

BOOKER T.
WASHINGTON



AMERICAN
HERO

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BTWsociety

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON SOCIETY

Live, Learn, and Lead

THE **BookerT.**WAY

Booker T. Washington Society
13 Wisley Court • Essex Junction, VT 05452
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A 501[c](3) non-profit educational and charitable organization

How would you define an American Hero?

Is it the one who climbs the ladder to achieve social and financial success? The athlete who 'sacrifices' his childhood or teen years for five minutes of glory at an Olympic game?

Or is it the man or woman possessed with courage and strength of character – noted for nobility of purpose – one who risks or sacrifices his or her life to help those who cannot help themselves?

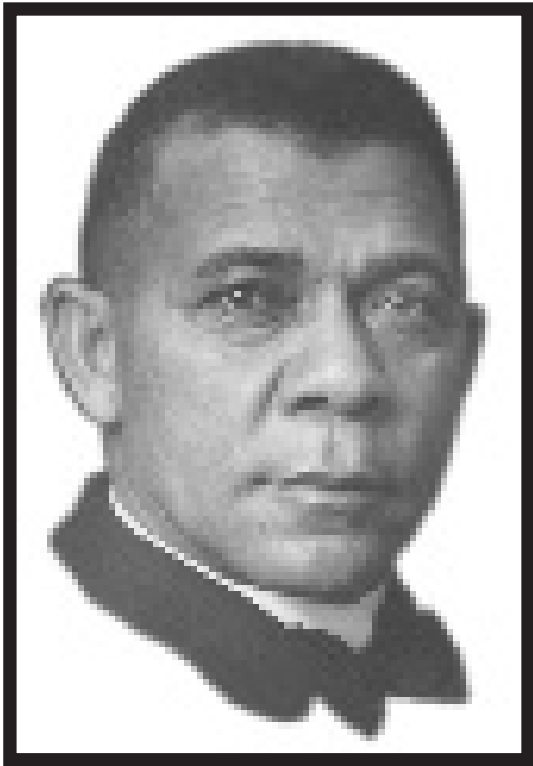
This booklet is designed to introduce you to the principles, values and work of the Booker T. Washington Society.

We believe Booker T. Washington was truly an American Hero. And today, more than ever, America needs heroes.

Why not you?



“Success is not measured by the position
one has reached in life,
rather by the obstacles overcome”



**"We should not let our grievances
overshadow our opportunities"**

(Quotations at the bottom of each page
are by Booker T. Washington)

“Why can’t we all just get along?”

It’s a simple question. Rodney King famously asked it two decades ago. There is a simple answer. But most of us don’t want to hear it. The answer is, “Because it is hard work.”

It is just easier to not like you if you are not like me.

You can be richer, poorer, brighter, lighter, whiter, darker, fatter, skinnier, younger, older – whatever. It is simply harder to get to know or trust those who don’t look or think like we do.

Booker T. knew that.

Whether prejudice forms out of envy, anger or fear, it is personal. So, to eliminate it in a real and lasting, sense, change has to take place on the inside. And that is always a matter of individual choice.

Booker T. knew that too.

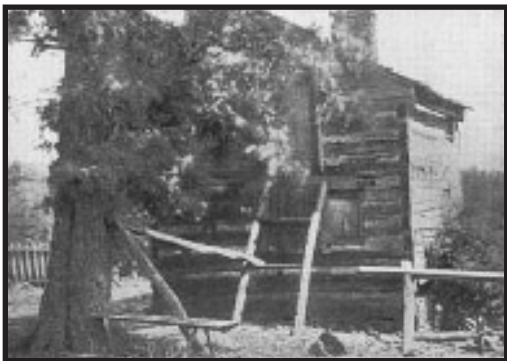
The Booker T. Washington Society is dedicated to advancing Dr. Washington’s vision and mission by encouraging Americans – especially younger Americans – to live, learn and lead the Booker T. Way.

Sincerely,

Ronald Court, President

Booker T. Washington Society

Born – April 5, 1856



He was born a slave in this one room, dirt floor cabin on a small Virginia tobacco farm. He had just one name, 'Booker' and lived here for 9 years with his mother Jane and half-brother John.

Yet he became a leader of his race, counselor to three U.S. Presidents (McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft), statesman, activist, orator, world-renowned educator, thinker and much more.

"In all my efforts to learn to read,
my mother shared fully my ambition and sympathized
with me and aided me in every way she could."

Ingenuity – in West Virginia



When freedom came, the family moved to West Virginia. Booker wanted to go to school, but his strict step-father insisted that he work in salt and coal mines to help support the family.

So Booker found a way. He got up at 4 in the morning, worked until 9a.m., then went to school till 3p.m., and went back to work at the mine until 9p.m. It was a 12 hour work day... PLUS school!

“A whining crying race may be pitied
but seldom respected.”

Initiative – Walking 200 miles



Then one day, he heard miners talking about a school in Virginia for Negroes run by a Civil War General named Armstrong.

From that moment on, he worked for years to save money to go. Finally, with his mother's blessing, he left family and friends, boarding a stagecoach with only enough money to ride half-way. He walked the rest of the way, over two hundred miles, to Hampton Institute.

“Few things can help an individual more than to place responsibility on him, and to let him know that you trust him.”

Commitment



BTW worked his way through Hampton as a janitor, graduating with honors, then returned to West Virginia to teach. In four years, he started two elementary schools, a night school and a debating society.

Then he attended a Baptist Seminary in Washington, DC before returning to Hampton to teach.

In 1881, Gen. Armstrong received a cable asking him to name a white principal to lead a new Negro 'Normal school' (teacher's college) in Tuskegee, AL. Instead, he recommended Booker T. Washington.

"The education I received at Hampton was but a small part of what I learned there I learned to love and read the Bible."

Determination



BTW arrived at Tuskegee to find... nothing.
No buildings, no land, no teachers and no students!

So he went out to the countryside to live with
ex-slaves and build interest in his new school.

As he saw how they lived, he thought about what
kinds of education would benefit them the most.

"If you want to lift yourself up,
lift up someone else."

July 4, 1881 – Independence Day



He held his first class in an old, dilapidated one-room church with a leaky roof. When it rained, a student would hold an umbrella over him.

He picked July 4th as the day to hold his first class at the new "Tuskegee Normal School."

That day – July 4th – was especially significant for him as it was for his students.

"I want to see my race live such high and useful lives that they will not be merely tolerated, but they shall actually be needed and wanted."

Initiative + Ownership



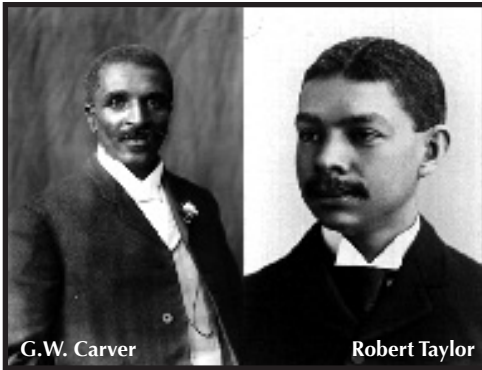
In his first year, BTW borrowed \$200 from Hampton's treasurer and bought an abandoned 100-acre farm.

Then he hired instructors and had them design Tuskegee's first permanent building.

Then he organized students to build it!

"I want to see you own land."

Work with the Best



BTW took pains to attract the best of the best. He hired Robert Taylor, the first black architect from MIT, who was also near the top of his class!

Next, BTW enticed Iowa botanist George Washington Carver to lead the Agriculture Department.

He gave Carver free rein to conduct peanut and soybean experiments. These made Carver famous and in fact, saved the economy of the South.

“No man, who continues to add something to the material, intellectual and moral well-being of the place in which he lives, is left long without proper reward.”

Initiative + Risk Taking



BTW improvised, innovated and risked everything to work through seemingly impossible problems.

Needing buildings for students and faculty, he figured to make bricks out of the red Alabama clay soil found on site by mixing it with straw and water.

But he failed several times and nearly went bankrupt until he got the clay, water and straw mix right. The brickyard even sold excess bricks and made a profit!

*“Opportunities never come a second time,
nor do they wait for our leisure.”*

A New Way of Thinking



And because it was hard, dusty work, BTW had to overcome the 'slavery mentality' – the mindset that thinks, "only slaves are fit for hard work."

He had to "un-teach" the false belief held by ex-slaves that freedom meant being free to escape from hard work.

"No race can prosper till it learns
that there is as much dignity
in tilling a field as in writing a poem."

Academic Education



Academic subjects were always the key part of the curriculum, even as BTW saw as his main purpose helping Southern rural blacks get out of poverty.

Tuskegee Normal & Industrial Institute was, after all, a teacher's college. BTW was simply determined to insure that every student had a means to support him or herself when they went back home to teach.

"At the bottom of education, at the bottom of politics, even at the bottom of religion itself there must be for our race, as for all races an economic foundation, economic prosperity, economic independence."

Learning by Doing



BTW insisted on “correlation.” He wanted students to apply the technical training they received in the classroom to solving the real practical problems they encountered in their shops and laboratories.

Today, this method is now sometimes called ‘interdisciplinary’ learning.

“The world cares very little about
what a man knows;
it is what a man is able to do that counts.”

Faith



This chapel (1899) is one of over 100 campus buildings built by students during BTW's tenure.

Though Tuskegee was non-sectarian, its daily life was permeated by active religion. This included Sunday preaching services and Sunday school classes, daily evening chapel devotionals and a "Week of Prayer" held for two weeks every January.

"In the sight of God there is no color line,
and we want to cultivate
a spirit that will make us forget
that there is such a line anyway."

Service to the Community



BTW established a Bible Training School in 1893 to prepare students for the Christian ministry.

Students helped out at community churches on Sundays. They also ran a YMCA that looked after the sick, needy and elderly in the area and a Humane Society for the proper care of animals.

“Educated men and women, especially those who are in college, very often get the idea that religion is fit only for the common people... No young man or woman can make a greater error than this.”

Fundraiser in Service for Others



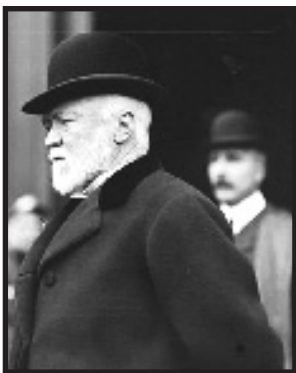
BTW spent nearly half of every year fundraising to support Tuskegee's ever expanding payroll.

As he grew contacts and influence among wealthy benefactors, he sought and directed funds to other institutions, including Fisk and Howard University.

His efforts were always to benefit Tuskegee and others, never himself.

"There is a class of race problem solvers
who make a business of keeping the troubles,
the wrongs and the hardships
of the Negro race before the public. ..."

Character in Action



Andrew Carnegie once attempted to give BTW \$150,000 to insure that he would be financially secure when he retired. However, BTW politely declined, asking that the gift go to Tuskegee instead.

But Carnegie persisted until BTW finally agreed to accept interest on the gift. Thereupon, BTW immediately canceled his Tuskegee salary and continued to work without pay for Tuskegee the rest of his life.

“... some of these people do not want
the Negro to lose his grievances
because they do not want to lose their jobs
... (they) don't want the patient to get well.”

Visionary



BTW asked Julius Rosenwald, builder of Sears, Roebuck, to fund a 'pilot' program of 100 elementary schools, designed and operated by Tuskegee.

This program, later expanded as the Rosenwald Fund, built 4,977 schools, 217 teacher's homes and 163 shop buildings in 15 states.

Carnegie, Rosenwald and BTW took a "matching funds" approach to involve and insure that local beneficiaries would have a stake in the program.

"The highly educated person
is the one who is considerate
of those individuals who are less fortunate."

Extension Service Pioneer



BTW was the first to take education to the people. He had Dr. Carver pack tools in a buggy to go out to farmers to demonstrate new techniques.

This 'Agricultural College on Wheels' reached 2,000 farmers (black and white) in its first month alone and spread to 28 states and around the world.

"The Negro has the right to study law, but success will come to the race sooner if it produces intelligent, thrifty farmers, mechanics, to support the lawyers."

International Educator



Visitors came from all over the world to learn firsthand the techniques taught at Tuskegee.

In 1905, they came from 16 countries, including Africa, India, China, Japan, Poland and Russia.

Many took ideas learned at Tuskegee back to their own countries to put into practice with changes and modifications adapted to their needs.

“Our ability to make the world better depends entirely on our ability to make ourselves better.”



(above: BTW Institute in Liberia, W. Africa)

BTW was the 1st black college president to send students to Liberia and bring others to Tuskegee.

In 1911, he sent his personal envoy, Emmitt Scott, to Liberia to discourage France from any further annexation of Liberian territory.

Thus, BTW was instrumental in preserving Liberia's independence.

“We must reinforce argument with results.”

Champion of Entrepreneurship



BTW founded the National Negro Business League, (1900) to help others start and grow a business by networking. He was a decade ahead of the formation of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Under his leadership, the NNBL grew to over 600 chapters in 15 years.

“What we should do in all our schools
is to turn out fewer job seekers
and more job-makers.”

Distinguished Educator



1896 – Harvard awarded an Hon. Masters Degree

1901 – Dartmouth bestowed an Hon. Doctorate

Harvard Pres. Charles W. Eliot, spoke at Tuskegee's 25th Anniversary in 1906, declaring, "By 1905, Tuskegee produced more self-made millionaires than Harvard, Yale, and Princeton combined."

"Anyone can seek a job,
but it requires a person of rare ability
to create a job."

Endurance under fire



Such prominence and achievement was bound to attract envy and enemies. When Teddy Roosevelt invited BTW to dinner at the White House – to Southern eyes, an unforgivable breach of racial etiquette – a group from Louisiana hired a black man to go to Tuskegee to assassinate him.

Fortunately, BTW was up North, fundraising.

“Education... that gives one physical courage to stand in front of the cannon and fails to give him moral courage to stand up in defense of right and justice is a failure.”

Tireless Advocate



In fact, BTW privately contributed substantially to fund several legal challenges to segregation and disfranchisement. One went all the way to the United States Supreme Court in 1903 (*Giles v. Harris*).

When he was offered \$10,000 to state publicly that he did not desire social equality for the negro, he refused, stating, "I will make no answer whatsoever."

"Those who have accomplished the greatest results are those... who never grow excited or lose self-control, but are always calm, self-possessed, patient and polite."

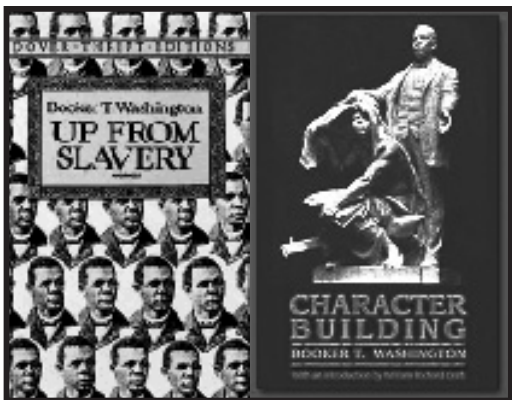
Powerful Orator



BTW attracted huge crowds – black and white, wherever he spoke. He fundraised and spoke all across the country – New Hampshire to California and from Minnesota to Florida... Europe also.

His fame and influence was so great that historians commonly refer to the 1895-1915 period as the “Booker T. Washington Era.”

“Leaders have devoted themselves to politics, little knowing, it seems, that political independence disappears without economic independence, that economic independence is the foundation of political independence.”



BTW wrote several books (2 most famous: above), countless newspaper and magazine articles and gave thousands of speeches all across the United States.

His inspirational 1901 autobiography, *Up From Slavery*, has been translated into 16 languages and has never been out of print.

“You may fill your heads with knowledge or skillfully train your hands, but unless it is based upon high, upright character, upon a true heart, it will amount to nothing.”

Died – November 14, 1915



“I mourn with you today as one who shares your sorrow. America has lost one of her best and greatest citizens.”

“History is to tell of two Washingtons. One the father of his country, the other the leader of his race.”

– Andrew Carnegie

“The man is unwise who does not cultivate in every manly way the friendship and good will of his next-door neighbor, whether he be black or white.”

“Lifting the Veil”



Booker T. Washington Monument
by Charles Keck (1922)

“He lifted the Veil of Ignorance
from his people and pointed the way to progress
through education and industry.”

This monument ‘Lifting the Veil of Ignorance’ symbolizes a terrified slave holding a book – representing education – and crouching on a plow and anvil – representing the tools of agriculture and industry.

“Great men cultivate love...
Only little men cherish a spirit of hatred.”



"My life work
is the promotion of education
of my race"

Booker T. Washington Society

This booklet can only scratch the surface of the remarkable story of Booker T. Washington.

There's much more at www.BTWsociety.org.

You are invited to read – and freely download – several of his books, articles and speeches we have posted there in our 'Library' tab.

But his story does not end there, for his approach to living, based on character, education, and opportunity remains as practical today as it was then.

It is this common sense vision and wisdom – his philosophy of life – that endures as a lasting and most valuable gift to us. It is his legacy.

We at the Society call it the 'Booker T. Way': seven guiding principles for living, learning, and leading a constructive, productive life.

As you get to know more about the Booker T. Way in the next few pages, I'd like you to consider your own story.

Think about it. Every day, in everything you do – good or bad – you create and write your own story. You are the author of your own history.

I hope you'll choose to think about what you can do to make your story what you want it to be.

THE **BookerT**.WAY

Our motto "I CHOOSE" simply says that every individual is free to choose, and therefore, is responsible for their thoughts, words and actions.

I CHOOSE...to use

my **I**NITIATIVE

to **C**OMMIT

to **H**ARD WORK,

to **O**WN my actions,

to **O**RGANIZE my time,

to **S**ERVE others, and even

to **E**NDURE the tough times with energy,
enterprise and enthusiasm!

Initiative

... taking action when no one is there to tell you to do the right thing.

To do good, you actually have to start to do something.

“If you don’t do it, it won’t get done.” – Anonymous.

Commitment

... Is what it takes to turn dreams into reality.

Words may speak boldly of intentions, but actions speak louder than words.

“It is making the time when there is none. It is the stuff character is made of; the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism.” – Abraham Lincoln

Hard work

... is spending whatever it takes – in time and effort to accomplish your goals.

It is hard work to plan, analyze and develop ways – to think about – how best to reach your goals.

“Leaders aren’t born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that’s the price we’ll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal.” – Vince Lombardi

Ownership

...means accepting responsibility for your actions.

You recognize that you own the choices you make, that you choose not to blame others for bad choices and can be justifiably proud for the good choices you make.

Organization

... is making the best use of your time, all the time.

You are given the same amount of time –168 hours each week – as everybody else on the planet.

Not one champion, hero or role model you can think of gets any more time to accomplish great things than anybody else.

Those who get things done are different than those who do not. How they choose to use their time is a big part of it.

Service

... is dedicating yourself to helping others as well.

“Inherent in a genuine leader is an authentic desire and commitment to serve others. A real leader is one who works for the good of people beside himself.” – Einstein

Endurance

... is the will to keep going especially when the going gets tough. No matter how easy your life may seem, as sure as night follows day, you are bound to experience tough times.

Welcome to life.

Stick to your goals and chances are the hardships you face along the way will fade away.

“To make dreams come in to reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort.” – Jesse Owens

Energy – Enterprise – Enthusiasm!

Success requires energy and patience – lots of it. That takes eating right and good exercise.

Success can require being enterprising – willing to think about and try new ways to deal with problems that may come your way.

And since you have to go thru life, no matter what – make it fun!

The BTW Society

Our Purpose...

Honoring the legacy of Booker T. Washington
by encouraging young Americans
to live, learn, and lead, "The Booker T. Way."

Our Ongoing Programs

We promote, publish, and provide information about
Dr. Washington's life and legacy through...

Essay contests for high school students around the country
and awarding scholarships that include flying students (with
a parent or mentor) to Washington D.C. to participate in
a multi-day conference with distinguished speakers, panel
discussions, banquets and award ceremonies.

Publishing online – for free download – as much of BTW's
books/speeches/articles – as funds permit.

Providing books by and about Booker T. to schools and
individuals without resources.

Our Philosophy

As BTW spoke of training the 'head, heart and hand,' so
too, the Heart of the Society is found in the local commu-
nities where our members reside.

And the Hands of the Society are those of each and every
member, students and supporters alike, working together,
making a difference for themselves and others in their
communities.

The BTW Society

Our Priority

Our priority then, is to encourage, challenge and assist students, supporters and prospective mentors in forming and sustaining their own local chapter of the Booker T. Washington Society.

To do this, we spend much of our time on the road meeting with and speaking to high schools and local service clubs such as Rotary and Kiwanis, and with youth and church groups throughout the country.

We provide the organizational structure, a chapter web presence and assist in the many 'start-up' tasks associated with new organizations.

But we need your help.

First, I hope you will choose to join the Society. It is free. Second, that you will invite others to join also. Third, that you consider becoming a charter member – or mentor a member – in your community's local chapter. And fourth, that you help to support the Society, to whatever extent you can, so that we may reach as many students in as many communities as possible.

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