Jersey, and Harrisburg.\textsuperscript{70}

Rosenwald's conditional gifts resulted in the first major effort of
the YMCA to provide adequate facilities for urban African-Ameri-
cans. The twenty-four buildings erected between 1912 and 1933 were
equipped with swimming pools, gymnasiums, cafeterias, reading and
class rooms, employment bureaus, and dormitories. They provided
facilities previously all but unknown to African-Americans.\textsuperscript{71}
The pools and gymnasiums offered recreation and exercise for YMCA mem-
bers as well as for African-American students from area schools. The
YMCA's educational program included a variety of classes, such as
elementary English, typing, architectural drawing, stenography, auto
mechanics, and driving lessons, enhancing the vocational qualifica-
tions of members. For a long time the dormitories of the Rosenwald
YMCA were practically the only places where African-American
male travelers could find comfortable and safe sleeping accommoda-
tions outside the homes of relatives and friends.\textsuperscript{72} By 1933 the Rosen-
wald YMCA had an aggregate membership of almost 20,000 and the
buildings were utilized by many thousands of other African-Ameri-
cans.\textsuperscript{73} The location of the YMCA in or near the African-American
business districts enhanced their importance for the African-American
community.

Thus, the Rosenwald YMCA improved the quality of life for
many urban African-American males. By providing recreational and
educational programs as well as accommodations, the YMCA offered
African-American men and boys an alternative to the city streets. The
mother of a member of the Washington branch expressed what many
parents must have felt: "Before this building was opened I did not
know where my boy was. Now I rest content, knowing that his leisure time is being properly directed.'

In addition to providing them with improved leisure-time activities, Rosenwald's philanthropy also stimulated African-Americans to actively participate in the planning and fund-raising efforts. Although Rosenwald and other whites contributed 86 percent of the funds, African-Americans gave substantial amounts of money considering their economic situation. According to the Southern Workman, the fund-raising campaign "called up latent energies which were heretofore undreamed of. It established self-confidence among the colored people, who worked earnestly to do their share in securing funds for the big Y.M.C.A. building campaign."

At the dedication of Chicago's Wabash Avenue branch, Rosenwald acknowledged and praised the involvement and support of African-Americans.

You now have an enterprise in which you have participated from the start, for you conducted a campaign for raising money to build it. . . . You are organizing the force to operate the plant. You are going to run it, too, what a chance for you to make good! What a grand opportunity to grow strong! What an efficient help to dissipate prejudice!

Rosenwald's philanthropy was less successful in stimulating interracial cooperation. Blacks and whites cooperated for the duration of the fund-raising campaigns, but once the buildings were completed, interracial cooperation usually came to an end. Nevertheless, most of the cities reported that the joint efforts had contributed to better understanding between the races.

Despite the continued absence of the interracial cooperation that he hoped to engender, Rosenwald's philanthropy did establish twenty-four black institutions, largely in the northern and western cities to which subsequent generations of African-Americans would migrate. While some African-Americans remained critical of Rosenwald's philanthropy for its role in perpetuating segregation, members of the YMCAs built with his support established an annual memorial day in his honor. When Rosenwald died on January 6, 1932, Channing H. Tobias, the highest-ranking black YMCA official, called him "one of the greatest friends of the Negro race since Abraham Lincoln."
Rosenwald's support of black YMCAs was clearly stimulated by genuine concern for the plight of African-Americans. As a Jew Rosenwald, in common with African-Americans, knew prejudice and discrimination at first-hand. However, compassion was not his only motivation. Rosenwald's philanthropy was also based on a firm belief in the American Dream, a belief he shared with African-Americans in the YMCA. He and they were convinced that America provided them with the opportunity to succeed. Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, while regrettable, were not overwhelming obstacles to success, but "a grand opportunity to grow strong!" Thus, the "peculiar alliance" between the Chicago Jew and black Christians was not peculiar at all. It was rooted in the late nineteenth century's self-help ideology and Horatio Alger myth.

Regardless of Rosenwald's motives, African-Americans benefitted from his philanthropy. Excluded from white YMCAs and with no hope for integration, support from Rosenwald provided them with the best available facilities. Moreover, with Rosenwald's help African-Americans acquired institutions over which they, and not whites, exercised control. More useful, perhaps, than an endless debate about motivation are some observations about the significance of the black YMCAs by the greatest African-American leader of the time, W. E. B. Du Bois. In 1925 he wrote:

"Today there is gradually rising . . . an independent autonomous colored Y.M.C.A.—national, even international in scope—whose connection with the white Y.M.C.A. is daily growing less and less, confined more and more to general policies and the rare personal contacts of a few officials."

Whatever his motives or philanthropic peculiarities, Julius Rosenwald helped to create a network of black YMCAs which served African-Americans in their search for cultural self-determination.

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### Location of Rosenwald YMCAs

#### 1910 Offer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Date Opened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>12th Street</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Wabash Avenue</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indianapolis</td>
<td>Senate Avenue</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Christian Street</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City, Mo.</td>
<td>Paseo Department</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>9th Street</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
<td>Carlton Avenue</td>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>Druid Hill Avenue</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Pine Street</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>Spring Street</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>135th Street</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>Butler Street</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Centre Avenue</td>
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#### 1920 Offer

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<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>Glenarm Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>St. Antoine</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>28th Street</td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>Michigan Avenue</td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton</td>
<td>5th Street</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montclair, N.J.</td>
<td>Washington Street</td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo</td>
<td>Indiana Avenue</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
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<td>Dallas</td>
<td>Moorland</td>
<td>1930</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youngstown</td>
<td>West Federal Street</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange, N.J.</td>
<td>Oakwood Avenue</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrisburg</td>
<td>Forster Street</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Rethinking the American Jewish Experience

Notes

Research for this article was made possible through a New Faculty Research Grant from Ball State University, an Albert J. Beveridge Grant from the American Historical Association, a Summer Research Fellowship from the University of Cincinnati, and a Research Grant from the Rockefeller Archive Center.

1. For a list of their locations, see the appendix.


5. Julius Rosenwald, "Burden of Wealth," *Saturday Evening Post*, January 5, 1929, p. 136; Embree and Waxman, *Investment in People*, p. 13. In accordance with his philosophy, Rosenwald made no bequests to his grandchildren, arguing that it "is the duty of every man to provide for his family. . . . As I have provided for my children, I expect them to provide for theirs. If they don't, their children must suffer the consequences—or perhaps the benefits—of their parent's neglect." Quoted in Angell, "Julius Rosenwald," pp. 144-145. At the time of his death, Rosenwald's estate was valued at $17,000,000, less than the total of his philanthropic contributions. Bachmann, "Julius Rosenwald," p. 99.


17. Ibid., pp. 605–606.

18. Ibid., p. 606.


23. Julius Rosenwald to Chicago YMCA, December 30, 1910 (JR Papers, reel 85); "To Give the City Negro a Fair Chance," Association Men, February 1911, p. 199.


26. Jesse S. Moorland, "A Dream Come True," Red Cross Magazine, February 1920, p. 49, Biographical Records, Julius Rosenwald, # 2 (YMCA Archives); Werner, Julius Rosenwald p. 119; George R. Arthur, Life on the Negro Frontier: A Study of the Objectives and the Success of the Activities...

27. L. Wilbur Messer to Jesse E. Moorland, June 11, 1907 (Records Relating to YMCA Work with Blacks, 1891–1979, box 6, # Colored Work Department—Local, State and Area Relationships, AK, 1910–1945, YMCA Archives).


29. Werner, Julius Rosenwald, p. 119; “Memorandum of Conversation between Julius Rosenwald, A. H. Loeb, L. Wilbur Messer, William J. Parker and Jesse B. Moorland” (Biographical Records, Julius Rosenwald, # 2, YMCA Archives).

30. For a discussion of the struggle of black YMCAs trying to obtain buildings, see Mjagkij, “History of the Black YMCA,” pp. 82–146.


36. Julius Rosenwald to Walter Wood, General Secretary, Philadelphia YMCA, October 29, 1913 (JR Papers, reel 85); Julius Rosenwald to Thomas E. Taylor, Secretary, Senate Avenue Branch, Indianapolis YMCA, June 30, 1913 (JR Papers, reel 84).


41. Julius Rosenwald to Chicago YMCA, December 30, 1910 (JR Papers, reel 85); Chicago YMCA, *Fifty-Five Years*, p. 86. A group of African-Americans under the leadership of Ferdinand Barnett held a first fund-raising meeting in December 1910; Spear, *Black Chicago*, p. 100.


45. “Y.M.C.A. Colored, Jan. 1911, Letters from friends about the offer” (JR Papers, reel 85); William Howard Taft to Julius Rosenwald, January 27, 1911 (JR Papers, reel 86); William Howard Taft to L. Wilbur Hesser, January 9, 1911, reprinted in *Chicago Defender*, January 21, 1911, p. 2.


48. Ibid.


50. While many African-American communities tried to match Rosenwald’s offer, some African-Americans in Boston, Cleveland, and Detroit opposed the construction of black YMCAs as “a form of offensive segregation.” African-Americans in Boston never applied for Rosenwald funds, whereas in Detroit and Cleveland opposition to Rosenwald YMCAs decreased throughout the following decade. In 1925 Detroit opened a black YMCA with Rosenwald’s support, and the following year Cleveland applied for matching funds. However, Cleveland’s African-American populace was unable to raise the necessary funds. This was the result of continued opposition to a segregated YMCA branch as well as the simultaneous fund-raising activities of the Phyllis Wheatley Association; William C. Graves to Rosenwald, April 19, 1920 (JR Papers, reel 84). For correspondence regarding the Cleveland and Detroit fund-raising campaign, see JR Papers, reel 84.


52. Moorland’s salary was paid in part through the building campaigns. He received 1 percent of the funds raised during the campaign, plus traveling and local entertainment expenses. Richard C. Morse, “Statement,” December 10, 1913 (Records Relating to YMCA Work With Blacks, 1891–1979, box 1, # Policy—Correspondence and Statements, 1913–1941, YMCA Archives).


54. See appendix. St. Louis conducted a successful campaign before the expiration of Rosenwald’s 1910 offer, but the building was not completed until 1919.

55. See appendix.


58. William C. Graves to Julius Rosenwald, May 2, 1920 (JR Papers, reel 86).

59. Ibid.

60. William J. Parker to Julius Rosenwald, March 15, 1920 (JR Papers, reel 85).


64. For correspondence concerning Jacksonville, Florida, see JR Papers, reel 84; and for Nashville and New Orleans, JR Papers, reel 85.


66. Moorland suggested a $15,000 donation from Rosenwald for every $35,000 raised locally. “New Proposition to be submitted to Mr. Rosenwald,” n.d. (JR Papers, reel 85).

67. Julius Rosenwald to Chicago YMCA, July 6, 1920 (JR Papers, reel 85).


69. The Emerson Street branch in Evanston, Illinois, is frequently listed as a Rosenwald YMCA, although it was not subjected to the conditions of the second offer. Rosenwald’s donations, totaling $12,000, were personal contributions designed to help liquidate the debt of the branch. For correspondence concerning the black YMCA in Evanston, see JR Papers, reel 84.

70. See appendix.

71. Werner, Julius Rosenwald, p. 120.


73. Arthur, Life on the Negro Frontier, p. 96, gives a membership of 19,296 for the year 1933.


75. African-Americans contributed 14 percent, local whites 48 percent, and Rosenwald 21 percent to the black branches. The remainder of the funds came from other sources outside the communities. William C. Graves to Julius Rosenwald, March 20, 1920 (JR Papers, reel 85).


78. See appendix.


80. Channing H. Tobias, “Address Delivered in Honor of the Memory of Julius Rosenwald over Station WEAF of New York and Broadcast over the NBS Network during the ‘Southland Sketches’ Hour,” February 7, 1932 (JEM Papers, box 126-41, #871).
